

# Interesting lettering and symbols on thimbles

## including thimbles of thimble clubs, collectors and societies etc

### as well as thimbles with cryptic pictorial messages

Are you fascinated by various lettering – not the hallmarks nor the maker's marks – but something more specific – on your thimbles? Sometimes it is lettering of a commemorative or an historic event, others just inscribed with some unusual words or symbols. None of the following thimbles fall into any previous *Learn More About...Thimbles* topics: not advertisements, slogans, scenic, placenames, patents, brands etc.

Some of the lettering is on an applied badge – probably done at the time of the commission?

It is as broad as thimble collecting but the occasion for the lettering or words or symbols is largely unknown: all eras (but largely ignoring contemporary thimbles), all countries and different materials are included, concentrating on the unusual. Who made some of the thimbles – for which occasion, tho some are self-explanatory – were they one-offs or made for commercial purposes? If they are of sterling, we usually know the maker.

I will remove the thimble if it becomes part of a new topic.

Quite a few have military connections, many from World War I. I have found a few examples of war **propaganda** thimbles and I have included them here, having no other place for them.

You will notice a preponderance of thimbles for various [thimble clubs](#) or [thimble collecting](#), [sewing](#) etc – they just need to be recorded.

I don't believe these are jeweller's inscriptions or monograms added after manufacture, in a cartouche.

I first encountered many of these thimbles in the *Thimble Society of London* catalogues. Most are rare and very few examples have been encountered: so well worth recording for posterity? I have combed Gay Ann Rogers, Edwin Holmes and John von Hoelle's thimble books for any clues. Those books date from the 1980s and our knowledge has moved on.

I would love for this topic to become a repository of oddities, mystery thimbles – the more cryptic the lettering, the better.

Some are included here just to record them as they are rare. They are made of sterling silver, gold, brass, steel, copper and aluminium, even a few china and plastic.

In 2022 I added a section at the end: thimbles from 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century that have pictorial or 'cryptic' messages around the band in the form of everyday objects. One day the meaning of these messages may become apparent, so recorded here for that time.

see also : *Who made these named thimbles* topic

The listing is in alphabetical order of the lettering.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Jan. Needle and thread ceremony Women's College Oxford



Birchcroft

## ЗІР ЕВРЕЙЧЕТА СОФИЯ



brass

red rubbed off band

Bulgarian: Na Sofiiskite Evrei - English: To the Hebrews of Sofia

with Star of David

Germany

1890s-1910s

## 4 - H CLOTHING 1949 and "4 - H CLOTHING 1983" and "4 - H CLOTHING, 1984"



Simons Philadelphia

award winners' thimbles

top L: sterling silver with gilt band

bottom R: unknown year

## 5 MEI 1945-1985



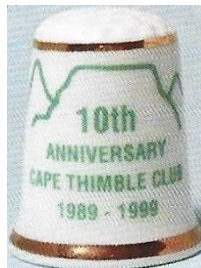
Pako Netherlands  
applied symbol of dove of peace on flag colours of Netherlands

## 10 1984-1994 S.A.T.C.



handpainted by Gili Davis  
porcelain

## 10th ANNIVERSARY CAPE THIMBLE CLUB 1989 - 1999



Frika Collection  
china  
background outline Table Mountain

## 10th Anniversary Thimble Guild 1970 - 1980



Georgia USA  
plastic



## 13th DTS CONFERENCE BOURNEMOUTH MAY 1 – 2 2013



Woodsetton Dudley UK  
lacquered copper  
knitting implements etched on verso

## 18.7.1975 IRJA MARTII 2009



Germany  
gold  
Finnish thimble collectors

## 20 JAHRE FINGERHUT MUSEUM 1982-2002



Thorvald Greif Germany  
925  
lower: enamelled 925



**21**



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver  
Seattle World Fair 1962

**40**



commemorating 40 years of South African Thimble Club 2024  
3D printed

**50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY MALTA GEORGE CROSS**



James Swann & Son Birmingham

**90**



Settmacher Austria  
copper with '90' applied  
commemorating the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, 1990

## 250 YEARS HANDEL'S MESSIAH 1743-1993



James Swann & Son Birmingham 1993  
maker's marks are lettered in the apex so had been missed

## 1788-1988



sterling silver  
Australia's bicentenary commemorative for Embroiderers Guild of NSW  
Guild's logo on verso

## 1889 PARIS



Alfred Féau France  
800 silver

## 1889 PARIS-EXPOSITION/1889 EXPOSITION



Alfred Féau France  
800 silver



Roger Lenain France  
800 silver

marked FRANCE with size #9 1970s reissue

Beryl Frank: In the 1970s Roz Belford, an astute retailer of thimbles ... discovered that Lenain had stored the original dies for their thimbles ... Some of these thimbles were reissued for export to the United States. ... The size is marked on the thimble ... If FRANCE is stamped on the thimble, it was made in the 1970s."

this reissue uses hyphens to separate the words – using the longer phrase





## 1900 PARIS



Alfred Féau France  
800 silver

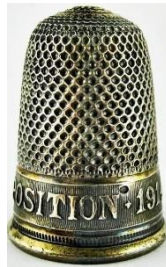


Roger Lenain France  
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## 1900 PARIS EXPOSITION



Alfred Féau France  
800 silver

## 1914



Charles Horner Chester 1913/1914

World War I thimble with a disc with an applied enamelled disc with a Red Cross symbol

## 1914 + Iron Cross



R: Gabler Germany  
800 silver

World War I thimble with a 1914 Iron Cross on the wide band  
crown and 'W' lettered above 1914

L: stone in apex – R: applied Iron Cross within indentations

## 1914 LYON EXPOSITION



Roger Lenain France  
800 silver



Roger Lenain France

marked FRANCE with size #9 1970s reissue

Beryl Frank "In the 1970s Roz Belford, an astute retailer of thimbles ... discovered that Lenain had carefully stored the original dies for their thimbles ... Some of these thimbles were reissued for export to the United States. ... The size is marked on the thimble ... If FRANCE is stamped on the thimble, it was made in the 1970s." The original apex is flatter than the original 1914 issue.

