

Thimble Collectors Club Thimbles

Waldenburg Porzellan <--> Wyese Pottery

Thimble Collectors Club

"Family of Ducks" Thimble



WALDENBURG PORZELLAN - Germany

A proud family of spoon-billed ducks, nestled deep within the marsh lands, pause by the water's edge and take a moment to quench their thirst. This marvelously complex motif forms the basis for an exciting new thimble manufactured by Waldenburg Porzellan.

Established in 1891, Waldenburg Porzellan represents the heritage of over three centuries of German pottery-making in the town whose name it bears. During the mid-1500's — long before the first true European porcelain was produced in the town of Meissen, Germany — a group of Saxon potters was plying its craft in Waldenburg, turning out handsome tankards and other vessels of brown, salt-glazed stoneware. Today, the Waldenburg name is noted for fine porcelain wares made from clays obtained in Germany's Silesia region.

The dense texture and brilliant white color which distinguish porcelain produced from Silesian clay — along with the finely painted detail and complex colors of the "Family of Ducks" motif — are characteristic of the outstanding wares manufactured by Waldenburg Porzellan.

Thimble Collectors Club

Teddy Bear Thimble



WALDENBURG PORZELLAN - W. Germany

Two cuddly teddy bears, charmingly attired in colorful German folk costume, provide a lighthearted motif for this fine Waldenburg porcelain thimble — available exclusively from The Thimble Collectors Club. Although the beloved stuffed toy based on a little bear cub, and known worldwide as the "teddy bear," is of early 20th-century American origin — Germany's renowned Steiff Company introduced its own more naturalistic and adult-looking stuffed bear toys during the same period.

Established in Waldenburg in 1891, Waldenburg Porzellan represents the heritage of over three centuries of German pottery-making in the town whose name it bears. During the mid-1500's — long before the first true European porcelain was produced in the town of Meissen, Germany — a group of Saxon potters was plying its craft in Waldenburg, turning out handsome tankards and other vessels of brown, salt-glazed stoneware. Today, the Waldenburg name is noted for fine porcelain wares made from clays obtained in Germany's Silesia region.

The dense texture and brilliant white color which distinguish porcelain produced from Silesian clay — and the finely painted detail and bright colors of the little boy and girl teddy bears on this thimble — are characteristic of the outstanding wares manufactured by Waldenburg Porzellan.

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Bavarian Beauty WALKÜRE, West Germany

In the delightful province of Bavaria, the people proudly maintain the quaint traditions which have survived for many hundreds of years. A third of Bavaria is thickly forested, and much of the remaining land is put to bountiful use, growing rye, wheat, barley and hops. In such rural surroundings old farming communities are able to retain the customs of days gone by and, although West Germany is a modern and progressive country, in Bavaria you may still see the brightly coloured folk costumes of dirndl skirts, shawls and lederhosen that were worn centuries ago. And Bavarian traditions continue to grow: Bayreuth is famous as the birthplace of Richard Wagner, and opera lovers from all over the world flock to the town for the festivals which celebrate his music.

The house of Walküre was founded in Bayreuth, Bavaria, by Sigmund Paul Meyer as long ago as 1899 and it is still in the hands of the Meyer family today. Walküre's motto, 'Invention and Creativity', is borne out by the up-to-the-minute technology which, together with its traditionally skilled craftsmen, creates such covetable collectors' pieces as this exquisite thimble.

Thimble Collectors Club

Bullfinch WALKÜRE, Germany

The male bullfinch is one of the prettiest of our common British birds. With his plump, feathery little body, bright rose-pink cheeks and breast, black cap and twinkling eyes, he is a cheering sight in our woodlands and hedgerows. Gardeners, however, do not welcome his arrival in spring, for he feeds on all the young buds of our carefully nurtured fruit trees. This charming thimble shows the male bullfinch perched on the branch of an apple tree, purposefully eyeing the flowers and buds!

The porcelain house of Walküre was founded in 1899 by Mr Sigmund Paul Meyer in Bayreuth, Bavaria. This is where the composer Richard Wagner lived in later life, and where the great annual Wagner Festival of opera takes place, attracting thousands of visitors to the town. Walküre, which takes its romantic name from the Valkyries, the wild horsewomen in Wagner's *Ring of the Nibelungen*, makes a wide range of high quality tableware, gifts and collectors' items. It has the motto 'Invention and Creativity,' and collectors of fine china the world over appreciate its high standards while admiring the originality and charm of its wares. This little thimble is a delightful example of its craftsmanship.

