

Thimble Collectors Club Thimbles

Rabat <--> Rozan

Thimble Collectors Club

Spanish Balcony RABAT, Spain

Think of Spain and you think of many things: long, hot days; dark evenings, with the night air warm against your skin; beautiful girls with hoop earrings, frilled dresses and broad-brimmed hats; and balconies everywhere you look, tumbling with flowers that twine among the intricate wrought-iron railings and bright with geraniums against the whitewashed walls. For a while, during the afternoon siesta, the wooden shutters may be closed, but for the rest of the day the balcony provides the occupants of the house with an essential viewing area from which to see and be seen, to call greetings to neighbours and exchange the latest gossip – and perhaps to indulge in a little shy courting.

The painter of this charming scene is Angela Beard, who is well known for her depiction of botanical and natural history subjects. Her work is much in demand by leading card companies and porcelain houses and this thimble is a typical example of her intricate brushwork and observant eye. Her collaboration with Rabat, a small porcelain company in Montgat, Barcelona, has produced a delightful thimble which is sure to find favour among discerning collectors.

Happy Pigs RALPH STEVENSON, England

A litter of cheerily squealing piglets clusters around the feeding trough in this amusing little scene. One of the most familiar farmyard animals, the pig is a naturally gentle creature, with clean and tidy habits if conditions allow. Few people know that pigs were actually domesticated in China and in parts of the Middle East as long as eleven thousand years ago. They were common farm animals in Greek and Roman times, and over the centuries at least four thousand breeds evolved. The ancestor of them all is the wild boar that roamed the forests and plains of Asia Minor.

There were two Stevenson potters at Cobridge, in Staffordshire, in the early years of the nineteenth century, and it is interesting to ponder whether it was Ralph or Andrew Stevenson who first used this mark, with its attractive ship motif. It appeared in 1810, and some maintain that its origins lie in the fact that Ralph sent most of his wares by sea to the Americas, where they were highly regarded.

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Cancan RAYNAUD, France

How daring! How French! The provocative dancing and infectious music of The Cancan heralded a new age for France, challenging the old fashioned ideas and standards of Nineteenth Century Europe. It was only natural to look to French craftsmen to capture the gaiety of the dance on a thimble.

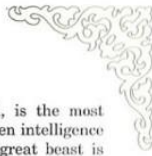
The porcelain house of Raynaud was founded in Limoges on the Montjovis in the mid 1800s by Charles Vogt. However, it was not until Martial Raynaud took control in 1919 that the company's reputation began to grow. The name of Raynaud may be found in the most famous places, in Arab palaces, on board Concorde and even on the new Orient Express. As an owner of Raynaud porcelain you are in the best possible company!

Chooks 'n' Chicks RECZYC POTTERY, Czech Republic

WHAT a clucking and a bustling there is in the farmyard today! A whole family of chickens is out and about, and there is a cheerful feeling of summer on the way. Chickens behave in much the same manner the world over, so these fluffy Czech chicks are no doubt having a good lesson from their parents on how to choose the right pickings for pecking.

The Reczyc Pottery, founded in the nineteenth century, was one of the foremost producers of pottery in Czechoslovakia, a country that became as highly renowned for its fine ceramic wares as for its beautiful crystal and glass. The first Bohemian porcelain craftsmen had strong links with the great traditional porcelain house of Meissen. For Reczyc, thimbles represented only a very small part of the range of ornamental china items it produced, which varied from small and delicate wares, like vases and pill-boxes, through to splendid 'wedding-present' pieces such as large, elegant centrepieces, candlesticks and beautiful tea and dinner services.

Elephant REGAL FLOWER, England



THE African elephant, the largest land mammal in the world, is the most majestic of all the inhabitants of Africa's vast savannahs. His keen intelligence and massive bulk could make him a formidable enemy, yet this great beast is essentially a gentle giant. His sense of smell is so acute that he can pick up a scent from several miles away, and his memory is legendary. A vegetarian, he eats all manner of tough grasses, leaves, twigs and branches – and takes two and a half days to digest them!

Arthur Stone began his career as a ceramic painter in the town that is still the heart of the English Potteries – Stoke-on-Trent, in Staffordshire. In 1901, with Edward VII newly on the throne, he set up his own small pottery company, Regal Flower. Influenced by the new Edwardian atmosphere and by the young artists of the time, his pieces were strikingly simple and modern-looking in comparison with the wares of his more traditional competitors. Regal Flower's backstamp was a *fleur-de-lys*, the emblem of the French royal family.

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Golden Peony REIHO, Japan

A traditional token of beauty, love, nobility and respect, the peony has long held pride of place in the affections of the Chinese. They called it the 'King of Flowers', and faithfully portrayed its beautiful blooms on painted screens, lacquered cabinets, delicate fans and – of course – porcelain. Also symbolic of riches, peonies were expensive to buy, and highly prized. A gift of these lovely flowers would have had a very special meaning in ancient China.

In the eighth century, the peony was imported to Japan, where it was first used as a herb, and later became a favourite motif in Japanese poetry and decorative art. In Europe the plant had been adopted by the Greeks, who linked it with Paeon, physician to the gods. Bearing his name, it later spread to England, where country folk carved its roots into weird shapes to charm their ills away.

This delightful thimble, with its rich colouring enhanced by touches of fine gold, shows a traditional Japanese flower cart bursting with peony blooms. It has been made by the porcelain house of Reiho, situated in Toki City. In Japanese, 'rei' means 'politeness', and 'ho' means top, or peak – thus the name can be translated as 'Peak of Politeness'! What better named company to produce this exquisite emblem of nobility!

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Blue Tits RENAISSANCE, England

The only British bird with a true blue plumage, the tiny Blue Tit is a popular visitor to our bird tables. The original painting for this delightful thimble is the work of Maurice Pledger, a Hertfordshire country man born and bred. His beautifully illustrated book 'Game Birds' was first published in 1981 with a commendatory by HRH Prince Philip and a text by Charles Coles, Director of the Nature Conservancy Council. Mr. Pledger has been honoured by several one-man exhibitions, including one at the prestigious King Street Galleries in St. James, London.

Inspired by the artists of the Renaissance period, Renaissance International take pride in continuing the tradition that has made Staffordshire china famous throughout the world. Their craftsmen and artists come from families that have been making china for many generations, and Renaissance put the accumulated skills to full use. They have established a worldwide reputation for delicately detailed figurines, and other fine work.

Thimble Collectors Club

The Blue Tits Thimble

Renaissance
Fine Bone China
Made in England

RENAISSANCE CHINA - England

The only British bird with true blue coloring, the Blue Tit provides a delightful motif for this fine English Bone China thimble from Renaissance China. The painting of the tiny birds is an original work by Maurice Pledger, a noted British ornithological artist.

Taking both its name and its inspiration from the great artistic tradition of the Renaissance period, this outstanding porcelain house is located in the historic English ceramic making district of Staffordshire. There, in a cluster of small villages now collectively known as Stoke-on-Trent, potters have been practicing their craft since the Middle Ages. Indeed, many of the artisans at Renaissance China are carry on skills which have been in their families for hundreds of years.

This meticulously crafted Bone China thimble, with its rich colored and superbly detailed design, exemplifies the standards which place Renaissance among the highest ranks of English Bone China manufacturers.

Thimble Collectors Club

Forget-Me-Not RETSCH, Germany

How and when the little myosotis first gained its popular name of 'forget-me-not' is a mystery, but we can imagine the scene as a pretty country lass received a posy of the simple blue flowers from her rustic swain. Their dainty petals, blooming cheerfully beneath larger and more assertive plants, will have played a happy part in many a country courtship.

In times gone by, flowers were used as emblems much more than they are today, and their romantic message, no matter how grand or humble, was quickly interpreted. A bouquet of forget-me-nots, tied with a simple bow of coloured ribbon, must have brought joy to many a maiden's heart.

This lovely thimble comes from the porcelain house of Retsch, which is situated in the beautiful area of the Fichtel Gebirge, a wooded mountainous region of Upper Franconia, Germany. A small company, it specialises in dinnerware and a wide range of gift items. 'Forget-Me-Not' is its very first thimble, and the charm and traditional craftsmanship it displays are bound to have collectors calling for more.

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Lilies of the Valley Thimble



PORZELLANFABRIK RETSCH - Germany

The German countryside springs to life in May and June with Lilies of the Valley in glorious abundance.