## 1914-1915 ARANYAT VASÉRT



Settmacher Austria  
aluminium

Hungarian lettering for 'Jewellery for iron'  
which was the WW1 appeal for money for munitions from the populace  
painted "stones" are original on blue band version –green one was made with no coloured stones  
(see Groiss on Settmacher - p59)

## 1914 + 1915 + 1916



probably Gabler Germany  
iron or steel

World War I thimble but what significance are the three dates  
do the crosses – or are they Red Cross signs - have significance

## 1914 16

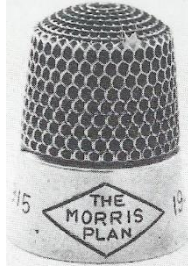


Roger Lenain (?) France  
gilt sterling silver

Isbister names this thimble as "Les filles filant" (Girls spinning)  
unusual as there are two dates lettered within the pictorial



## 1915 THE MORRIS PLAN 1940



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver  
lettering within diamond-shape with dates alongside  
1940s

## 1915 - 1919



tho I can't see the maker's marks this appears to be made by Henry Griffith & Sons  
sterling silver  
I feel these dates were placed at time of manufacture

## 1995 WIEDERAUFBAU FRAUENKIRCHE DRESDEN



Thorvald Greif Germany  
925

commemorating the reconstruction of the Dresden Frauenkirche with applied rebuilt church, 1995  
copper attachment on the side represents the ruins of the church 1945, which is placed next to images of  
bombed ruins – '13.-14.2.45' is lettered vertically on thimble along one side of copper

## 2000 NEW YEAR NEUJAHR



Settmacher Austria  
aluminium  
Settmacher closed in Vienna in 2005

## 2004-2014 Schiller's 200 Jahre Wilh. Tell



Julius Wengert Pzorzheim Germany  
sterling silver  
limited to **100**

## (A Gentleman in Khaki)



Henry Griffith & Sons Ltd Birmingham 1899  
created during the Boer War being waged between Britain and South Africa

## A MEMORIAL OF QUEEN CAROLINE OB<sup>T</sup> AUG<sup>T</sup> 7 1821 AG<sup>D</sup> 53



sterling silver  
wide band with royal symbols (thistle and clover) on the verso  
it is interesting that this thimble mentions 'obituary' (OB<sup>T</sup>)  
she was Queen Caroline of Brunswick, wife of George IV

## A present from Gay Ann Rogers "AMERICAN SILVER THIMBLES"



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver  
A gift from GAR to those who lent thimbles  
1989



## A STITCH FOR THE RED WHITE & BLUE



G W Hatton & Co Chester 1914

enamelled bands in the order of the lettering - red at the top of the band  
band lettering is not coloured



G W Hatton Chester 1914

also with a Chester 1918 assay mark  
blue lettering with an added full stop  
enamelled bands



G W Hatton & Co Chester 1914

enamelled bands



sterling silver with enamelled bands  
similar to above but lettering is not coloured  
and not hallmarked



similar thimbles with no lettering were produced to commemorate coronation of  
Edward VIII, which never took place Chester 1936

L: the enamelling is worn

C: Charles Horner Chester 1936

b&w photo



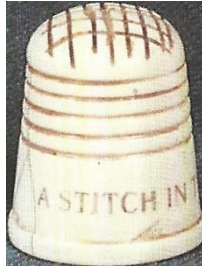
order of the colour of the bands is reversed with the blue at the top of the band  
R: Charles Horner Chester 1936



applied worn coat-of-arms

### A stitch in time

Other thimbles with this lettering can be found in several other topics



synthetic material  
'A stitch in time'  
TTG August 1987



James Swann & Sons Birmingham 1990

### A stitch in time saves nine

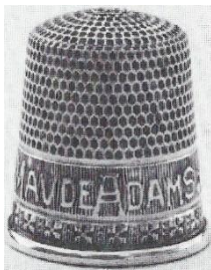


James (Hagop) Demirjian California  
sterling silver



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver  
1900s

## A THIMBLE FROM MAUDE ADAMS



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver  
c.1906

commissioned by Adams (1872-1953) to commemorate her starring role in 'Peter Pan' in New York, where Wendy gives Peter Pan a thimble as a kiss

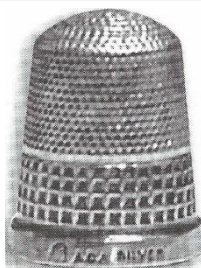
## A.C. ILLUM KYINDERNES BYGNING



Settmacher Austria  
tombac

Illum (1863-1938 ) was a Danish businessman and store owner. His wife raised money for the Women's Society by selling thimbles thru the family business  
shows Women's Building, Copenhagen  
1930s

## A.C.A SILVER



the extra mark seems to be a size mark

## A MERRY X-MAS



sterling silver with shadow gothic lettering on textured ground  
unknown USA maker whose mark is a small crown  
1900s

H Muhr's Sons produced a similar thimble

## ADAM RIESE 1x1 RECHNEN



Thorvald Greif Germany

925

commemorating the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 1500 master calculator and accountant, 2000  
blue glass apex and open work with Roman numerals of dates, as part of the design

## Africa Convention Feb 1990



Moroak

china

limited to **200**

## AJOS



James Swann Birmingham 1917/1918/1922

lettering is always contained in this scrolled lozenge  
mark has appeared on several James Swann thimbles with different patterns

## AMERICAN Quilter's Society



Simons Philadelphia

sterling silver

applied ASQ logo

1990s



## AMERICAN RED CROSS HUMANITY NEUTRALITY



aluminium with a red-painted band – including the Red Cross symbol

I understand these thimbles were made during WWII

volunteers and members of the Red Cross prepared sewing kits, which were sent to the military in the USA and overseas

surplus supplies were used in one instance post-war by a schoolteacher to teach her first- grade students to add and subtract (eBay March 2019)

## ANG



ANG lettered on the wide bands  
for American Needlepoint Guild

sterling silver (L) – plastic (R) Christmas in July 1984

see also: Needle Artists by the Sea

## AOPA



Ketcham & McDougall New York

sterling silver

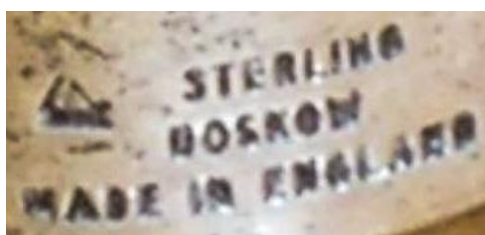
enameled badge has 'wings'

AOPA lettered across the centre – for Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association

## ARB ... and others



monograms: AMY - CAF - DAS - JAW - JJB - JSH - KDK - LRL - MEK - MGG - MOM with hearts in centres of Ms



Leonore Doskow New York  
sterling silver

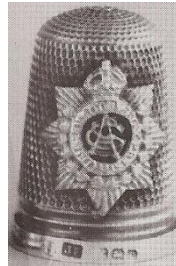
chunky distinctive applied block lettering on the bands  
marked 'Sterling Doskow Made in England' with a maker's mark on the verso  
the mark is an L with a D superimposed on it, in a triangle  
made in England by James Swann & Son, they bear the mark of Leonore Doskow  
who worked out of Montrose NY USA - she designed and finished the thimbles





this Daskow creation with initials of **BCH**, lettered in cursive – is probably just a monogram  
 thimble forms part of sewing kit, and all have a smooth surface – tape measure, kit and thimble all bear  
 the same monogram + .925

### ASC



James Fenton Birmingham 1914  
 for Army Service Corp.  
 used for supplying the army with all supplies  
 applied badge has the ASC monogram in the centre

### Association of the Inner Wheel Club of Great Britain and Ireland



James Swann & Son Birmingham  
 for Rotary, with their logo – R applied logo  
 1983

### Asylum 1808



interesting, dated Georgian thimble has cursive lettering  
 steel-topped sterling silver