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Thimble Collectors Club

Christmas Floral Thimble



WALKURE - Germany

Snowflakes drift on a brisk winter day; sleigh bells echo on the wind. Memories of holiday seasons are forever captured in this delightful Christmas floral pattern design by Erste Bayreuther Porzellanfabrik Walkure.

Founded in 1899 by Mr. Siegmund Paul Meyer, Walkure is located in Bayreuth, Bavaria which is also home to Richard Wagner and the annual gathering of the Wagnerian musical elite. Enduringly classic designs replete with cultural charm accentuate the highly-skilled craftsmanship of the Walkure artisans. Collectors of fine china and porcelain the world over highly value the hard porcelain bakeware and collectibles which emerge from this factory, knowing that their motto, "Invention and Creativity" is a part of every one of their wares.

Available exclusively from the Thimble Collectors Club, the Christmas Floral thimble, finished with a brilliant hand-painted band of gold is sure to become a treasured addition to your collection.

Thimble Collectors Club

Floral Girl Thimble



WEDGWOOD - England

Wedgwood's famous "Floral Girl" graces this lovely thimble of matchless blue jasperware from one of England's most celebrated porcelain houses.

Best-known by far for the unglazed jasperware invented in 1774 by the firm's founder, Josiah Wedgwood I, this renowned porcelain house still uses many of its original 18th-century molds for the white bas-relief decorations — which are painstakingly applied by hand. The "Floral Girl" figure, based on Flora, the Roman goddess of flowers and spring, is one of the classic Greek and Roman ornamental designs created for jasperware in the late 1700's by Wedgwood's gifted modeler, William Hackwood.

Josiah Wedgwood established his firm in 1759 in England's historic Staffordshire district, where his family had been pottery-makers for four generations. Wedgwood has produced many types of high-quality porcelain wares and ceramics over its two and a quarter centuries, with the acclaimed jasperware continuing to grow in popularity. Since 1940, Wedgwood has been located in a modern facility in Barlaston, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire.

Thimble Collectors Club

Otters

WEDGWOOD, England

Although widespread on our rivers and streams where they live in holes in the banks, Otters are not often seen. So we are particularly pleased to bring you two Otters as depicted by the talented artist Dick Twinney. Dick, who spent his childhood studying wildlife on the banks of Devon's River Teign and Dartmoor, is deeply concerned with conservation. Many disabled birds and mammals make their home with Dick and his family.

Dick is an accomplished artist, and has exhibited in Britain, Germany and Canada. One of his paintings is owned by the Prince and Princess of Wales.

Strange to relate, the first Josiah Wedgwood never undertook the manufacture of fine bone china. It was first made by the company in the days of his son, Josiah II, between 1812 and 1822. In 1878 it was revived and has been made by the company ever since, helping build the name of Wedgwood with its superlative quality.

Thimble Collectors Club

Playful Kittens

WEDGWOOD, England

Who can resist the charm of a kitten, with its cheeky ways and limitless capacity for fun? And a whole litter of them can make you laugh until the tears come to your eyes – and sigh in exasperation. One thing is sure: if you try to knit with kittens at your feet, before long you'll find the yarn coming to an abrupt and soggy end in your hand where the naughty things have chewed it clean through. A lively kitten will clamber up the curtains, dive at the newspaper just as you're trying to read it, pounce on you from a dark corner when you're walking past with a loaded tray – it seems there's no end to the escapades he can dream up. Yet as he stalks past you, back arched, a fearsome expression on his tiny face and a clear conviction in his mind that he's a terrifying tiger, you can't help dissolving into laughter and forgiving him yet again.

This delightful thimble is the result of a collaboration between Wedgwood and artist Sue Camm. One of the oldest and most illustrious of British porcelain houses, Wedgwood has since 1759 been producing the fine quality ware that has earned it its towering reputation among collectors.

Thimble Collectors Club

Queen's Portrait WEDGWOOD, England

The name of Josiah Wedgwood is associated with one of the longest traditions of fine tableware and ornament production. He was a great innovator, experimenting with and creating new products. His most famous invention was Jasper ware, now amongst the most collected of ornamental pieces. Perfected in 1774, Jasper is an unglazed, vitreous fine stoneware which can be stained in a number of different colours, providing a background for white classical bas-reliefs or portraits. Over two centuries later, the method of manufacturing Jasper in Wedgwood's Barlaston works, which the company moved to in the 1940s, has remained unchanged.

To celebrate the 60th birthday of Her Majesty the Queen on April 21st 1986, a new portrait was modelled for Wedgwood by sculptor Raphael Mankouf who designed the new official portrait for British coinage.