Porzellanfabrik Retsch is located in the beautiful Fichtelgebirge region of Upper Franconia in Germany. Retsch is primarily a producer of dinnerware and gift items. As far back as the records indicate, this is the first thimble they have ever produced. Interestingly, the five-pointed crown over the script version "R" is a common porcelain mark denoting "Our wares are fit for royalty."

Porzellanfabrik Retsch is proud to offer its first thimble exclusively to members of the Thimble Collectors Club.



Thimble Collectors Club

Floral Medley Thimble



REUTTER PORZELLAN - W. Germany

A delicate pink rose, symbolizing beauty and romance, is at the heart of the floral design on this lovely thimble from Germany. As it often appears in nature, the regal rose blooms amid its "court" of pastel-tinted wildflowers.

Reutter Porzellan is renowned for the meticulous detailing of its porcelain miniatures. As many as 17 craftsmen monitor each piece as it is formed, glazed, hand-painted and fired. Three consecutive firings are necessary to achieve and preserve the delicate colors that you see in the "Floral Medley" thimble.

The famed porcelain house is located in the village of Denkendorf, in the heart of Bavaria. It was founded in the mid-1940's by Frau Marta Reutter, herself a lover of miniatures. In the ensuing 40 years, the Reutter hallmark has become recognized and respected among discriminating collectors around the world.

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Garland of Flowers REUTTER, Germany

This attractive thimble, in eighteenth-century style, is festooned with luscious, deep pink, velvety roses, tied with a silky ribbon of palest blue. It is delightfully evocative of June – that glorious month of long, hot days, strawberries and cream, happy family picnics and traditional weddings. Many a summer bride has chosen just such roses for her bouquet, and has garlanded the church with them, too. Pure white, pink and azure blue is the chosen colour scheme of our delicately pretty thimble, with touches of fresh green for the leaves, and a band of pink at the thimble's crown.

The porcelain house of Reutter is situated in the historic town of Denkendorf, near Stuttgart, in the beautiful Necker Valley in south-western Germany. Founded over forty years ago by the husband-and-wife team of Willy and Marta Reutter, the company has come to specialise in the making of porcelain miniatures – perfect, tiny gift items such as little boxes, dishes, figurines and thimbles. These require a high degree of dedication and attention to detail from the group of skilled artists and craftsmen who are proud to belong to this fine and highly respected porcelain company.

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Honeysuckle REUTTER, West Germany

This exquisite thimble is brought to you by the house of Reutter, which was founded over thirty years ago by Willy and Marta Reutter and has since established a reputation for excellence. The pottery is situated in the historic town of Denkendorf, near Stuttgart, in the beautiful Necker Valley. For this project Reutter has collaborated with Phil Weare, who is an artist of distinction. He has illustrated many books and exhibited widely; his work is to be found on permanent exhibition in the Natural History Gallery at Bristol Museum. This delightful illustration of honeysuckle demonstrates the quality of his talent.

Honeysuckle is one of our best-loved native plants. It can be found scrambling over hedges, walls and thickets, its tendrils ever seeking to climb higher towards the sun. When its delicate flowers appear in June the air is filled with its sweet, heavy scent; to walk along a country lane between old stone walls swagged with honeysuckle and dog roses is surely one of the greatest pleasures that summer offers us. This thimble brings with it the memory of those long summer days when the honeysuckle graces us with its beauty and perfume.

Pennsylvania Dutch REUTTER, Germany

FAMILY groups from Germany and Switzerland sailed to America and settled in eastern Pennsylvania from 1683 onwards, and for a century or more these families and their descendants continued to live together in a German-speaking colony, and 'kept themselves to themselves'. They produced a kind of folk art, unique in America, which was known as 'Pennsylvania Deutsch', and which in turn became 'Pennsylvania Dutch' – nothing to do with Holland! With craftsmanship, designs and motifs rooted in the traditions of their forebears, they made their own very charming and distinctive furniture, pottery, metalwork and wood carvings. Stylised flowers and leaves twine delightfully through their work, and are reproduced on this attractive modern thimble in the much-loved traditional pottery colour of blue on white.

The Reutter porcelain house, located near Stuttgart, in the beautiful Necker Valley of south-western Germany, was founded over forty years ago by the husband-and-wife team of Willy and Marta Reutter. They gathered together a group of highly skilled artists and craftsmen, who brought with them similar traditions to those original Germans from the Rhineland who travelled to the New World. Reutter has been delighted to produce this thimble, embodying these old and well-loved traditions.

Thimble Collectors Club

"Pennsylvania Dutch" Thimble



REUTTER PORZELLAN - Germany

One of the marks of a quality porcelain house is the ability to create a complex piece of fine porcelain and then highlight the piece with a complementary design. And with this "Pennsylvania Dutch" thimble, the German firm of Reutter Porzellan has ably demonstrated its incredible talents.

Formed in the mid-1940's by Frau Marta Reutter, herself a lover of fine porcelain, Reutter Porzellan is located in the village of Denkendorf, in the heart of the world-famous Bavarian region of Germany. The influence of Frau Reutter's love of porcelain miniatures is evident in the meticulous detailing of the factory's wares. In fact, there are often as many as 17 craftsmen monitoring each piece as it is formed, glazed, hand-painted and fired.

The dark blue 'Pennsylvania Dutch' pattern perfectly complements the unique shape of this thimble. Finished with a striking band of 24kt gold, Reutter Porzellan has created a masterpiece that is sure to become a treasured part of your Thimble Collectors Club collection.

Thimble Collectors Club

Posy of Pansies REUTTER, Germany

The quaint markings of these richly coloured pansies, resembling little faces peeping out from their leafy cirlet, continue to inspire gardeners throughout Europe to produce ever more luxurious species. This much-loved flower was developed in the early nineteenth century by a gardener who became known as the 'Father of the Heartsease'. The many varieties of pansy we enjoy today were derived from the smaller viola – a flower that was held in affection by Napoleon because it reminded him of the Corsican woods where it grew wild and where he played as a child. The names of our modern species of pansy – Alpine Glow, Arkwright Ruby, Coronation Gold, Blue Heaven – resound with the colourful splendour of this most admired and widely grown of flowers – blooms that enliven garden beds and window boxes the year round.

Coral Guest, a member of the Society of Botanical Artists and winner of two gold medals from the Royal Horticultural Society for her paintings, is the talented artist who created this beautiful floral tribute. It has been skilfully reproduced on this thimble by Reutter, a porcelain house situated in the historic town of Denkendorf, in Germany's lovely Necker Valley.

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The Serenade REUTTER, Germany

This charming thimble is adorned with a French summer scene of romance and song – a handsome young swain serenades his true love, singing to the music of a lute. His sweetheart sits, adoring, dreamily waving her hand in pleasure at the music, a basket of freshly picked flowers on her knee. This scene is taken from a painting by the French artist Jean Honoré Fragonard (1732-1806), who is best known for his light-hearted scenes of flirtation taking place during picnics and games in romantic settings – such as gardens full of abundant flowers, with leafy glades and charming vistas. The thimble is further embellished by a rich golden band and scroll decoration typical of the popular mid-eighteenth-century French Rococo style, of which Fragonard was a master.

The Reutter porcelain house is situated in the historic town of Denkendorf, near Stuttgart, in south-west Germany's lovely Neckar Valley. The company was founded over forty years ago by Willy and Marta Reutter. In more recent years, Marta started to specialise in porcelain miniatures, and she gathered together a group of skilled artists and craftsmen who, with their love of detail, have devoted themselves to perfecting these tiny masterpieces.

Thimble Collectors Club

Romance Thimble



REUTTER PORZELLAN - Bavaria, West Germany

This exquisitely decorated porcelain thimble from Reutter features the rich background color, lavish gold embellishment and central "medallion" scene of the 18th-century decorating style originally made famous by the great French porcelain houses of Vincennes and Sevres.

Since the mid-1940's, when Reutter Porzellan was established in Denkendorf, Bavaria, Frau Marta Reutter's firm has specialized in porcelain miniatures. A longtime collector of these tiny works of art, Frau Reutter gathered together a group of craftsmen and artists experienced in the painstaking skills required to produce miniatures. Attention to detail and dedication to perfection are crucial, and as many as 17 artisans oversee the manufacture of each article.