## BATS 1978-1998



Steve Johnson

corozo nut

commemorating 20 years of Bay Area Thimble Society

bat and lettering in gold

limited to **30**

## BATTLE OF PLATTSBURGH SEPT 1814 LAKE CHAMPLAIN



Ketcham & McDougall New York

sterling silver

PAT'D

commemorating the centenary of the battle

## Bay Area Thimble Society 25 Years 1978-2003



Thorvald Greif Germany

925

applied bat and thimble

limited to **35**

## Bertus van Dikkenberg 1998



Bertus is a Dutch collector and had this thimble created

engraver from Schoonhoven

thimble at R is a cover for thimble at L which then forms one thimble

## C. BENZ 1844-1929



Thorvald Greif Germany

925

commemorating 80 years of Cornelius Benz 2009

## CC 1492-1992



Thorvald Greif Germany

925

commemorating 500 years of Christopher Columbus

## CANADA



Birks

sterling silver

applied unknown military insignia  
for World War I

## CAPE THIMBLE COLLECTORS CLUB



Charmaine Hoy Cape Town

handpainted resin

1992



## CAROLINE QUEEN OF (rose thistle shamrock pictorials)



sterling silver  
c.1820

## Cats 1984-2009



Tom Edwards Washington  
sterling silver  
to commemorate 25 years of Capitol Thimble Society  
gilt star on apex

## CENTURY OF PROGRESS CHICAGO 1934



brass  
World's Fair commemorative



## CHARLES ILES BEZOEK 1987



Iles & Gomms Birmingham  
quilting thimble with concave apex

thimble made for Vingerhoed's – a Dutch Thimble Group – outing to the Charles Iles factory

## CHICAGO 1978



Simons Philadelphia  
pewter

created for attendees of Thimble Collectors International (TCI) convention

## (clasped hands)



sterling silver – pre 1880s  
clasped hands – with pansy, carnation and oak leaves

## CLEAN HANDS FOR NEEDLEWORK



aluminium  
so well used even the 'glass' top has popped out  
neither a slogan nor an advertising thimble

## CLEVELAND 1940 K.I.O.



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver

K.I.O stands for Kentucky Indiana Ohio  
thimble commemorates the annual bowling tournament for Union Printers  
the tournament was held in Ohio in 1940  
(my thanks to Thimblestuff for this research)

## CORKY 1-29-63



Leonore Doskow New York  
sterling silver

made in England by James Swann & Son, they bear the mark of Leonore Doskow  
enamel portrait in set-in circular disc of dog

## "CORONET"



brass

L: "Coronet" England

R: "Coronet" with 'Trade Mark' with a crown or coronet in between on verso

(crown) **M. 1939**



Charles Iles Birmingham  
tailor's brass-lined steel

marked for the Air Ministry as official property of the Royal Air Force,  
commonly found in their Maintenance Units where they were used in the repair of parachutes, barrage  
balloons etc and also issued with airman's hussifs (Eileen Saunders 1991)

WD would be for the army ie War Department

RN would be for the Royal Navy

## CYBER



Tom Edwards Washington  
sterling silver

commissioned by Cyber Thimble Group for collectors around the world

## DAIRYLAND THIMBLERS



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver

made for TCI Convention in Milwaukee WI 2024

## De Vingerhoed



china

address of Dutch thimble club

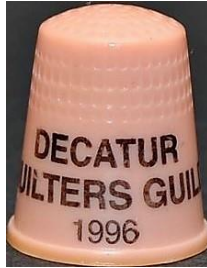


## De Vingerhoed 5 jaar 1982-1987



Hooijkaas (HH) Schoonhoven  
Kay Sullivan's Dutch thimble catalogue

## DECATUR QUILTERS GUILD 1996



Georgia USA  
plastic

## DEDALERAS 2012 ARGENTINAS



resin  
Argentina's flag colours  
Argentinian Thimblers

plastic **KΔ** (Delta Kappa)



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver  
fraternity thimble  
see also: ΠβΦ (Pi beta Phi)

## DORCAS THIMBLERS ACTS 9



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver  
club thimble for Florida's Dorcas Thimblers  
the coral set into the map shows Sarasota, for foundation members

## DTS 1985 1995



John Herbertson London 1995  
club thimble for Dorset Thimble Society  
limited to **14**

## E.S.A - LONDON



brass  
Educational Supplies Association, London  
probably made by Charles Iles of Birmingham  
were they issued to schools?

## ELECTION



Arthur Witting Birmingham 1927/1928/1929/1930/1931/1932  
probably made by Henry Griffith & Sons as the sunburst patterning is peculiar to HG&S  
Edwin Holmes in his *Thimble Notes and Queries* of winter 1989 ... "In Britain the term is unthinkable (in the political sense). In the sense of 'choice' it is evidently a brand name ... the dates are not all for election years which at the time were in 1931."

## ELIXABETH HILSON HELP HOPEFUL SOROFUL HARTES



silver

16th century personalised thimble

apex missing

housed in the British Museum

unusual spelling of her first name

## Elsa Williams School of Needle Arts



Simons Philadelphia

sterling silver

these thimbles were given to students who completed her course – emeralds around the band

Elsa Williams' school was in West Townsend MASS – it closed in early 1980s

## EMBROIDERERS' GUILD 1901-1981



A.F. Pinxt

handpainted commemorative china 75 years

limited to **100**



## Embroiderers' Guild of America



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver

- 1: the US Guild was established as a branch of the London Guild between 1958-1970
- 2: larger applied logo which is the Embroiderers Guild of America's first logo as an independent group - applied logo of the Guild which has EGA with a thimble, sewing needle and threads
- 3: most recent EGA logo on band
- 4: unknown maker with EGA logo on apex

## EMBROIDERERS' GUILD OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Pat Hagan South Australia  
sterling silver

to commemorate the 200th anniversary of founding of South Australia 1986  
Hagan's design is of a raised Sturt Desert Pea, which is South Australia's floral emblem  
limited to **100**

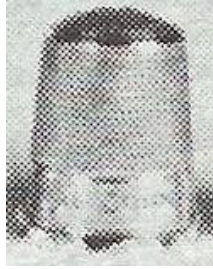
## EMBROIDERERS' GUILD QLD



Louis Hermann Brisbane  
sterling silver

to commemorate 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of founding of the Guild in 1968  
Hermann's design is of an all over Cooktown Orchid, which is Queensland's floral emblem  
1993

## ESSEX GIRL GUIDES



I am fascinated by the supposed hallmark for this thimble – 1949  
was this produced as a fundraiser?