The commissioning of this latest Royal portrait continues a Wedgwood tradition which dates back to the days of Josiah I when Jasper portrait medallions of George II and III and Queen Charlotte were produced, along with those of past monarchs and other notable people of the day. Portraits of all succeeding monarchs — eight in total — have been issued by the company, these being among the most sought after and highly prized Wedgwood products.

Sculptor Raphael Mankouf was born in Jerusalem in 1937 and this is his first commission for Wedgwood. This is also one of the most important club exclusives so far.

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Thimble Collectors Club

Rose WEDGWOOD, England

Since its introduction in 1774, Wedgwood's celebrated blue Jasper ware has become one of the most popular ceramic creations in the world.

Josiah Wedgwood experimented tirelessly during the Eighteenth Century in developing many of the materials and methods which are still used in the modern ceramics trade. He took many hundreds of hours to perfect Jasper ware. It is in fact a pure white, unglazed vitreous stoneware, but it is possible to colour it to almost every shade, of which the most famous and popular is the distinctive pale blue.

The rose motif was specially designed for the Thimble Collectors Club, to produce a truly magnificent thimble.

Thimble Collectors Club

Swan WEDGWOOD – England

Josiah Wedgwood himself considered Jasper his crowning achievement. Over the past two centuries collectors, scholars and historians have confirmed his judgment.

This unique unglazed stoneware, with its distinctive white bas-relief figures on a pale blue background, is world famous. And the methods used to create Wedgwood Jasper are today essentially the same as those perfected by Josiah in 1774... for no-one has ever found a better way to achieve the superb clarity of detail for which it is so esteemed.

Born in Burslem in 1730, Josiah had been apprenticed to his elder brother before going into partnership with Thomas Whieldon of Fenton, the greatest English potter of his time. He remained with Whieldon for five years before starting in business on his own account.

In 1759 Josiah Wedgwood FRS – the 'Father of English Potters' – founded the Wedgwood firm, renting the Ivy House works in Burslem for ten pounds a year.

By 1776, Wedgwood had prospered sufficiently to buy the Ridge House Estate between Hanley and Newcastle-under-Lyme. There he built himself a house and a splendid new factory which he named Etruria. It was formally opened on 13 June 1769 and six 'First Day's' Vases were made by Wedgwood and Bentley to commemorate the event. During his lifetime Josiah invented and produced a wide range of table and ornamental ware, of which Jasper has become the most valued and sought after in the world. Jasper was the last of the ceramic bodies developed by Josiah and was perfected only after years of search for the right ingredients. It is an unglazed white vitreous fine stoneware, which can be tinted with mineral oxides to almost any shade – green, yellow, lilac, black or the distinctive pale blue. The Wedgwood Catalogue of 1787 describes it well:

"Jasper – a white porcelain of exquisite beauty and delicacy, capable of receiving colours in a manner which no other body, ancient or modern, has been known to do. This renders it particularly fit for cameos, portraits and bas-relief, as the background may be of any colour without paint or enamel, and the raised figures of pure white."

In this great tradition, Wedgwood created a beautiful swan motif for the Thimble Collectors Club and its members – an exclusive piece to treasure.

Thimble Collectors Club

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Thimble Collectors Club

Attic Treasures WESTBURY STUDIO, Wales

Memories by the dozen nestle side by side under the attic's silent beams. Childhood treasures – a long-suffering doll, a favourite teddy bear and a traditional rocking horse – are companions to a guitar and dartboard, the distractions of the teenage years. The sunshine filtering through the uncleaned windows can still tempt a glint from an old electric fire and the head of a golf club. And there are yet more forgotten delights crowded into the surrounding cupboards and chests. Though left in patient and dreaming silence, these items are still precious. Replaced by new, up-to-the-minute models, their places in our affections are secure – just like the memories of the happiest days of our lives.

The well-known artist Ray Hutchins, whose work includes the Glasgow 1990 stamp issue, has created this evocative scene especially for the Thimble Collectors Club. It has been produced for us by Westbury Studio, of South Wales. A husband and wife business, the company manufactures a variety of collectors' items, from china thimbles to porcelain figurines. Their fine porcelain was used in dolls produced to commemorate the wedding of the Duke and Duchess of York.

Thimble Collectors Club

Bullfinches Thimble



WESTBURY STUDIO - Wales

Springtime approaches and love is in the air. A shy male Bullfinch, its song lilting softly upon the gentle breezes, attracts a potential mate amid the branches of a peaceful English apple orchard.