From its pristine white porcelain to its clear colors and meticulous detail, this thimble exemplifies the quality which has earned Reutter the respect of the most discriminating collectors. The "Romance Thimble" has been made especially for members of The Thimble Collectors Club.

Blue Chrysanthemum REVOL PORCELAIN, France

Inspired by the blue and white ceramics of the Chinese and Japanese masters, the fresh, flowery design on this elegant, pure white thimble features a stunning chrysanthemum in full bloom. Autumn flowers are a rare treat, and the warmth and splendour of a generous bunch or pot of chrysanthemums bring a glow of pleasure as winter draws close. The Chinese word for 'chrysanthemum' sounds like the word meaning 'to remain' – and all over the Orient these beautiful, long-lasting flowers have become a symbol of the season of Autumn, as well as long life, enduring love and happy marriage.

The porcelain house of Revol was founded in 1789 by Gustave Revol in Vallier, in the heart of France, where the raw materials for porcelain were readily found. After a period of specialisation in the making of perfume and spirit bottles and flagons, the company broadened its range to include beautiful table settings and small gift items. The exquisite early Revol bottles are much sought-after by collectors, and, following in these excellent traditions, the company continues to produce fine ceramic wares of the best collectable quality.

Blue Onion REVOL PORCELAIN, France

Delicately delineated in a sharp indigo on a pure white ground, the ornamental flowers of the onion are arranged in a charming circular motif on this elegant thimble. We can almost smell the refreshingly distinctive aroma of these attractive blooms. Growing in both wild and cultivated forms all over the Northern Hemisphere, the allium, or onion, family embraces a rich variety of shapes, sizes and colours. It covers our familiar, strongly flavoured, kitchen-garden onion and fresh, spiky green chives, to the mystical garlic, with its health-giving properties and pungent odour.

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Cloverleaf Thimble



REVOL PORCELAIN - France

According to American folklore, the discoverer of a four-leaf clover soon see his or her true love — providing they don't give away a universal token of good fortune. Revol Porcelain has chosen a stylized rendition of this celebrated symbol to adorn their first thimble.

Revol Porcelain was founded in 1789 by Gustave Revol in the city of Vallier in the heart of France. This family run firm was originally noted for its specialty bottles for perfumers and distillers. In the second half of the 19th century, Revol was the leading producer of jars and liquor bottles in France. The exquisite bottles and other vessels from this period are now very much sought after by European collectors. Entering the 20th century, Revol expanded their product line to include fine giftware and tableware. Having recently expanded into the European market, Revol now employs over 280 people and runs their kilns continuously.

The stylized design of the clover on this thimble is characteristic of France's illustrious craftsmen and is reminiscent of their traditional steel and silver engravings. The "Cloverleaf" thimble is available exclusively from the Thimble Collectors Club.

Songbird REVOL PORCELAIN, France

ONE of our most colourful and easily recognisable birds, the glorious little goldfinch has been chosen for portrayal on our Songbird thimble. Strikingly handsome, it is named after the yellow bars on its wings, but other distinguishing features are its red face feathers, black and white head, and, of course, its clear, sweet song. It is a gregarious bird, often to be seen in 'charms' – an apt description – of up to twenty at a time. They are the friends of the farmer, for they eat the seeds of just the weeds the farmers dislike amongst their crops, and a group of them, singing merrily as they flutter over the fields, is one of Nature's most delightful offerings.

Revol Porcelain was founded in 1789 by Gustave Revol in Vallier, where the raw materials for porcelain occurred in plentiful supply. He specialised in making bottles for perfumes and spirits, and for many years, from the second half of the nineteenth century, Revol was France's leading producer of jars, flagons and bottles of many kinds. These are now highly sought after by collectors all over Europe. Today the company, known for its fine dinner services and gifts, is owned and run by Gustave Revol's direct descendants.

Thimble Collectors Club

Swallows REX, Spain

The saying goes that one swallow does not make a summer. Nevertheless, our first sighting each April of that graceful form wheeling above our heads tells us that long days and blue skies are drawing near. A swallow's diet consists of insects caught on the wing, and during the breeding season the parent birds must catch many thousands of tiny morsels to feed their growing brood. Barely is this labour of love ended before you will see them lining the telegraph wires in late summer, assembling for their long journey back to Africa for the winter months.

The swallow-and-roses design of this elegant thimble, with its gilded background and marbled surround, echoes the traditions of the eighteenth century. It is brought to you by the Spanish house of Rex Porcelain, founded twenty years ago. Although the company boasts some of the most advanced facilities available, a firm belief that human artistry produces the best results means that each piece is still individually hand cast and decorated by expert craftswomen. There is even a training school on the premises to ensure that its fine reputation is maintained. Today, Rex exports its exquisite porcelain to over forty-five countries and is a favourite among collectors everywhere.

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The First Balloon Flight Thimble



ROCKINGHAM - England

It started with an idea . . . and in 1783, two French brothers by the name of Montgolfier trapped hot air in a patched-together cloth bag . . . and the hot-air balloon was born. That historic moment of long ago is charmingly captured on this fine bone china thimble bearing the acclaimed Rockingham hallmark.

Rockingham Pottery was established in 1745 on the Marquess of Rockingham's estate in Swinton, near Doncaster. In 1782, the estate was passed to his nephew, Earl Fitzwilliam, who rescued it from bankruptcy, and borrowed the griffin from his family crest for the firm's hallmark. Purchased by the Brameld family in 1806, the firm began to make bone china commercially about 1826. They soon became noted for their tea and dessert services, particularly after the completion in 1830 of a magnificent dessert service for William IV which is still used at Buckingham Palace.

With its twin bands of 22kt gold, the "First Balloon Flight" thimble is available exclusively from the Thimble Collectors Club. It is a delightful addition to your growing collection of fine thimbles.

Floral Fantasy I and II

In the style of ROCKINGHAM, England

This stylish pair of thimbles immediately attracts our attention with its bright colours and bold designs. A dramatic black ground, studded with red, star-shaped flowers, and a swirling green and yellow border of leaves, give colour and impact to one of the pair, while the other uses a butter-yellow ground and a pattern of bright red blooms for a stunning effect. Each thimble has a golden band at the base, and is surmounted by an integrally moulded daisy pattern.

The Rockingham pottery was founded on the estate of Earl Fitzwilliam, Marquess of Rockingham, near Swinton, in Yorkshire. In 1806 it became a small family concern when Thomas and William Brameld, father and son, took over the proprietorship. Two younger members of the family later started to experiment with porcelain making, and in 1826 went into full production. After making a fine dessert service for William IV in 1830, the firm was granted the title of the Royal Rockingham Works. Apart from its much admired sets of plates, Rockingham also made figures, inkstands, vases, baskets and other small single items. The mark of the griffin is derived from the Rockingham coat of arms.

Thimble Collectors Club

Floral Lustre

A thimble produced in tribute to the nineteenth-century ROCKINGHAM WORKS, England

This exquisite lustre thimble, with its floral motif and brilliant crown, has been produced in homage to Rockingham, a factory renowned for its lavishly decorated fine porcelain. The works were situated on the Marquess of Rockingham's estate, and were several times rescued from bankruptcy by his nephew, Earl Fitzwilliam, who inherited the estate in 1782. In 1806 Thomas Brameld and his son William took control, beginning to make porcelain commercially around 1826, and it was from this period that Rockingham gained its illustrious reputation.

Although tea and dessert services were the chief wares, figurines of people and animals were also manufactured during the early period of the factory's existence. A magnificent dessert service, still in use at Buckingham Palace, was made in 1830 for William IV, thus establishing Rockingham as the porcelain to be seen on the tables of the aristocracy.

Our pretty thimble is made of lustreware, another quintessentially English form of porcelain ware dating from the nineteenth century. The pigments, which are applied by hand, contain minute amounts of gold, platinum or silver to produce the soft sheen which is shown here to such delightful effect.

Thimble Collectors Club



Golden Romance

A thimble produced in tribute to the style of ROCKINGHAM, England

The first thing that everyone will notice about this intriguing thimble is its unusual shape – it reminds us of the medieval 'tailors' thimbles', which were a simple metal ring, in the days when needles were more commonly pushed through cloth with the side of the finger rather than the tip.