## ESTC 1984



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver  
club thimble for Empire State Thimble Club

## 'Exposition Paris 1937'



Settmacher Austria  
brass - silverplate  
L: 'Austria' stamped in indentation  
R: blue apex

## FECMU



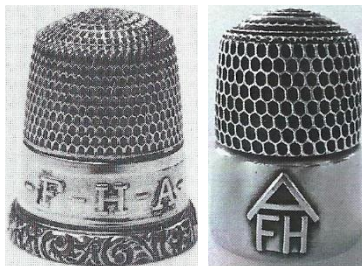
sterling silver  
applied badge is for the qualities of  
**F**aith **E**ndurance **C**ourage **M**odesty **U**nselfishness  
of the Royal Neighbors of America

## FEDERATION CENTENARY 1901 to 2001



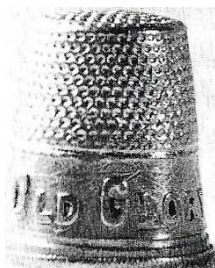
Curtis Hine North Balwyn Melbourne  
sterling silver  
handmade  
limited to **10**

## F-H-A



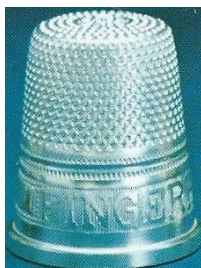
Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver  
for Future Homemakers of America  
L: 1940s  
R: applied logo Ray Nimmo 21<sup>st</sup> C

## FIGHT FOR OLD GLORY



aluminium

## FINGERHUTMUSEUM



Helmut Greif Germany  
sterling silver  
Thimble Museum in Creglingen



## FINGERHUTMUSEUM 10 JAHRE 1992



Thorvald Greif Germany  
925 – R: 14ct gold  
Thimble Museum in Creglingen

## FINGERHUTMUSEUM CREGLINGEN 25 2007



Thorvald Greif Germany  
925  
depicting Tilman Riemenschneider, carver of Creglingen church alter 16<sup>th</sup> century

(fleur de lis)



Lotthammer-Eber (six petalled mark) Pforzheim Germany  
made for the Italian market  
900 silver

R: Lotthammer-Eber mark has been over stamped with Florence's Piliti & Schreyer mark

## FOR LIBERTY



Ketcham & McDougall New York  
sterling silver  
1917

**FOR**



## VALOUR



copper with applied Military Cross  
1930s

## FREUNDE DES FINGERHUTS 1993



Thorvald Greif Germany  
925

design has ten thimble shapes in relief both upright and upside down each with a date – ranging from 1983 and 1992  
commemorating ten years of Thimble Friends  
limited to **150**



there are also several single letters between the thimbles = ZEHN JAHRE meaning ten years



## FRIEDEN IN DEN NIEDERLANDE 50 JAHRE FREI!



Thorvald Greif Germany  
925

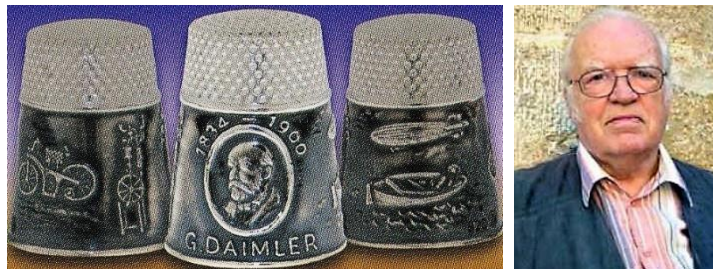
## FRIENDS WAR RELIEF SERVICE



Ketcham & McDougall New York  
also made by Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver

'Friends' would have applied to Quakers who were active in war zones as conscientious objectors  
first set up at the start of Franco-Prussian war and revived at start of WW1  
applied enamelled disc  
1900s

## G. DAIMLER 1834-1900



Thorvald Greif Germany  
925

175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Gottlieb Daimler 2009

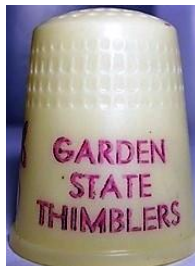
## G. King – G. K ... – K ...



sterling silver  
Georgian trio

three similar thimbles with intriguing lettering  
two of the thimbles have their lettering upside down to face the sewer when sewing

## GARDEN STATE THIMBLERS



Georgia USA  
plastic



## GFS



Charles Horner Chester 1920  
applied badge  
Girls' Friendly Society

## GOLDSCHMIED HAUS HANAU 1979



Germany

## GOTT MIT UNS 1914



Germany

L: brass – C: silver with stone in place of damaged silver apex  
propaganda thimble: God with us

## GOTT STRAFE ENGLAND



Settmacher Austria  
aluminium

propaganda thimble: God punish England  
green, red and black bands were available

## GOTT STRAFE ITALIEN



Settmacher Austria  
aluminium  
b&w photo

## GRAND NATIONAL JUBILEE

no photo

metal  
for King George III  
heads of the King and Queen

## GREAT BRITAIN 50 KM FRANCE MAI 1994 26000DM



Thorvald Greif Germany  
enamelled 925  
commemorating opening of the Chunnel

## GREGORITA



Charles Iles Birmingham  
brass tailor's - with sprigs before and after lettering  
see also: Jesuesito, Josefina, Regina

## GS



Ketcham & McDougall New York  
sterling silver  
for Girl Scouts  
applied green enamelled badge  
1880s

## GUERNSEY



James Swann & Son Birmingham  
Guernsey lettered diagonally on applied map of Guernsey

## HANS SACHS 5. NOV. 1494-1994 500



Thorvald Greif Germany  
brass  
commemorating 500 year anniversary of this German poet and playwright

## HAPPY CHILD UNHAPPY CHILD



pre-1884 sterling silver  
lettering around rim with accompanying applied scenes around the band



## HEIL UND SIEG



Settmacher Austria  
aluminium  
propaganda thimble: Health and victory

## "HER MAJESTY" THIMBLE



Charles Iles Birmingham  
This thimble had long been associated with Queen Victoria. This is not so  
There were many commemorative thimbles made for the 1897 Jubilee  
It may be an advertising thimble but what is it advertising?  
Additional lettering has "ENGLAND" below the larger lettering

## HERMÉS



France  
sterling silver, with boar's head mark  
is this (upside-down) lettering an advertising thimble – or the maker – or a prize for a designer working for the fashion label?

## HEROES OF THE CRIMEA



Charles Iles Birmingham  
brass

## HIGHGROVE



James Swann & Son Birmingham

Highgrove House in Gloucestershire, home of King Charles III  
presumably made as a souvenir for the when he was Prince of Wales  
smooth apex

## HONOUR THE BRAVE



Charles Iles Birmingham  
brass

## Houston Thimble Group "Chartered March 8 1977"



Georgia USA  
plastic

## H.W.SILVO / SILVO



sterling silver

all over blackberry patterning

is this lettering an advertising thimble – or the maker's mark?  
with appearance of the thimble at L, maybe H.W is the maker

## ICH KENNE KEINE PARTEIEN MEHR NUR DEUTSCHE 4-8-1914



Germany  
brass

translated: I just don't know any parties any more  
quote by Kaiser Bill at the outbreak of World War I

## IHN



Ketcham & McDougall New York  
aluminium  
applied swastika symbols

## IHS



Swann Thimbles Birmingham 1992  
made for The Thimble Guild  
communion chalice with IHS in roundel above  
IHS = first three letters in Greek for 'Jesus'  
grapes to L represent wine – corn represents bread  
limited to **250**