Taking its name from the Westbury-on-Trym district of the historic Welsh city of Bristol, Westbury Studio began fine porcelain-making in the summer of 1983. Employing a small but highly skilled group of native Welsh craftsmen, Westbury Studio has quickly gained international recognition for its finely crafted, hand-painted bone china figurines, most notably those of horses, dogs and birds. Like the majority of Westbury Studio's creations, this lovely scene, painted by Michael J. Clarke, is taken from the beautiful natural surroundings which can be found in the nearby countryside.

Accented with a band of 22kt gold, this "Bullfinches" thimble is an adorable addition to your collection, and is available exclusively through the Thimble Collectors Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

(6.96)

6/95

Fox Cubs

WESTBURY STUDIO, Wales

Six playful fox cubs jostle each other to peep over the side of their den. Their triangular faces and soft, furry ears have the charm of all small animals, and their long, sensitive noses, which quiver at the slightest scent, show their common ancestry with our famous hunting dogs. Inquisitive, intelligent, and cunning, the fox still traditionally makes his earthy home deep in the quiet banks of our British woodlands; but as towns and villages extend towards him, he increasingly forages for his food in our gardens and dustbins. Many a sudden midnight clatter is caused by a hungry fox!

This delightful thimble has been produced for the Thimble Collectors Club by Westbury Studio, a small family pottery in Glamorgan, South Wales, near some of the finest countryside in the British Isles. The company, which includes an Italian chief modeller who trained with Capo di Monte, and a painter from Minton, makes a variety of collectors' and gift items, from exquisite miniatures to china dolls and figurines. It had the great honour of producing dolls to commemorate the marriage of the Duke and Duchess of York.

Thimble Collectors Club

The Little Owls Thimble



WESTBURY STUDIO - England

Gathered on the branches of a weathered stump, four little owls pause to contemplate the coming night's adventures. The Welsh firm of Westbury Studio has realistically captured this natural scene from the countryside surrounding its factory to encircle this fine bone china thimble.

Founded in 1983, Westbury Studio took its name from the Westbury-on-Trym district of the historic city of Bristol. Employing a small, but highly skilled group of native Welsh craftsmen, Westbury Studio has quickly gained international recognition for its finely crafted, hand-painted bone china figurines, most notably those of horses, dogs, and birds. These skilled artisans are also known worldwide for the delicate bisque porcelain doll parts which are used in the finest collector dolls.

This "Little Owls" thimble, with its adorable motif set on sparkling white china and accented with a lustrous band of gold, is available exclusively to members of the Thimble Collectors Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

Old Mill Thimble



WESTBURY STUDIO - England

A tranquil 19th-century country scene — an English Tudor style water mill, a lovely maiden and child feeding ducks, and peacefully grazing cows — graces this charming bone china thimble from England's Westbury Studio.

Founded in 1983, Westbury Studio took its name from the Westbury-on-Trym district of the historic city of Bristol. Applying the strictest standards of quality to every phase of the manufacturing process, Westbury Studio is widely known for its superb bone china and porcelain wares. In addition to thimbles, the firm specializes in finely crafted hand-painted bone china figurines, horses, dogs, and birds. The studio's skilled artisans are also known worldwide for their delicate bisque porcelain doll parts which are used in the finest collector dolls.

The meticulous detail and delicate colors of this lovely pastoral scene, attest to the superb quality standards upheld by this fine English porcelain house. A smooth, brilliant glaze and a band of gold provide the finishing touches to the "Old Mill Thimble," available exclusively from The Thimble Collectors Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

The Road to Canterbury WESTBURY STUDIO, Wales

The great makers of porcelain and china are household names, but it is often equally exciting to discover a new group of craftsmen with a genius for ceramics.

Such a find is the Westbury Studio. Here is a small group of porcelain specialists who established themselves in Wales just over two years ago. Surprisingly the chief modeller is an Italian, Salvatore Forte. However when you learn that he was trained in Capo di Monte and decided to settle in Wales you can understand his skill. Apart from an expert painter from the famous Minton Porcelain House, Westbury are made up of native Welsh craftsmen.

See what this small but dynamic studio has produced for Thimble Collectors Club members. In vivid colours they have reproduced a scene from the stained glass windows of Canterbury Cathedral depicting 13th Century pilgrims on the way to Canterbury. We were very impressed by this clever technique, so here is a thimble from one of Britain's newest Porcelain Houses but one which surely has a great future.