An attractive little interlude is being played out before our eyes, and we do not need the name of the thimble to tell us that romance is in the air. A young lady has just come to the gate to meet her sweetheart – who in the next scene naturally steals a kiss! The country setting is depicted in golden tones, and this charming ring thimble is finished off with borders of the same golden hue.

Most of the old-established, illustrious porcelain houses had humble origins in pottery. The Rockingham factory, situated on the Marquess of Rockingham's estate at Swinton in Yorkshire, was no exception, having been established as The Swinton Pottery in about 1745. In 1826 its owners, Thomas and William Brameld, began to make porcelain commercially, and the company gained a fine reputation for its beautiful porcelain, which was a pure, translucent white, often decorated with rustic scenes similar to the one on our delightful thimble.

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Harebell

In the style of ROCKINGHAM, England

The distinctive azure blue bells of the harebell – the true 'Bluebell of Scotland' – are to be found scattered freely over the slopes and heaths of that beautiful land. Thriving as it does in the cool, temperate climate of the Northern Hemisphere, this charming member of the Campanula family is rarely to be found further south. Chosen as an emblem of peace and serenity, the harebell appears in the last lines of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*: 'I lingered round them, under that benign sky; watched the moths fluttering among the heath and harebells; listened to the soft wind breathing through the grass; and wondered how anyone could ever imagine unquiet slumbers for the sleepers in that quiet earth.'

This attractive thimble, crowned with a sparkling crystal, has been crafted in the style of Rockingham, a porcelain company with a fine reputation going back to the middle of the eighteenth century. Established as the Swinton Pottery on the Marquess of Rockingham's estate in Yorkshire, the concern prospered, becoming best known for the splendour of its porcelain tableware. In 1830 Rockingham was commissioned to produce a magnificent dessert service for William IV, which is still in use at Buckingham Palace today.



Piggy Holiday ROCKINGHAM, England

We do like to be beside the seaside! And that seems to go for piglets, too. The four farmyard siblings have donned their beachwear and are thoroughly enjoying their day by the sea. A fine sandcastle is well under way, and one of the chaps has already made quite a splash. Will the others brave the waves too? This is a pretty little present to delight a child. You could point out that even piglets swim in safety by wearing armbands or rubber rings!

The Rockingham pottery was founded on the estate of Earl Fitzwilliam, Marquess of Rockingham, near Swinton, in Yorkshire. In 1806 it became a family concern when Thomas and William Brameld, father and son, took it over. Two younger members of the family started to experiment with porcelain, and in 1826 went into full production. After making a fine dessert service for William IV in 1830, the firm was granted the title of the Royal Rockingham Works. Apart from its beautiful sets of plates, Rockingham also made figures, inkstands, vases, baskets and other small single items. The mark of the griffin is derived from the Rockingham coat of arms.

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Red Dragon Thimble



ROCKINGHAM POTTERY - England

A fiery red dragon, as strikingly beautiful as it is menacing, strides across the face of this artfully designed thimble from the world-famous craftsmen at Rockingham Pottery.

Rockingham Pottery was established in 1745 on the Marquess of Rockingham's estate in Swinton, near Doncaster. In 1782, the estate was passed to his nephew, Earl Fitzwilliam, who rescued it from bankruptcy and borrowed the griffin from his family crest for the firm's hallmark. Changing hands a number of times over the next few years, the firm became well known for their exquisite tea and dessert services. The Rockingham name received international prominence in 1830 following the completion of a dessert service for William IV, a set which is still used at Buckingham Palace today.

With its brilliant gold accents and pure white English Bone China, the "Red Dragon" thimble makes a wonderful addition to your growing collection, and is available exclusively from the Thimble Collectors Club.

Thimble
Collectors
Club

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Scottish Thistle

A thimble in the style of ROCKINGHAM, England

One dark night, a party of invading Danes decided to attack a Scottish village by stealth, hoping to catch their enemy unawares. Bare footed, they crept silently over the hillside. Then one unfortunate man stepped on a thistle! The cry he let out alerted the Scots, who immediately sprang into action, and defeated the Danes in a ferocious battle. Since that night, the thistle has been heralded as the insignia of Scotland, along with the motto *Nemo me impune lacessit*: 'No one provokes me with impunity'. Later, the thistle was adopted as a device by Queen Anne.

The Scotch thistle is also known as the cotton thistle, because of the fine, white, cobweb-like hairs which cover its broad, silvery leaves. The striking mauve flowers appear in July and August, and are a popular addition to flower arrangements.

This charming thimble, surmounted with a shimmering, multi-faceted, pale purple crystal, has been produced in homage to the English name of Rockingham, whose royal and aristocratic patrons loved the colourful elegance of wares produced by this illustrious house. In all its techniques, Rockingham was indisputably one of the best porcelain houses of its time, and our lovely thimble carries on its noble traditions.

TCCFC287

Thimble Collectors Club

The Sleigh Ride

With the mark of ROCKINGHAM, England

Dashing through the snow, drawn by prancing, mettlesome steeds, the open sleigh was surely the most exhilarating form of transport in the world. Snugly wrapped in luxuriant furs or fleecy rugs, passengers were warmly cocooned against the freezing air, only their faces exposed. On arrival at the evening's entertainment, pink cheeks and sparkling eyes only added to the gaiety. Crowned by a glittering crystal, this brightly coloured and handsome thimble paints a thrilling picture of a swift sleigh ride through the snow.

The Rockingham porcelain works had its origins at Swinton, near Doncaster, on the estate of the Marquess of Rockingham. The Brameld family, who took over the original small pottery on the estate in 1806, perfected the making of bone china, and in 1826 began to produce it commercially, using the griffin mark from the Rockingham coat of arms. Such was the quality of their work that in 1830 they were commissioned to make a dessert service for William IV, which brought them an enduring reputation for fine and beautifully decorated wares. The magnificent William IV service is still used at Buckingham Palace today.

CTCCFC294

Thimble Collectors Club

Still Life Thimble



ROCKINGHAM — England

Luscious pears, apples, blackberries and cherries adorn the table at a traditional English feast. Presented here in a still life portrait in the style of the great artists of the 19th century, Rockingham, a name synonymous with fine china, continues the age-old English tradition of decorating high quality bone china with fruit.

The small Rockingham pottery was established in 1745 on the Marquess of Rockingham's estate in Swinton, near Doncaster. In 1782, the estate was passed to his nephew, Earl Fitzwilliam, who rescued it from bankruptcy, and borrowed the griffin from his family crest for the firm's distinguishing hallmark. Purchased by the Brameld family in 1806, the firm began to make bone china commercially about 1826. They soon became noted for their tea and dessert services, particularly after the completion in 1830 of a magnificent dessert service for William IV which is still used at Buckingham Palace.

This unique thimble, with its raised crown and motif of succulent fruits accented by twin gold bands, is a precious addition to any collection and is available solely from the Thimble Collectors Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

Kurbits RÖRSTRAND, Sweden

Originally founded in Stockholm in 1726, the eminent porcelain house of Rörstrand is Sweden's oldest pottery and the second oldest in Europe. Since World War II when the factory was moved to Lidköping for safety, porcelain, stoneware and earthenware have all been produced in a wide variety of dinnerware and collectors' pieces.

From such a famous Swedish house it was appropriate to bring you a traditional Swedish design. "Kurbits" is a style of painting developed in the county of Dalecarlia during the 17th century. It was used to brighten up the furniture and walls of the Swedes' simple farmhouses. In the same way, Rörstrand have used this colourful design to bring life to their finely crafted porcelain.

Thimble Collectors Club

Kurbits Thimble



RORSTRAND - Sweden

Busy Bears ROSE CHINA, England

TEDDY bears! The favourite of every child – and of some grown-ups too! The story goes that once upon a time President Theodore 'Teddy' Roosevelt (1858–1919) was out bear hunting, and came across a female bear and her cub. He was charmed by the little bear, and spared both it and its mother. His companions affectionately recounted this tale, and the name 'Teddy' was thereafter given to toy baby bears.

Rose China was a small company, established in 1882 by the potter and historian Charles Sims. It was best known for its salt-glazed stoneware, which was made by firing pottery in the kiln to a very high temperature – 2,500 degrees Fahrenheit – and then throwing in salt. This process gave the pottery a hard, transparent glaze with an interesting 'orange-peel' texture. Many of the Staffordshire potteries experimented with salt glaze in an effort to imitate a certain type of tough Chinese ceramic ware. The results were popular, and these salt-glazed wares continued in production. Later pieces from Rose China were sometimes decorated with colourful transfer prints, and we feel that the old craftsmen would be pleased with our present-day tribute to them.