## ILES PATENT



brass  
Charles Iles Birmingham  
unusual, beaded rim – vitreous lining



## ILES TAILOR



silverplated

as this isn't open-ended like other tailor's thimbles, this name is a mystery

## ILMO 1994



Tommie Jane Lane Nebraska

sterling silver

club thimble for ILMO Thimblers (Illinois-Missouri)

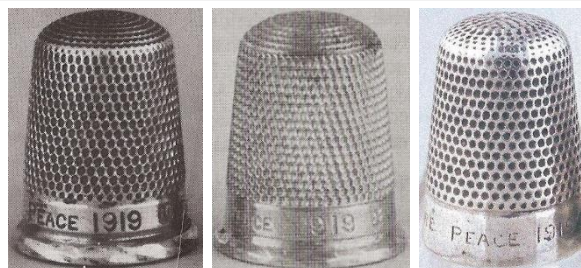
## (Ionian Islands)



sterling silver

made for the British Exhibition 1851  
with seven symbols around the band

## INFANT WELFARE PEACE 1919



James Fenton Birmingham 1918

lettering on raised narrow band  
three slightly differently-shaped thimbles

## JESUESITO

no photo

brass

double row of scrolls before and after lettering

see also: Gregorita, Josefina, Regina

**"Join the THIMBLE EXCHANGE CIRCLE" "Thimbles Galore from THE THIMBLE LADY 1984"**



plastic

Georgia, USA

## JOSEFINA

no photo

brass

double row of scrolls before and after lettering

see also: Gregorita, Jesuesito, Regina

## JUSTICE



James Swann & Son Birmingham 1948

## KANNO PATCHWORK SCHOOL 1999



china  
commemorating 20 years

## KING AND CONSTITUTION

no photo

metal  
for King George III  
royal cypher (GIIIR) with crown above  
celebrating the King's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary 1809

## КАУЪ КОЛЛЕКУЦИОНЕРОЪ НАПЕРСМКОВ 2009 (Thimble Collectors Club)



Moscow Thimble Club  
porcelain

## Lady Slipper Thimblers of Minnesota *founded 1982*



Georgia USA  
plastic



## LEAVITT



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver  
band lettering of this name is vertical to the rim

## LEMBRANCA



brass  
memento - Portuguese

## (Lincoln Imp) and **The Lincoln Imp**



sterling silver – unknown maker 1892  
pewter

James Ward Usher, a Lincoln jeweller and silversmith, registered the Lincoln Imp, when he obtained the sole rights to use the Lincoln Imp in 1892

it was modelled on a stone imp high on the walls of Lincoln Cathedral

this is a RARE thimble

top R: Ray Nimmo Birmingham 2015

lower: pewter where the imp can be moved up and down, showing inner mechanism

## L.C.C.



Charles Iles Birmingham  
brass  
for London County Council  
and probably issued to schools?  
interesting star mark on apex – blue vitreous lining

## LONG LIVE KING W<sup>M</sup>. IV



L: brass – R: sterling Z  
William IV reigned 1830-1837

## LONG LIVE Q<sup>N</sup>. ADELAIDE



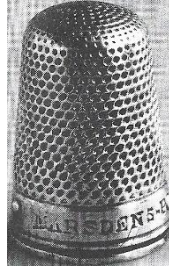
brass  
Adelaide married William IV in 1818. They ascended to the throne in 1830

## LOT.No A



brass with Birmingham anchor mark  
sturdy tailor's thimble with strong indentations

## MARSDENS PATENT



silver

first thimble patent granted on 12 May 1850 - to Charles Marsden (#13341)  
ventilated thimble

## MARTHA



Thorvald Greif Germany

925

commissioned by Martha Arufat USA 1999

## MARTIN & SON



Charles Iles Birmingham

brass-lined steel

is this an advertising thimble?

World War I

## MARTIN LUTHER 15.10.n.1487-15.2.1543



Thorvald Greif Germany

925

five dated panels, 1517 1521 1546 1555, commemorating life of Luther 1996



## MATT



probably made by Henry Griffith & Sons (no maker's marks) - the size marks are consistent with Griffith's  
 thimble sizing  
 steel-cored sterling silver  
 does MATT have any meaning?  
 these thimbles have the same construction as Dorcas thimbles (see inner view)  
 first recorded by Di Pelham Burn (1993)

## Medical Corps for RAF Doctors



James Fenton Birmingham 1938  
 applied badge has medical symbol with a crown at the top as part of the design

## MOZART



Thorvald Greif Germany  
 925  
 commemorating 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth 2006

## NAS NEEDLE ARTISTS by the SEA



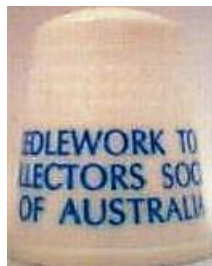
James (Hagop) Demirjian California  
.925 sterling silver  
group is a chapter of American Needlepoint Guild Inc (ANG)

## NDR



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver  
for Nancy Reagan with White House

## NEEDLEWORK TOOL COLLECTORS SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA



Georgia USA  
plastic

## NEQG



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver



## NFTC 1986-2016



Tom Edwards Washington  
sterling silver

commemorating 30 years of Nimble Fingers Thimble Club Seattle  
the thimble figure on the dropped rim is known by members as Nimby  
limited to **50**

## NFTC 2015 OHIO



Tom Edwards Washington  
sterling silver

commemorating the Mini Convention by Nimble Fingers Thimble Club Coeur d'Alene  
moose and eagle

## NIMBLE FINGERS SPOKANE 1988



Joe Turner Jewelry Works Studio Coeur d'Alene  
sterling silver  
club thimble for Nimble Fingers Thimble Club

## NOBODY'S PREFECT



Ray Nimmo  
sterling silver (L) nickel (R)  
2012/2013 (not assayed)

anyone who owns one of Ray's 21<sup>st</sup> C thimbles, will know of his sometimes quirky, fun lettering



## N'OUBLIONS JAMAIS 1914



Lenain France

800 silver

some examples have an ornate rim



Lenain France

800 silver

marked FRANCE with size #9 1975 reissue

Beryl Frank "In the 1970s Roz Belford, an astute retailer of thimbles ... discovered that Lenain had carefully stored the original dies for their thimbles ... Some of these thimbles were reissued for export to the United States. ... The size is marked on the thimble ... If FRANCE is stamped on the thimble, it was made in the 1970s."

The reissue wording ends with an exclamation mark.