Thimble Collectors Club

The Road to Canterbury Thimble

WESTBURY STUDIO
FINE PORCELAIN MADE IN WALES

WESTBURY STUDIO - England

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Thimble Collectors Club

Rose Garden WESTBURY STUDIO, Wales

No other flower has captured our hearts as has the rose. Surely no one can fail to appreciate a headily scented rambler climbing a cottage wall, or a wild dog rose peeping shyly from summer hedgerows. As for the real rose enthusiasts, over the centuries they have devotedly cherished and nurtured rose varieties of such ancient lineage that today we can still buy from our garden centres a rose which grew in Crete over four thousand years ago! With such romantic histories and abundant beauty, no wonder that roses grace so many of our gardens.

The poetry of William Morris, featured on this delightful thimble, charmingly complements the collaboration of Neville Mardell, a graphic designer working in line and watercolour, and Westbury Studio, a small family pottery in Glamorgan, South Wales. Apart from the chief modeller, Salvatore Forte, who trained with Capo di Monte, and a painter from the illustrious Minton house, the craftsmen at Westbury are all natives of Wales. Since its establishment, Westbury has swiftly built up a reputation for fine exclusive items, and they had the honour of producing some of their exquisite ware for the occasion of the wedding of the Duke and Duchess of York.

Toy Pattern WESTCHESTER CHINA, USA

A CHEERFUL and colourful medley of traditional toys adorns this delightful thimble. At the centre of the group is every child's favourite - the faithful rocking horse. Mane and tail flying, he eagerly paws the ground, ready to gallop the youthful rider off to uncharted lands of fantasy and fine adventure! A gleaming trumpet and a splendid drum roll up with a fanfare, as prime candidates for the nursery orchestra. Chunky building blocks with ABC, a string of beads for dressing up, and balls just waiting to be thrown complete the happy group, together with a generous scattering of sugary treats. This nostalgic reminder of a Victorian nursery shows us fun and games for a child of any century.

The makers of this thimble, Westchester China, are a small and flourishing porcelain house which was founded some ten years ago in upper New York state. The owners trained in design and technique in Bavaria, and thus brought with them to the New World the highly respected tradition of German porcelain making, rooted in the early eighteenth century. This fine tradition is continued by their dedicated team of skilled craftsmen, and combines well with modern developments, including the most environmentally friendly kilns and equipment.

Thimble Collectors Club

"Bundle of Toys" Thimble



WESTCHESTER CHINA - United States

A charmingly classic German design, featuring children's toys and candy, decorates the very first thimble to emerge from the relatively new porcelain house of Westchester China.

After meeting at the potters' college in Selb, Bavaria, and then gaining more than a dozen years experience in one of Germany's largest porcelain factories, two families immigrated to the United States with plans to found a small porcelain workshop. Finally settling in upstate New York some ten years ago, their dream came true upon the opening of Westchester China. Though not as old and large as the world's most famous factories, Westchester China utilizes the most modern, state-of-the-art equipment to help produce their high-quality porcelain.

With its charming design and playfully colorful motif this "Bundle of Toys" thimble heralds Westchester China's emergence as one of the world's up-and-coming porcelain houses. This exclusive Thimble Collectors Club offering, only the second from a U.S.-based porcelain house, makes a striking addition to your growing collection.

Thimble Collectors Club

Columbus WESTCHESTER, USA

It is five hundred years since Christopher Columbus set sail from Spain in search of a short sea route to 'the Indies' - the fabulous silk and spice countries of the Orient. Two months later he landed on an island in the Bahamas and took possession of a New World for Spain - firmly convinced that he had reached the coast of Asia.

Columbus was born in Genoa, one of Italy's major seaports. A sailor all his life, he developed the belief that it was possible to reach the Far East by sailing west across the Atlantic Ocean. After many setbacks he won the patronage of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain, and embarked on his visionary voyage with three ships - the Santa Maria, the Pinta and the Niña. The most famous, the Santa Maria, is pictured here together with the route he took, navigated mainly by the stars. Perhaps the greatest and most courageous mariner of all time, Christopher Columbus - 'Admiral of the Ocean Sea' - changed the course of world history by linking up the 'New' world with the 'Old'.

This historic thimble has been produced in the New World by Westchester China, a thriving porcelain house in upper New York state. It was founded by a group of traditionally trained craftsmen from Germany, who today use only the most modern, environment-friendly kilns and equipment.

Thimble Collectors Club

Koalas WESTMINSTER CHINA, Australia

It is sometimes hard to believe that the cuddly koala is a real animal and not simply a fluffy toy. With its short, broad arms, blunt black nose and myopic gaze, it looks like the favourite inhabitant of the nursery shelf. These delightful creatures feed almost entirely on eucalyptus shoots, grazing their way slowly through the trees in groups. Baby koalas are only half an inch long at birth, but they stay safely hidden in their mother's pouch until they are five months old. Then they clamber out to face the world, clinging to the safety of their mother's back until they are old enough to climb the trees unaided.