Thimble Collectors Club

Classic Rose Thimble



ROSENTHAL China — West Germany

One of the world's largest and most prestigious porcelain-makers, Rosenthal China has selected a quaint floral pattern for this lovely thimble. Created exclusively for the Thimble Collectors Club, it is the first thimble ever produced under the Classic Rose hallmark, which Rosenthal established expressly to continue its traditional shapes and patterns.

Rosenthal China is still headquartered in Selb, Bavaria, where Philipp Rosenthal, Sr. founded a porcelain-decorating factory in 1879. Since the late 1800's when Rosenthal established his own porcelain works in the northern Bavarian town of Kronach, this family-directed firm has become as well-known for its contemporary tableware designs, as for its ever-popular traditional wares. Rosenthal's decorative patterns are often planned with the help of such noted designers as Emilio Pucci and they count the Vatican, the White House and numerous royal families among their celebrated clientele.

The pristine white porcelain, charming old-style motif and delicate gilding of this premier "Classic Rose Thimble" make it an enchanting addition to your thimble collection.



Romance

ROYAL ADDERLEY, England

Roses are unequalled as a symbol of romance and true love, and rare is the feminine heart that does not melt if warmed by a gift of a bouquet of exquisite velvet blooms. Roses have long had a romantic appeal of their own. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw the introduction of many-petalled damask, musk, bourbon and gallica roses which were given the names of aristocratic French ladies – including Madame Alfred Carrière and Madame Grégoire de Staechelin – and, of course, there is the beautiful Souvenir de Malmaison, named after the famous rose garden of Napoleon Bonaparte's Empress, Josephine. The fascinating history of roses is long and complex, and it is wonderful to realise that we can grow in our gardens today roses that first bloomed over four thousand years ago.

Royal Adderley began in 1852 as part of the Ridgway Company, and in 1945 the Adderley floral works was established in Longton, Staffordshire. Royal Adderley has a long association with flowers, particularly roses, and this delicately crafted thimble bears testimony to many years of refinement in technique. Such workmanship is highly prized by thimble collectors, and 'Romance' is destined to find pride of place in collections everywhere.

Thimble Collectors Club

Old Country Roses ROYAL ALBERT

The 'Old Country Roses' design is part of the folklore of English china. Seldom, if ever, has there been a pattern which has appealed so intensely to so many people, over such a long period. 'Old Country Roses' tea services ensure that tea is served elegantly all over the world.

Royal Albert, the largest individual producer of English bone china, is a perfect example of the harmonious marriage of traditional skills and modern methods.

Traditional skills were those acquired through nearly a hundred years of change and growth within the company, which used to be known as T. C. Wild and Sons Limited. Its present name goes back to 1896, when Thomas Wild took over the Albert Works in Longton — a factory given its title to commemorate the birth of Prince Albert. Since then, the company has gone from strength to strength, thanks to excellent working conditions, technical innovation and outstandingly popular designs — none more so than 'Old Country Roses'.

Thimble Collectors Club

Red Squirrels ROYAL ALBERT, England

The red squirrel is one of the most lovable of British wild animals. With its bright, inquisitive eyes, tufted ears and bushy tail, it makes a delightful sight as it scampers with astonishing agility through the trees. Perched on its haunches, tail curled over its head, and a nut grasped firmly in its paws, it has irresistible charm.

This heartwarming illustration is from the brush of John Francis, the noted wildlife artist. His work is on permanent display in the British Museum and he has contributed to many natural history books published both in Britain and abroad. His depiction of red squirrels has been lovingly reproduced on porcelain by Royal Albert, a house established in 1896 by Thomas Wild. In the early years of this century Royal Albert grew rapidly and their ware became a familiar sight on British tables. Under the third generation of the Wild family the company began to export widely and was granted the Queen's Award for Industry in recognition of this. A member of the Royal Doulton group since 1964, Royal Albert continues to produce traditional English tableware and collector's items, of which this exquisite thimble is a typically high-quality example.

Thimble Collectors Club

Old Country Roses Thimble



ROYAL ALBERT CHINA - England

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Thimble Collectors Club

Serenity ROYAL ALBERT, England

The founder of the house of Royal Albert was Thomas Wild, who purchased the Albert Works in the famous Potteries town of Longton in 1896. Two years later the business was inherited by his son Thomas Clark Wild (who had started his career as a potter at the tender age of eight), and was renamed the Royal Albert Crown China Works.

The early years of this century saw a period of growth and expansion under the direction of T. C. Wild, as Royal Albert ware became a familiar feature of English breakfast and tea tables. At the instigation of the third generation of the Wild family, T.C.'s sons Tom and Fred, the market for the company's fine bone china products was later extended to cover North America, Australia and New Zealand, for which it was honoured with the Queen's Award to Industry for export achievement.

A member of the Royal Doulton Group since 1964, Royal Albert continues to produce traditional English tableware and collectors' items, using many of the styles and patterns which were introduced in T. C. Wild's day. The Serenity design is one of the latest to come from the Royal Albert pottery. Depicting a gentle informal spray of garden flowers it continues the popular Royal Albert tradition of floral motifs. This delightful thimble marks a new progression in these designs, and a splendid addition to your collection.

Thimble Collectors Club

Serenity Thimble



ROYAL ALBERT
Bone China
England

ROYAL ALBERT CHINA - England

Thimble Collectors Club

Anemones ROYAL BOCH, Belgium

Crimson, magenta, indigo, violet, lavender blue – the colours of the glorious anemone flowers are the very richest found in nature's palette. Heralds of spring, the anemone's velvety blooms may appear as early as February, peeping from a shady spot in a rockery and providing a vivid splash of colour in an otherwise ordinary garden landscape. This lovely flower has a noble history. During the time of the Crusades, Bishop Umberto of Pisa blessed the soldiers leaving for the war and told them to bring back soil from the Holy Land as ships' ballast. This they did, and it was spread over the Campo Sancta to honour the dead. The following spring, the ground there was carpeted with scarlet anemones, which is how this perennial favourite came to be called 'blood drops of Christ'. Ever since, the anemone has had a special place in the hearts of all of us, and today in the Holy Land is a protected wild flower.

This delightful garland of anemones has been painted by Coral Guest, a member of the Society of Botanical Artists, and winner of many awards for her floral paintings. The thimble has been produced by Royal Boch, an historic porcelain house situated in the French-speaking south of Belgium. The company is justly proud of its Royal prefix – testimony to the fact that it has produced fine china for the Belgian royal household.



Pansy ROYAL BOCH, Belgium

THE pansy is a flower beloved of all country folk. The five rounded petals cluster together to make an appealing little face, peering over a cape of fresh green leaves. The attractive shapes of flower and leaves, coupled with the wonderful variety of colours, both delicate and rich, in which it can be found, make the pansy a 'must' for all gardens, enlivening the front of the summer border from May to September. Winter-flowering varieties bloom from autumn right through to spring, so the gardener who plans his patch well will have colour and cheer throughout the year from these endearing little flowers.

The Royal Boch porcelain works is situated in the French-speaking, southern part of Belgium. It specialises in traditional Belgian design motifs and shapes for its fine ceramic vases, bowls and gift items. The word 'manufacture', which is part of the name of the company, may be used only by factories that produce most of their goods by hand, with very little use of machines. This well respected porcelain house is justly proud of its Royal prefix, which testifies to the fact that it has made fine china for the Belgian Royal household.

Thimble Collectors Club

Bullfinch ROYAL CHELSEA, England

A soft, piping 'dew' sound is the calling note of the bullfinch – one of Britain's prettiest birds. The subtle hue of the male's rosy-red throat and breast is unmistakable as he flits among the branches of a plum or apple tree, making a meal of the newly emerging buds. He stays close by as the female incubates her clutch of purple-spotted eggs, laid in a cosy, cup-shaped nest of twigs and moss. Whenever she needs sustenance, he flies off, to return seconds later with a tasty offering. The chicks hatch and he is kept fully occupied helping his mate to feed those noisy, hungry mouths. Within about two weeks, the young will fly from the nest, leaving the parents free to raise another brood in nature's endless cycle.