## NTC



Simons Philadelphia

sterling silver

for National Thimbles Collectors

in 1955 Sara Anne Weisbrot formed this group in the USA  
it was the first organised thimble group anywhere in the world

## NTCSA CONFERENCE 1994 MELBOURNE



Gems of Tasmania

china

## NUR DEUTSCHE KEINE PARTEIEN 4.AUG.1914



Germany  
brass

translated: I just don't know any parties any more  
quote by Kaiser Bill on the outbreak of World War I

## OHIO THIMBLE SEEKERS 10th ANNIVERSARY 1982



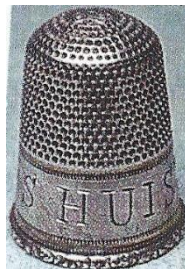
Georgia USA  
plastic

## OHIO VALLEY THIMBLERS



Georgia USA  
plastic

## ONS HUIS



Gabler Germany  
lettered in Dutch meaning Our House  
1900s

## OTS 1982-2007



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver  
Ohio Thimble Seekers

## PATENT ENAMEL



Charles Iles Birmingham  
brass-lined steel  
is this an advertising thimble?  
maybe any enamelling has worn off?  
World War I  
other examples exist in brass

## PATTY NEWMAN USA



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver  
personalised  
with heart and four-leaf clover  
limited to **100**  
member of TCI



## (Peace)



Henry Griffith & Sons Birmingham 1919

gilt-lined

applied peace emblem with a crown

according to Dorothy Friend (*TCI Bulletin* January 1988) this is the brass insignia for the Royal Artillery

## PEPPER



Horace Woodward & Co Birmingham 1888

made in the shape to use as a pepper shaker, with specific holes in apex  
it has a diamond-shaped registration mark

## PETER PAN REGD



L: Henry Fidkin Birmingham 1918 – R: CU Birmingham 1918

Fidkin would have made the thimbles for the sponsor Charles Usher of Leicester

it is still a mystery what this lettering is for – it could be promotional but it isn't advertising a specific product

## ΠΒΦ (Pi beta Phi)



Goldstein Stern & Co New York

panelled sterling silver

sorority thimble

see also: ΚΔ (Delta Kappa)

## PIONEER WOMAN



Ketcham & McDougall New York  
sterling silver  
applied memorial

## PRINS CLAUS 6.9.1926+6.10.2002



Thorvald Greif Germany  
enamelled 925 in colours of Dutch and German flags

## PRINSES CATHARINA-AMALIA HK 017.12.2003



Thorvald Greif Germany  
enamelled 925  
scalloped rim

## PRISCILLA NUTMEGGERS



sterling silver  
club thimble of this group of thimble collectors

## RAF



Felix Morel Bath

blue enamelled brass with sterling silver RAF wings attached

## REAL GERMAN SILVER



Charles Iles Birmingham

none of Iles thimbles were made of silver – these are nickel silver

## (Red Cross)



Simons Philadelphia

sterling silver

applied enamelled cross

## REGINA



Charles Iles Birmingham

brass tailor's - with sprigs before and after lettering  
see also: Gregorita, Josefina



## RH



Charles Horner Chester 1919

what a puzzle this lettering is! RH with numerals –  
(ignore the RH graphic above of 1919 – a typo – should read 1918)

lower: a date '1918' + '60' – on a wider band

there is then the intertwined WS or SW capped by more numerals on the verso  
that isn't meant as a monogram?

I recently encountered a query from a German member in a 1986 *TCI Bulletin*, asking about this thimble –  
"It seems that these marks were pressed during the production of the thimble, not later ... Perhaps it is  
for a firm's name or an anniversary date?"

no-one ever attempted an answer

and now - late in 2020 – a thimble discovery with almost identical markings –  
by James Fenton

there has been a suggestion that this is an anniversary date

the date could be 19 January (numerals from the monogram) and the date is 60 years in 1918 (so 1858)  
they could have been privately engraved using plain thimbles ...



James Fenton Birmingham 1918



## ROBERT F KENNEDY WE MOURN OUR LOSS 1925-1968



USA  
plastic

## ROYAL ENGINEERS



James Fenton Birmingham 1939  
George V cypher (the monarch is their Commander-in-Chief)  
RE's motto: Honi soit qui mal y pense

## ROYAL SCHOOL OF NEEDLEWORK



Stephen Frost Warwick Models  
pewter  
with a pair of applied strawberries

## RSN



Clive & Clarissa Cooke Ludlow  
sterling silver  
for Royal School of Needlework  
logo has a sewing needle thru the lettering  
1980s

## S.A.T.C. CONVENTION 1993



handpainted by Gili Davis  
porcelain

## SAND IN YOUR SHOES OCEAN CITY MD TOW MEETING APRIL 6 2013



Woodsetton Dudley  
enamelled copper  
TOW = Thimbles on Wheels

## SATC 24<sup>th</sup> February 1996



Frika Collection  
fine bone china  
South African Thimble Club  
limited to **100**

## SATC 1993



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver  
for South African Thimble Club  
applied club logo in shape of a thimble  
'1993' engraved on verso  
limited to **50**



## SATC CONVENTION 1993



Gili Davis South Africa

Handpainted porcelain

R: lettered SATC 1993

L: limited to **30** – R: limited to **30** (given to international delegates)  
thimbles are numbered

## SATC Turn of the Century Convention 6 March 1999



Frika Collection

bone china

South African Thimble Club

limited to **100**

## SATCC 40 YEARS 2024



bone china

South African Thimble Club

## SCHMUCKMUSEUM PFORZHEIM 1978



Germany

this museum is dedicated to history of jewellery

## SCHOOLHOUSE QUILTERS KENMORE



Louis Hermann Brisbane  
sterling silver

all round design has a quilt and a schoolhouse on an indented ground – patterning continues over the apex

## SCHWARZ-GELBES KREUZ 1914



aluminium

promoting an Austrian aid organisation for war invalids and their families, which started on 31 August 1914

notice the depiction of the medal pressed into the thimble  
available with black or yellow band

## SOUTH AFRICAN THIMBLE DAY 27 JUNE 1987



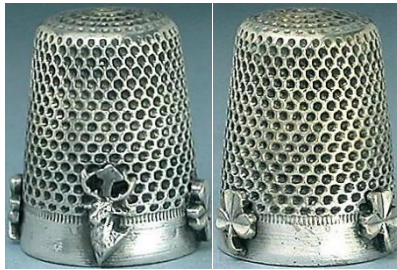
china

## SOUVENIR ST LOUIS EXPOSITION 1904



Charles Iles Birmingham  
nickel silver

(St Hubert)



French sterling silver  
stag with three shamrocks affixed on band

## St Peter's Band of Hope. July 1918



MAA Birmingham 1917

## STADTISCHES MUSEUM SCHWÄBISCH GMÜND 1979



Germany

## STER<sup>G</sup> SILVER



## STIRLING SILVER



mid-Victorian sterling silver with steel apex  
interesting spelling

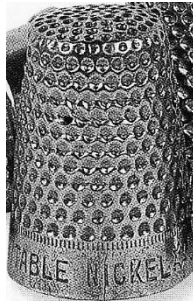


(swastika)



Waite Thresher USA  
sterling silver with applied swastika L: child's size  
1890s

## TABLE NICKEL



## TAYLOR'S NEW YORK 1939 WORLD'S FAIR



Taylor's Pork Roll was first available at the 1939 World's Fair  
advertising aluminium with blue band

## TC 1967 1776-1976



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver

1967 is the date celebrating the start of Ruth Mann's thimble group which became a round-robin thimble group  
1776-1976 dates on verso commemorate the American bicentenary