This charming thimble is brought to you by Westminster China, a family-run house which was established in 1954 and swiftly grew to be one of the most notable names in Australian ceramics. The company has attracted skilled craftsmen steeped in the traditions of the European porcelain industry and has followed a policy of combining the valued expertise of old with the very best of modern equipment and technology. This thimble amply demonstrates the success of their approach and is sure to be popular with collectors everywhere.

Thimble Collectors Club

The Koalas Thimble



Westminster

WESTMINSTER CHINA - Australia

The koala, one of many fascinating creatures found only in Australia, has appropriately been chosen to decorate Westminster's fine bone china thimble.

From humble beginnings in 1954, the family-owned firm of Westminster China is now among Australia's most highly regarded enterprises. Experienced craftsmen and artists from the most illustrious British and European porcelain houses formed the nucleus of Westminster's staff, training the Australians in all aspects of production and porcelain decorating. In 1975 the firm moved to a large modern facility equipped with the newest types of firing kilns, as well as a comprehensive china decorating department.

At Westminster China, equal emphasis is placed on the quality of the bone china and the quality of the decorative art. The third generation of the founding family currently directs this firm. Combining Old World craftsmanship with uniquely Australian creativity, the Westminster hallmark is gaining world-wide recognition.

Displayed against the distinctive rust red and buff-colored hues of Australia's landscape, the furry koalas make this thimble a delightful addition to any collection. The Westminster "Koalas Thimble" is available exclusively from the Thimble Collectors Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

Black Agate

In the style of WHIELDON WARE

Of all the minerals buried in our earth's crust, agate is one of the most captivating to behold. Its colours include white, yellow, milky blue, brown and red and it is often dyed to produce an even wider variety of hue. The banded, swirling nature of its colouring has long made it prized for ornament, and agate carving has been practised in India and China since prehistoric times. A particularly hard stone, it is also used for burnishing and polishing gold on glass and ceramics.

Agateware was probably first produced in about 1730 by Dr Thomas Wedgwood, but it was Thomas Whieldon who brought it to preeminence in the 1740s, and gave his name to an improved form. The body was made to resemble agate by building up irregular layers of clay coloured white, brown, green and blue, producing brilliant mottled and tortoiseshell effects. The ware was then lead-glazed. Whieldon's agateware appeared as plates, teapots, jugs, tureens, cottages, cow creamers, dove-cotes and figurines. However, because it was very difficult to produce, its manufacture was short-lived. Our exquisite thimble, made in fine English bone china, beautifully recalls Whieldon Ware's rippling colours and delicate bands of gold. It is a fine memento of one of the great traditions of Staffordshire pottery and of a long-gone art form.



Thimble Collectors Club

Blue Agate

WHIELDON WARE, England

Agate ware, or marbled pottery, was highly prized as long ago as the first century A.D. – some examples have been excavated from Roman sites, and some rare Chinese pieces are also known. The early potters experimented with different effects, made by pressing clays of two different colours together into a mould. The piece would be hand finished, to leave a smooth, delicately veined surface. Later potters, including such famous names as Thomas Whieldon himself followed by Josiah Wedgwood and Josiah Spode, applied various metal oxides which gave different colours to make a marbled effect on a plain clay base.

Today, after some years of experimentation, refining and perfecting the techniques used by the famous potters of the past, Whieldon Ware of Stoke-on-Trent have developed an intriguing secret process and achieved some fascinating results with their agate ware. The nature of the process causes a different marbled effect on each individual piece, and these unique thimbles are sure to become sought after by collectors everywhere.

Thimble Collectors Club

Tropical Fish Thimble



WHIELDON WARE - England

Colorful tropical fish gracefully swim around the sides of this unique shell-shaped thimble from Whieldon Ware.

Thomas Whieldon, founder of the Whieldon pottery, received his early training from the master craftsman, Josiah Wedgwood. Soon after venturing out on his own, Whieldon created a niche for himself in the pottery world. Inspired by both Chinese and classical European designs, his ornamental wares and figurines, were sought after for their brilliantly-colored glazes and unusual decorations. In 1780, however, the Whieldon Ware hallmark was taken out of circulation. After much consideration, the owner of the hallmark has agreed to resurrect the original backstamp for use on this unique thimble, available exclusively from the Thimble Collectors Club.