Artist Jane Harvey-Winton has created this charming scene, using pen and coloured pencil to give it its delightful, soft quality. This is just one of the techniques she perfected in her work as a leading book illustrator in America. The scene enhances the beautiful thimble made by Royal Chelsea, previously a Longton China House, and justly proud of their tradition of fine chinaware production.

Thimble Collectors Club

Mary Had a Little Lamb ROYAL COACH, England

How the nursery rhymes of childhood do ring down the years! There can be few people who come across a field of gambolling lambs in springtime without thinking of the words they sang in wavering tones as toddlers, bursting with pride at being able to perform for the fond approval of the family. And unlike Miss Muffet and her tuffet, lambs could actually be seen for real, frisking with their young companions or eagerly drinking their mothers' milk, tails wagging furiously as they did so. Perhaps there was even the excitement of watching a sheepdog herding them patiently but firmly to fresh pastures, their little hooves clattering busily along a high-banked country lane.

Royal Coach was established in 1980 in Stoke-on-Trent, its name chosen as a reminder that the town was once an important stopping-place for the stage coaches that plied between Manchester and Birmingham. At first its main product was china teaware manufactured exclusively for sale in the United States, but as time went by it broadened its range and British collectors are now fortunate enough to be able to enjoy its beautifully crafted wares, typified by our charming thimble.

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Thimble Collectors Club

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"Little Lambs" Thimble



ROYAL COACH - England

Thimble Collectors Club

London Bound ROYAL COACH, England

"Ta-rah, ta-rah! The stirring sound of the coaching horn heralds the arrival of the magnificent stage coach, pulled by a spirited team of four horses. With skill and patience, the coachman steadies his powerful charges, controlling them with his gentle hand and soothing voice to ensure a smooth ride for his passengers. The stage coach brings bustle and excitement to the otherwise sleepy hamlet, and the village folk stop to give a cheery wave to the tired travellers. The party comes to a halt at the old inn on the village square, where a couple of hours of much-needed rest and welcome refreshment await both horses and travellers. Soon the coach will be on its way again; now it is the departure from the village that is signalled on the coaching horn as another stage of the long journey to London begins.

The romantic scene of yesteryear shown on this delightful thimble echoes the name of the young but thriving porcelain house that has produced it specially for the Thimble Collectors Club. The company's name - Royal Coach - was chosen because Stoke-on-Trent, where it is located, used to be one of the principal stopping-places for the old stage coaches that regularly travelled the length of the country.

Thimble Collectors Club

London Bound Thimble



ROYAL COACH - England

The stillness of an autumn morning is broken by the sound of galloping hoofs, squeaking wheels, and a loud "Tah Rah," as the coachman's horn announces the stage coach's arrival at a country inn. This quaint scene from the turn of the nineteenth century is captured in meticulous detail on this charming thimble from Royal Coach.

The Royal Coach hallmark was specifically developed for use on a range of fine china teacups and saucers depicting scenes of English inns where stage coaches visited during the nineteenth century. Once the original production run of this series was completed, the hallmark was taken out of circulation. After much consideration, however, it was agreed that the prestigious Royal Coach hallmark would be resurrected just for this thimble.

Available exclusively from the Thimble Collectors Club, the "London Bound" thimble with its quaint motif, pure white bone china, and glistening band of 22kt gold, will surely be a treasured addition to your collection.

Thimble Collectors Club

Bramble Blossom ROYAL COURT, England

The delicate and charming bramble blossom can be widely found in hedgerows, thickets and gardens throughout the summer. When the stems have reached full length, they arch over so that the tips touch the earth where they grow roots, forming a new plant – hence its abundance. Blackberry picking is one of the joys of a country walk, to return home with purple-stained lips and fingers and a basketful of ripe and shiny berries to put in an apple pie. In bygone days country folk would make an infusion of the leaves for use as a tonic.

Over the years, Royal patronage of china and porcelain manufacturers has led to the word 'Royal' being added to many famous names. Royal Court, the makers of this delightful and unique thimble, began by producing chinaware for Canada, but recently their fine bone china has become greatly in demand in Germany and Japan also. Cambridge-shire artist Angela Beard has painted many botanical and natural history subjects for quality greetings cards and her work has been used in America and Germany for porcelain products. Her collaboration with Royal Court on this project has resulted in a thimble which is sure to delight collectors everywhere.

Thimble Collectors Club

Butterfly Thimble



ROYAL COURT CHINA - England

A dainty pink butterfly drifts lightly among the blossoms and foliage of an English garden on this lovely thimble from Royal Court China. From the meticulously formal flower beds of a country estate to the lovingly tended patch in the cottage yard, the garden has long been an important element in English culture.

Generations of English poets and artists have been inspired by the beauty of a garden, and it has been a popular theme for porcelain decorators as well.

Like many English porcelain houses from the Victorian era, Royal Court has become known for fine bone china tableware, exquisitely decorated with naturalistic patterns. Originally oriented towards the Canadian market, Royal Court's outstanding wares are now available worldwide. The pure white bone china and delicate artistry which has created growing collector demand for the Royal Court name can be seen on this thimble from a distinguished chinamaker.

Thimble Collectors Club

Wild Rose Thimble



ROYAL COURT CHINA - England

Roses are particularly beloved by the English, whose national flower is the rose. And though the five-petaled flowers so exquisitely depicted on this lovely bone china thimble from Royal Court may not look like roses to some — they are admired by enthusiasts as the rose at its purest — the form most predominant in the wild. Europeans have cultivated the rose since the Middle Ages. Countless varieties — noted by their size, color and number of petals — have been developed by horticulturists around the world. Yet for hardness and fragrance, few can surpass the "wild rose."

Capturing the delicate hues and velvety texture of rose petals requires the skills of the most gifted porcelain painters — the kind of artisans especially sought out by Royal Court, one of England's most esteemed purveyors of bone china. The softest shades of creamy yellow and blush pink have been rendered more exquisite still through the artistic technique of outlining the blossoms in white, against the background of the white bone china thimble.

Distinctively hand-painted floral designs and highest quality bone china are long-standing traditions at Royal Court — where the firm's name inspires its expert craftsmen and artisans to produce dinnerware, tea sets, and ornamental articles worthy of use by English royalty!

Thimble Collectors Club

Red Aves ROYAL CROWN DERBY, England

For more than two hundred years Derby figurines and tableware have been among the finest produced anywhere in the world. The precise date when fine china was first made at Derby is not certain, but historians suggest a date of around 1750. What is certain is that over the years a breathtaking variety of exquisite and delightful pieces have proudly borne the Derby backstamp and been avidly sought by collectors.

The history of Royal Crown Derby has encompassed drama, difficulties, triumphs and honours. An early partner, William Duesbury, was responsible for buying the famous Chelsea factory in 1769, which he then closed and transferred its finest craftsmen to Derby. George III gave Duesbury his patronage and the right to mark his fine china with a crown. William Duesbury II led the company to new heights of quality in the late Eighteenth century, and yet by 1846 Crown Derby were in financial difficulties. A group of employees left to establish a separate factory in King Street to carry on the Derby tradition and in 1877 two Royal Worcester craftsmen set up a new firm, the Derby Crown Porcelain Company. They became the heirs to the Derby heritage, producing incredibly fine and highly decorated pieces. In 1890 Queen Victoria granted the company a Royal Warrant and the name Royal Crown Derby was born. Furthermore in 1935 the King Street factory joined with the Royal Crown Derby company to re-unite the two parts of the Derby tradition.

On this thimble in the Red Aves pattern, a relatively new introduction in Derby terms at fifty years old, it has graced some of Royal Crown Derby's finest pieces and now it decorates a thimble that is exclusive to Thimble Collectors Club members.

Thimble Collectors Club

Red Aves Thimble

DERBY CHINA



ROYAL CROWN DERBY

ROYAL CROWN DERBY CHINA - England

One of England's oldest and most widely recognized porcelain houses Royal Crown Derby has selected its distinctive "Red Aves" pattern as the decorative motif for this fine bone china thimble. For more than two hundred and fifty years — through both lean and prosperous times — the Derby name has been associated with fine dinnerware, serving pieces, and bisque porcelain figurines which have become avidly sought by collectors in all parts of the globe.