## TCI 2000



Thorvald Greif Germany  
925

commemorating the millennium with darkened band including an applied thimble with  
'New Year 2000' lettered within – applied bunch of flowers  
apex has 'TCI' with thimble

## TEG



James Swann & Son Birmingham  
lettering on dark blue enameled band  
for The Embroiderers Guild (UK)

## THE EMBROIDERERS GUILD 1960 1990



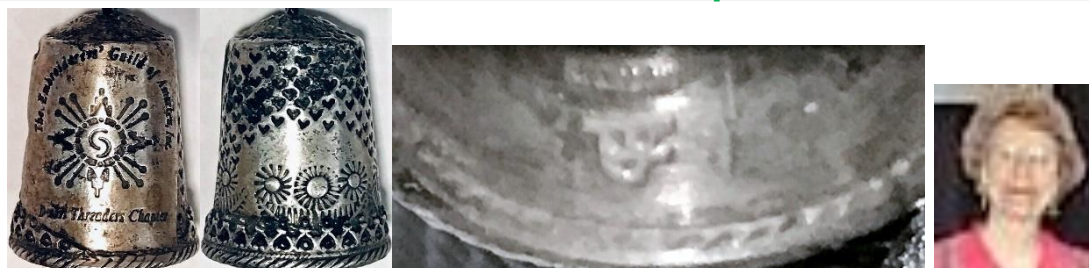
Peter Gertler Melbourne

sterling silver/gold dipped sterling silver

The Embroiderers Guild of **Victoria** commissioned Gertler to create a design for 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary  
applied pair of scissors

limited to **100** of which **30** were the gold edition

## The Embroiderers' Guild of America Inc Desert Threaders Chapter



Tommie Jane Lane Nebraska  
sterling silver  
hearts design on verso

## "THE GIRLS' CLUB"



Webster USA

sterling silver

lettering includes a swastika

thimble would have been made before World War II

two different forms of lettering

## THE INNER WHEEL



James Swann & Son Birmingham

enamelled sterling silver

The Inner Wheel is Rotary Services Club

## THE SEATTLE THIMBLE SOCIETY



Tom Edwards Washington

sterling silver

## THE THIMBLE SOCIETY OF LONDON



Anne Young UK

handpainted boxwood

1983



## THIMBLE COLLECTOR



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver

Fern Hill's personalised thimble to give to friends – designed by her brother-in-law  
applied gold thimble with red enamelled rose

## THIMBLE COLLECTORS CLUB 85 R.S.A.



Easy Promotions Johannesburg  
china  
club thimble

## THIMBLE COLLECTORS CLUB SOUTH AFRICA We Love Thimbles



Georgia USA  
plastic

## THIMBLE COLLECTORS GUILD



synthetic material

TCG is name of the Scottish thimble sales catalogue (1983-2018)

## THIMBLE COLLECTORS THE THIMBLE GUILD EST. 1970



Georgia USA  
plastic

## Thimble Collectors@ONElist.com EST. 1998



James Swann & Son Birmingham 2000  
commissioned by Cyber Thimble Group for collectors around the world

## THIMBLE GUILD 1970 1980



Simons Philadelphia  
sterling silver  
commemorating tenth anniversary of thimble group started by Evelyn Eubanks in 1970  
1970 date is lettered on rim of an inscribed thimble image

## THIMBLEFULL OF SAND AND SURFING TOO! TOW Carlsbad, CA October 21, 2023



enamelled disc on silver metal  
TOW is Thimbles on Wheels

## THIMBLESELECT



handpainted by Gili Davis South Africa  
porcelain  
mail order thimble business

## THIMBLESELECT 1987-2002



Gems of Tasmania  
china  
mail order thimble business  
limited to **130**

## THIMBLETTER 20th 1973-1993



Daniel Riccio USA  
bronze

## THREE RIVERS THIMBLERS Pittsburgh, PA



Georgia USA  
plastic



## TO JEAN FROM THE LANTERN THEATRE



James Swann & Son Birmingham 1983  
who is Jean?  
Lantern Theatre is in Sheffield in England

## TO MRS T.R.GILLIES DEVOTED SERVICES 1914-1918



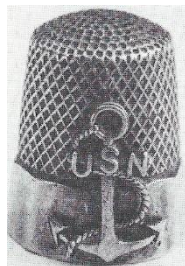
9ct gold  
Gordon Highlanders emblem on the verso  
b&w photo

## U · S · 1



Simons Philadelphia  
14ct gold  
doesn't look like a cartouche

## U S N



Simons Philadelphia  
10-panelled sterling silver  
applied anchor with USN  
1940s

## VERMONT 1981 STITCH IN TIMERS



James (Hagop) Demirjian California  
925 sterling silver

## VICTORIA G.G, 1230



Gabler Germany  
aluminium  
reeded rim  
what intriguing wording  
lettering almost looks like a London phone number from 1920s

## VROUWENKIESRECHT



brass  
reeded rim  
Dutch: Women's suffrage

## WAR CHEST FUND



Charles Iles Birmingham  
Ivory

During the 1914-1918 war 13,000 white ivory thimbles were donated by Mrs Ninian Thomson to the War Chest Thimble Fund in New South Wales to raise funds for comforts for the Australian men fighting in Europe during World War I

## WEMBLEY 1924



Henry Griffith & Sons Birmingham 1924

the lion was the symbol of the 1924 British Empire Exhibition  
as shown on the commemorative postage stamps  
thimble box lettered 'Present from Wembley' with identical lion as on thimble



different thimbles from Charles Iles

nickel-plated and brass versions lettered BRITISH EMPIRE EXHIBITION

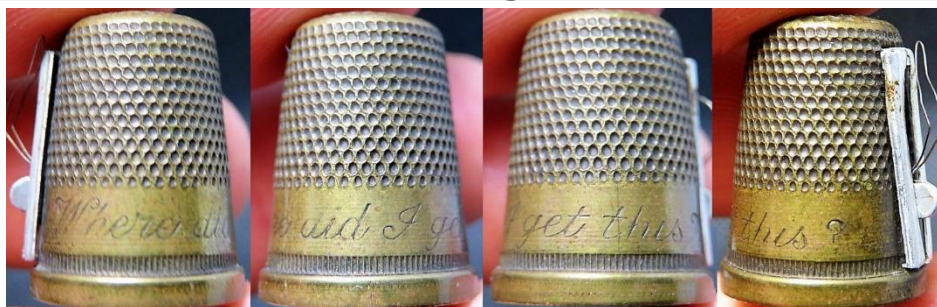


Arcadian China

British Empire Exhibition Wembley 1925

RED<sup>G</sup> 712455

## Where did I get this ?



base metal with brass band  
needle threader attached to one side



## WILLIAM SHAKESPEAR



Charles Iles Birmingham  
brass  
size 2  
lettered upside down  
includes a bust portrayal of Shakespeare