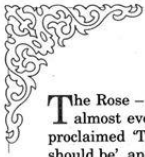
With its breathtaking display of tropical fish, captured on a thimble of pristine white delicately molded into the shape of a seashell, and accented with a band of gold, this thimble provides a fitting tribute to the original Whieldon potters.

Fruit Still Life

WIENER-KIRSCH PORCELAIN, Austria

A cluster of apples, pears, currants and raspberries forms the subject of this luscious still life. The natural beauty and texture of food, and particularly fruit, has fascinated centuries of painters. From the rich canvases of the early Dutch interiors, with their lavish piles of apples and grapes, through charming nineteenth-century French landscapes showing picnics, with baskets of pears and plums, right up to more modern times, with bowls of cherries and strawberries, bunches of bananas and succulent pineapples and water melons, all have idealised fruit, with its tempting juiciness and its wonderful variety of shapes and colours. This delightful thimble, its mellow hues reminding us of summer-with-a-hint-of-autumn, is sure to appeal to painters and nature lovers alike.

Hugo F. Kirsch founded his Viennese pottery workshop in 1906 for the production of artistic ceramic wares in, unusually, both stoneware and porcelain. In the early pieces, only traditional underglaze blue decoration was used, as in the very early examples of Chinese porcelain. Today the company, having grown in size and reputation, continues to produce highly attractive items with artistic and naturalistic ornamentation.



Glory of the Rose KIRSCH, Austria

The Rose – symbol of romance and emblem of England – is known and loved in almost every country of the world. Around 600 BC, the Greek poetess Sappho proclaimed 'The Rose (Mankind will all agree), The Rose the Queen of Flowers should be', and poets down the centuries have continued to praise the rose's beauty and fragrance. Nearly two hundred years ago, the Empress Josephine loved roses so much that she dispatched messengers to every corner of Europe to collect every known variety for her fabled gardens at the Palace of Malmaison. Fashionable lady that she was, she set a trend for rose gardens that encouraged growers to experiment, and by 1840 there were five thousand named varieties on the market!

A gorgeous arrangement of roses adorns this tall, slender thimble, and the prettily scalloped base adds to the effect of daintiness and delightful femininity. Brought to us by the house of Kirsch, it displays the high-quality artistry, delicate brushwork and attention to detail which are typical of this company's products. Hugo J. Kirsch founded the Vienna Porcelain House in 1906, and the present company is named after him.

Thimble Collectors Club

Fruit Picking WILHELMSBURG, Austria

Shiny-dark blackberries bending the stems of an English hedgerow bramble; velvety apricots nestling on the branches in a sun-baked Spanish orchard; or, as here, crimson-red cherries soaking up the sun's warm rays on a south-facing wall in the beautiful Austrian Tyrol. Fruit picking is a universal activity, and come harvest time, it is all hands to the task. There is something very satisfying about a fruit harvest – watching the mound of succulent fruit grow in the basket until it will take no more, then taking the bounty away to make into jars of sweet jam, melt-in-the-mouth pies or wonderful desserts that everyone will enjoy. This is the season of long, warm, summer days when the sun seems to shine for ever and the fruits of one's labour are a just reward for the day's toil.

Named after the town of Wilhelmsburg, near the historic and lovely city of Vienna, the Wilhelmsburg porcelain house has been part of the Oespag group since 1967. Its range of fine porcelain and other ware may be seen by the public in the company's headquarters, set in the elegant grandeur of a Viennese Palace.

Swan
WILHELMSBURG, Austria

THE beautiful mute swan nests and breeds throughout the British Isles, and can often be seen serenely swimming, in its pure white splendour, on the sheltered fresh waters of lakes, ponds, reservoirs and rivers, and even sometimes in salt-water estuaries and bays. It is quieter than other species of swan; but do not be misled into thinking that it is as silent as its name implies. It will 'honk' and 'trumpet' at any time, and to protect its young will hiss or snort alarmingly at an intruder. This thimble shows a picturesque vignette of a pair of these most graceful and elegant of birds, paddling majestically down the river with their brood of downy cygnets bobbing around them. The idyllic scene is enhanced by foliage and water lilies, and is surrounded by a fluttering golden ribbon.

The Wilhelmsburg porcelain house became, in 1967, part of the large Oespag group, which has its showrooms and offices in the glorious Viennese Palace, opposite the palace gardens and near the State Opera House. Wilhelmsburg itself is situated in the town of that name outside Vienna, and is a busy, fully modernised centre of production for high-quality tableware and gifts.

Thimble Collectors Club

"Swan" Thimble



WILHELMSBURG - Austria

A gracefully elegant pair of swans drift idly along the calm waters of the river. A breathtaking scene elegantly framed in 24kt gold by the artisans of Wilhelmsburg Porzellan.