William Duesbury established the firm's first factory, consisting of few converted cottages, at Derby around 1750. The son of a Staffordshire potter, and a talented porcelain painter himself, Duesbury had accepted commissions from the well-known Chelsea and Bow factories before opening his own. When Chelsea was offered for sale in 1770, and Bow in 1776, Duesbury bought them, consolidating all manufacturing operations at Derby in 1784. King George III first gave Duesbury the right to use the crown on Derby bone china. Queen Victoria granted the royal warrant in 1890, commanding that the firm be known henceforth as Royal Crown Derby China, Limited.

Still thriving today, this famous porcelain house continues to produce new designs and patterns. "Red Aves," which has graced Royal Crown Derby's finest pieces for the past fifty years, now decorates this handsome thimble, available exclusively from The Thimble Collectors Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

Heath Fritillary ROYAL CROWN DUCHY, England

This charming butterfly – the heath fritillary – takes its name from the delicately spotted, bell-shaped flowers, whose petals it so closely resembles. The glimpse of a butterfly always brings a special thrill – as a harbinger of spring, or the quintessence of a lazy summer's day – but to see the heath fritillary is a particular joy. This is because this once common and widespread creature is becoming an increasingly rare visitor to Britain's woodland clearings. Its plight is sufficiently serious to have caused concern to HRH Prince Charles: he has had a plantation of conifers removed from his land in the Duchy of Cornwall so as to restore the butterfly's natural habitat. Such a move will help to ensure that this enchanting part of Britain's heritage lives on to delight future generations of nature lovers.

This thimble, with its lovely scene and important conservation message, has been produced by Royal Crown Duchy. The company began operations in the Duchy of Cornwall, but has recently moved to Stoke-on-Trent, heart of the bone china industry, where it is able to call upon the experience and skills of centuries of tradition in fine chinaware.

Thimble Collectors Club

Flower Cart ROYAL DELFESTA, England

A gentle donkey stands patiently, half asleep in the sunshine, while his pretty young owner sells flowers from her simple wooden cart. Bringing a welcome breath of freshness to the midday heat, the flower cart holds a mass of blooms of every imaginable hue, each sending up its own warm, sweet fragrance to scent the still air. Dressed in milkmaid costume, a cool straw hat protecting her from the glare of the sun, the young flower girl is as charming a sight as the flowers about her. The well-fed little donkey, happy to help in her daily work, nevertheless looks forward to the cool of the evening, when he will trot home to a shady green pasture and a welcome supper after his day's toil.

Royal Delfesta has been producing fine bone china for over a hundred years at its Sutherland factory, which was restored recently after a devastating fire. It has crafted this attractive thimble using the talents of the accomplished artist George Fryer, who has had his work published in many countries, including Sweden, America and Japan.

Thimble Collectors Club

Balloon Seller ROYAL DOULTON, England

Ever since 1815, when two young Englishmen named John Doulton and John Watts formed a partnership in a small pottery in Vauxhall Walk, Lambeth, London, the name of Doulton has been associated with the craft of high quality ceramics. For John Doulton brought to ordinary pottery a style and imagination that had previously been lacking. He quickly created sufficient demand for his wares to support nine Doulton and Watts workshops.

However, it was John Doulton's second son, Henry, who started making the elegant bone china for which Doulton was to become famous. Henry also took the decision to move the Doulton pottery to Burslem in Stoke-on-Trent. Aided by an accomplished staff of artists, designers and modellers, he presided over the creation of an exquisite selection of chinaware culminating in the award of a coveted Albert Medal in 1885. Two years later Queen Victoria knighted Henry Doulton and in 1891 his company gained the monarch's official approval and the name of "Royal Doulton" came into being. To many people Royal Doulton are particularly famous for fine bone china figures. How fitting then that one of their most celebrated and admired creations, the old balloon seller, should be portrayed on this exclusive thimble. Royal Doulton is part of Britain's heritage. Now you can share it by owning a piece of their perfect bone china.

Thimble Collectors Club

Balloon Seller Thimble



ROYAL DOULTON - England

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Thimble Collectors Club

Carousel ROYAL DOULTON, England

As we look at this delightful thimble, the evocative music of the old-fashioned fairground rings in our ears, tempting us all to try our luck at the coconut shy, to hurtle down the helter-skelter, and to whirl around on the painted 'gallopers'. Fairgrounds provide a unique form of entertainment, and nearly all of us cherish childhood experiences of them. So a little memento such as this thimble can prompt a host of happy memories.

Royal Doulton needs no introduction. It is one of the largest and best-known manufacturers of fine bone china in the world – or even in space, as Royal Doulton plates were carried on the inaugural flight of the space shuttle 'Discovery'! And as Cleopatra's Needle has Doulton ceramics in a time capsule inserted into its base, perhaps it will also be the longest-living! The artist whose work appears on this thimble is Jane Winton, a young English painter whose charming work appears on greetings cards and in children's books both in this country and in the United States of America.

Thimble Collectors Club

Carousel Thimble



ROYAL DOULTON - England

No decorative motif could be more perfectly suited to a thimble's rounded contour than a ring of prancing carousel horses! Jane Winton, a noted English illustrator of children's books, created the colorful steeds for this charming bone china thimble from Royal Doulton, one of the world's most renowned porcelain houses.

John Doulton established the firm which bears his name in 1815, when he became a partner in a small pottery works in London's Lambeth district. It was his son, however, who set the course for Royal Doulton's ensuing success. After moving the firm to the town of Burslem in England's historic Staffordshire pottery-making center, Henry Doulton assembled an outstanding staff of porcelain craftsmen and artists. In the early 1900's, Charles Nock, the art director, gained international recognition for Royal Doulton with the introduction of the now-famous figurines and the revival of the old Staffordshire tradition of Toby and character jugs.

Royal Doulton's unflagging dedication to quality, meticulous workmanship and innovative design is evident in the delightful "Carousel Thimble," available exclusively from The Thimble Collectors Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

The Circus

ROYAL DUX, Czechoslovakia

Roll-up, roll-up, ladies and gentlemen! Take your seats in the Big Top for tonight's performance at the circus! The ringmaster cracks his whip. There is an expectant buzz as the excited audience files into the huge striped tent. The performers are in the final stages of preparation - the clowns paint on their sad eyes, red noses and wide grins; the liberty horses are harnessed with their plumed finery; the elephants, seals and monkeys are washed and brushed and petted; and the acrobats, jugglers and tight-rope walkers fasten their sequined costumes, mentally rehearsing their performances of skill and daring. For more than two hundred years, troupes of circus performers have travelled the countries of the world, entertaining and delighting audiences with their spectacular displays. So hurry, hurry, hurry - the clowns are already tumbling into the ring; the show is about to begin!

Skilled craftsmen at the house of Royal Dux in Duchcov, Czechoslovakia, have been producing items of exquisite porcelain, such as this thimble, since the company was founded in 1853. Besides thimbles, Royal Dux produces porcelain figures of outstanding quality and beauty, cherished and sought after the world over.

Thimble Collectors Club
9/95
686

Badgers

ROYAL ENGLAND, England

Of all our British fauna, the badger is one of the most delightful of creatures. Not many of us are lucky enough to see one, as they are shy, nocturnal creatures, occasionally caught in the headlights of a car as they bundle hurriedly off the road. However, a real nature-lover will think it well worth while to sit quietly for hours in a hide downwind of a sett, waiting for the thrill of seeing a black and white snout cautiously emerge to test the evening air before the whole badger family sets out busily on the night's activities. These will usually include the careful housecleaning for which badgers are famed, when old bedding is brought to the surface and replaced by fresh to satisfy the fastidious nature of our much-loved Brock.

This charming thimble comes from Royal England, which was established in 1980 as a hallmark of the pottery house Morgan Graham. Its limited edition giftware, which is produced mainly for export, includes figurines, trinket boxes and thimbles. It has gained a high standing among connoisseurs of porcelain and British collectors will be sure to seize the chance to acquire one of its wares.

Thimble Collectors Club

"Badger" Thimble



ROYAL ENGLAND - England

Nestled in the flowers and tall grass of the meadow, a baby badger - cautiously watched by a protective mother - starts to explore a strange new world on this delightful thimble from Royal England.