## WIR MÜSSEN SIEGEN



Settmacher Vienna  
tombac  
propaganda thimble for We must have victory

## WITH THANKS FROM NORFOLK QUILTERS



Swann Thimbles Birmingham 1992

## With Warm Regards JvH



John von Hoelle USA

tall brass with Celtic symbol between lettering

*JvH* lettered in a roundel

made at Iles & Gomms factory

John J von Hoelle's book is *Thimble Collector's Encyclopedia* 1986

lettering very faint

## Y.W.C.A



Charles Iles Birmingham

silver-plated brass

for Young Women's Christian Association



## Pictorial or cryptic messages on mid-18<sup>th</sup> to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century thimbles

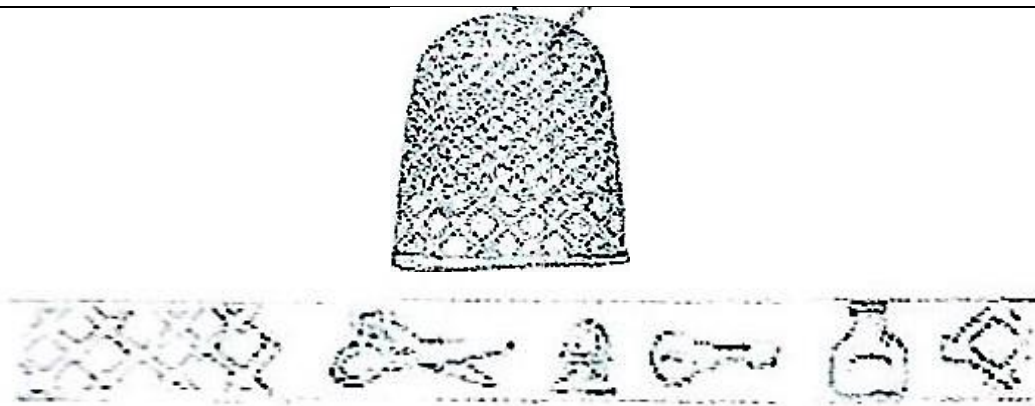
In 2022 I added this section: thimbles from 18<sup>th</sup> century that have cryptic or secret coded messages punched or engraved around the band in the form pictures of everyday domestic objects  
One day the meaning of these messages will become apparent: they are recorded here so that they aren't lost

I don't know a term for this group of thimbles; so for now they are known as Pictorial thimbles

These thimbles first came to our attention as thimble collectors. in Brian Read's book which has hundreds of drawings of thimbles found in archaeological digs

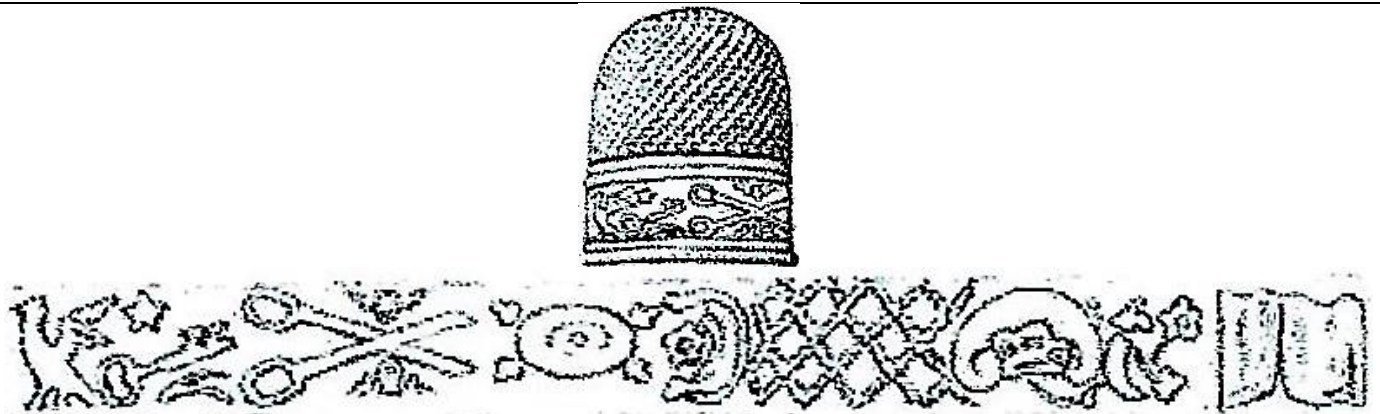
Two of these interesting thimbles are illustrated (drawings 289-290)

They are all made of base metals, including bronze or a copper-alloy – a few additional examples have emerged



trellis – scissors – thimble – key – bottle

Read #289 sketch



Read #290 sketches



bird - key - scissors - flower - trellis - cartouche - wishbone or stirrup







scissors - thimble - trellis - pincushion - woman - beaded cross  
found buried in Staffordshire



initial 'A' - trellis - two cups - two rackets or clubs (may even be spoons) - jug-like 'gin' bottle



tho this thimble with an almost identical set of pictorials is very badly corroded, the message symbols aren't damaged



two cups - two rackets or clubs (may even be spoons) - initial 'A' - jug-like 'gin' bottle - trellis - leaves - flowers - ASH



this thimble almost doesn't fit as a pictorial - only the linking word ASH gives it a place



several linked elongated rondels - flower in eash - ASH



initial A - club - rose - cartouche - beehive - dog - fish

---

## References

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Jenny Scharff Bockel *Thimbles of Southern Africa*. 2004  
Beryl Frank *Thimbles of France with waffled knurling*. 2003  
Dorothy Friend *British commemorative and souvenir thimbles*. 1987  
Franz Groiss *Thimble factory in Vienna founded 1863*. 1990  
Magdalena and William Isbister *Exposition thimbles*. 2010  
Magdalena and William Isbister *The "merchant's warehouse" fable*. *TCI Bulletin* spring 2007  
William Isbister *Late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century French silver thimbles: a visual guide*  
Brian Read *Metal sewing-thimbles found in Britain*. 2017  
Molly Pearce *Queen Adelaide At Your Fingertips* spring 2018  
Diane Pelham Burn *Identifying steel-cored thimbles*. 1993  
Gay Ann Rogers *American silver thimbles*. 1989  
*Simons pewter thimbles*. *Thimble Guild* spring 2003

## Contributors

Jeanne Millsap Beas | Lola Bennett | Christina Bertrand | Clarice Birch | Joanna Blackie-Sew Many Bits | Bleasdales  
Jenny Bockel | Pawel Brzyski | Susan Dempster | Margaret Frecker | Kit Froebel | Micky Garvey | Connie Halket |  
Lydia Hamilton | Julie Hollick | Edwin Holmes | William Isbister | Denise Jenkins-Welsh Thimbles | Eleanor Johnson  
Friedy & Gerrit Kamp | Andrea Lange | Carolyn Meacham-Elegant Arts | Ray Nimmo | Molly Pearce | Alan Powell  
Gay Ann Rogers | Mabel Rogers | Wolf-Dieter Scholz | Simon | Norma Spicer | Kay Sullivan-De Vingerhoed  
Thimble Society of London | Sandi Wood | Sandra Woodyard

This listing of thimbles with Interesting lettering 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](mailto:thimbleselect@bigpond.com) TO SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

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