Named for the city in which it is located, the Wilhelmsburg factory has been in operation for almost two hundred years. In 1967, the factory merged with the huge Oespag group, a conglomerate of several Austrian porcelain factories. Using the tremendous resources of Oespag, the Wilhelmsburg factory now produces more than 2,500 tons of elegant tableware each year for the European catering industry.

The tremendous resources at Wilhelmsburg's disposal have combined to create a miniature treasure. With its distinctive shape and unparalleled complexity of design, the "Swan" thimble will become an instant favorite among Thimble Collectors Club members.

Thimble
Collectors
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Brambles
WYESIDE, Wales

Not long ago, every country lad and lass would, come late August or September, be sent 'a-brambling' in their local fields. Together they would skip along, the air on their cheeks still warm from summer, but showing just the first nip of autumn. Breathlessly, they would make for the biggest patch. Cruel thorns pulling at their clothes, they would stretch for the finest blackberries, tasting their fill and at last dropping them in their baskets, now racing to see who could fill theirs to the brim. At last, exhausted and stained with purple juice, they would trudge home to rest, and Mother's work would start. Next day there would be blackberry and apple pie for everybody! And in the larder, a row of gleaming jars of bramble jelly and jam for the winter.

The Wyeside pottery nestles in a Welsh valley, beside the lovely river Wye. A husband and wife team runs this small concern, which has quickly built up an excellent reputation for high-quality bone china giftware. This attractive thimble, which displays both fruits and flowers of the bramble bush, is a charming example of their craft.

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Thimble Collectors Club

Hazelnut Thimble

WYESIDE POTTERY

Made in Wales

WYESIDE POTTERY - Wales

A shiny brown hazelnut almost hidden among the flowering branches of a hazelnut tree, is the simple yet charming decoration for this thimble from Wyeside Pottery.

Nestled along the banks of the river Wye in Mid Wales, Wyeside Pottery is a short distance from the craft center of Wales, where you can see everything from Welsh tweed being transformed from fleece to fabric, to woodcarvers producing intricate carvings. In Builth Wells, a husband and wife team of potters established a pottery to supply the local tourists with their unique range of gift items and dinnerware. Demand for these quaint items has grown to reach the United States, and Wyeside Pottery has agreed to supply us with a thimble manufactured exclusively for members of the Thimble Collectors Club.

This delightful thimble of pristine white china has been handcrafted with meticulous attention to detail, and accented with a band of 22kt gold. It is a delightful addition to your growing thimble collection.

Thimble Collectors Club

Violets

WYESIDE, Wales

The prettily drooping heads of the violet give a delightful impression of modesty, inspiring phrases such as 'shy violet' and 'shrinking violet'. With their distinctively marked petals, violets even seem to present us with tiny faces that give them an extra-special appeal as they cluster together at the front of our flower beds. This appeal catches the eye even when they are backed by bigger, bolder denizens of the garden. Violets have been a cottage garden favourite over the centuries, and even in these days when large garden centres offer us so many plants from which to choose, their pretty purple flowers can still be seen in borders everywhere.

As you might guess from its name, the Wyeside pottery is to be found beside the magnificent river Wye as it winds through Builth Wells in mid-Wales on its long journey down to the Severn Estuary. Wyeside is a young, family-run pottery which has swiftly built up a reputation for high-quality bone china giftware, and this beautifully decorated thimble demonstrates the fine craftsmanship and attention to detail that collectors have already come to expect in its range of products.

Thimble Collectors Club

The Wise Owl WYESIDE, Wales

The traditional wise owl of children's stories is the Barn Owl, shown here perched on a branch beneath a full harvest moon. Also known as the White Owl, he is instantly recognisable, being the only bird which is golden-buff above and white below. If you are lucky enough to see him in the daytime, he will regard you with his characteristic long, unblinking, considering gaze, reminiscent of a wise old man. On a dark night, a glimpse of him in flight, caught in the headlights of your car, reminds you of ghosts and witches. His eerie screech adds a further frisson of excitement!

The lovely river Wye rises in mid-Wales and winds through the historic towns of Rhyader, Builth Wells, Hay on Wye, Ross on Wye and Monmouth, before flowing out into the Severn Estuary near Chepstow. Near its source many artists and craftsmen have found the ideal spot for their studios and workshops, and may be found painting, spinning, weaving, carving, and, of course, potting. Wyeside pottery, located in Builth Wells, has quickly built up a reliable reputation for high-quality design and craftsmanship which is demonstrated by this beautiful thimble.

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