Founded on the acclaimed traditions of the Stoke-on-Trent potteries, the Royal England pottery has built an international reputation as a specialist in producing hand-made miniatures of fine bone china. Recently, these skilled craftsmen ventured into the realm of thimble manufacture and have created yet another masterpiece in miniature. These delicate thimbles, decorated with enchanting motifs painstakingly recreated in lifelike detail, are quickly gaining recognition from collectors worldwide.

This "Badger" thimble, with its finely-detailed wildlife scene, is accented with a glistening band of 22kt gold. It has been crafted exclusively for the Thimble Collectors Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

Games of Yesteryear ROYAL ENGLAND, England

All down the ages, the sight of children playing in the street has enlivened our towns and villages. Lost in their make-believe world, they hop and skip oblivious to grown-ups and their cares. The simplest of objects bring pleasure to children's hearts as, with their ever-ready fantasy, they turn a crate into an ocean liner or a broomstick into a galloping steed. The plain, sturdy playthings of yesteryear – hoops, skipping ropes, spinning tops – were handed down from child to child and were treasured as lovingly as the most sophisticated toy of today, for to those young minds they were the most prized possessions in the world.

This delightful thimble comes from Royal England, founded on the acclaimed traditions of the Stoke-on-Trent potteries. The factory has built an international reputation as a specialist in producing hand-made miniatures in fine bone china to the very highest standards, and the name of Royal England has become synonymous with quality. For this exquisite thimble, they collaborated with artist Eric Kincaid, renowned children's book illustrator, whose understanding of the enchantment of childhood is perfectly evoked in this endearing scene.

Thimble Collectors Club

Games of Yesteryear Thimble



ROYAL ENGLAND - England

Bringing to life a long forgotten childhood memory, playful children gleefully cavort across the front of this delightful thimble from Royal England.

Founded on the acclaimed traditions of the Stoke-on-Trent potteries, the Royal England pottery has built an international reputation as a specialist in producing hand-made miniatures of fine bone china. Recently, these skilled craftsmen ventured into the realm of thimble manufacture and have created yet another masterpiece in miniature. These delicate thimbles, decorated with enchanting motifs painstakingly recreated in lifelike detail, are quickly gaining recognition from collectors worldwide.

This "Games of Yesteryear" thimble, with its finely-detailed childhood scene is accented with a band of 22kt gold. It is available exclusively to members of the Thimble Collectors Club.

3-10-87
received 10-10-87

Thimble Collectors Club

Bouquet ROYAL FRANCONIA, Germany

The traditional "Manier Flower Style" pictured on this unusual Royal Franconia thimble can be traced back well over two hundred years to around 1750 and is an old Meissen pattern.

Royal Franconia were founded over a century ago in the north of Bavaria, a wooded and thinly populated part of Germany. Raw materials were plentiful and the newly opened railway lines near the plant provided access to the whole of Europe. It was not long before Franconia's reputation for fine porcelain was recognised and soon became known throughout the world.

Today, Royal Franconia enjoy much acclaim for their products and continue to use many of the traditional designs that made them famous.

Thimble Collectors Club

Blue Jay Thimble



ROYAL GEORGINA CHINA - Ontario, Canada

One of the most well-known and beautiful North American birds, the blue jay, alertly surveys its surroundings from a flowery perch. The striking blue, black and white plumage of the crested bird is complemented by the pastel pink fruit tree blossoms on this lovely bone china thimble made by the Canadian porcelain house of Royal Georgina.

Dennis Salt — a Fellow of England's Institute of Ceramics and winner of five medals for ceramic technology — mastered the art of porcelain-making at the prestigious houses of Royal Doulton, Wedgwood and Royal Worcester before establishing his new firm in Canada's Ontario Province in 1988. Named for the beautiful resort town of Georgina, where it is located, the fledgling porcelain house has already earned recognition by combining the finest traditions of English bone china with decorative designs inspired by Georgina's scenic Lake Simcoe shore.

Crafted from native Canadian china clay, the translucent white bone china thimble is luxuriously finished with a band of hand-applied gold. Royal Georgina's "Blue Jay Thimble" is available exclusively from The Thimble Collectors Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

Images of Canada ROYAL GEORGINA, Canada

The maple leaf, emblem of Canada, conjures up the images of many other facets of that vast and beautiful land. Forests, lakes, mountains; grizzly bears fishing for salmon in fast-flowing rivers; the stately moose wending its majestic way across country; the Indian villages with their tepees and brightly painted totem poles and, probably the most famous sight of all, the Mounties — the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Formed in 1873 as the North West Mounted Police, this force of brave and hardy men has become as legendary for the efficiency and discipline of its members as for their smart and distinctive uniforms.

The bone china industry is still young in Canada. Its technology was introduced to that country in 1975 by Dennis Salt, founder of the Royal Georgina China Company, which is based in Georgina, a town that bears the proud title of 'The Ice Fishing Capital of Canada'. In his studio on the south-east shore of Lake Simcoe, Ontario, Dennis Salt is training local craftsmen to the exacting standards of English bone china producers, and his exclusive products are rapidly becoming a byword both in Canada and beyond.

Thimble Collectors Club

The Blossoms of Spring ROYAL GRAFTON, England

Forget-me-nots and Lilies of the Valley entwine on this beautiful thimble from Royal Grafton, makers of fine English bone china. This particularly pretty thimble – available exclusively from the Thimble Collectors Club – is in the long and distinguished tradition of Staffordshire floral decoration.

The calligraphy on the back of the thimble is in real gold, and was executed by Bryan Butcher, a London artist. The line is from 'At Parting' by Algernon Charles Swinburne.

More than 100 years of tradition and experience stand behind the name of Royal Grafton China. It was in 1876 that Alfred B. Jones opened a small pottery in Longton – then one of a cluster of little towns in North Staffordshire. Jones worked to perfect a translucent bone china of remarkable whiteness and strength. As the reputation of Royal Grafton tea sets spread, the porcelain house flourished and Jones took his two sons into partnership in 1900. Recognising his contribution to the Staffordshire pottery industry, the people of Longton twice elected Alfred Jones mayor of Longton, before the town became absorbed into the modern city of Stoke-on-Trent.

Since that time, Royal Grafton have continued to set uncompromising standards of quality and design. They still rely heavily on the tried and tested hand-skills of potters and decorators to maintain their hard won reputation.

Thimble Collectors Club

The Blossoms of Spring Thimble



ROYAL GRAFTON CHINA - England

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More than 100 years of tradition and experience stand behind the famed name of Royal Grafton China. It was in 1876 that Alfred B. Jones started his first factory, known as the Grafton China Works. Over the years, the firm has specialized in high quality tea sets of fine shapes and many distinctive hand-painted decorations. It still sets uncompromising standards of quality and design.

Thimble Collectors Club

Elephants ROYAL GRAFTON, England

This delightful painting of elephants is by Adam Hook, a young artist with a deep interest in wildlife. The elephant must surely be the most majestic of all the denizens of Africa's vast savannahs. Their keen intelligence and formidable bulk could make them redoubtable foes, yet these massive beasts are essentially gentle. Their sense of smell is so acute that they are able to pick up a scent from several miles away, and their memory is legendary. As they move in their slow herds across the plains, giving their strange, trumpeting calls, they truly seem like animals from a long-gone age when the world was young.

More than a hundred years of tradition and experience lie behind the proud name of Royal Grafton, who bring you this thimble. Alfred Jones founded the house in 1876 in Longton, Stoke-on-Trent, and watched it grow from strength to strength. Indeed, so appreciative were the local people of Royal Grafton's contribution to the pottery industry that they twice elected Alfred Jones mayor of Longton! Since that time, Royal Grafton have never failed to reach the highest standards of quality and design, and this charming thimble bears all the hallmarks of quality that collectors have long expected of them.

Thimble Collectors Club

Princess Diana 25th Birthday Thimble



ROYAL GRAFTON CHINA - England

This lovely bone china thimble, featuring a portrait of Diana, Princess of Wales, was created as a special tribute in celebration of her 25th birthday by the well-known English porcelain house of Royal Grafton.

From the moment the public first became aware of the romance between Prince Charles, heir to the British throne, and Lady Diana Frances Spencer, daughter of the 8th Earl Spencer — her delicate blond beauty and charming personality won the hearts of the English people. Barely twenty years old at their engagement, the shy kindergarten teacher has proved herself an exemplary wife for the future king. Since the wedding at St. Paul's Cathedral on July 29, 1981, Diana has assumed her royal duties with poise and confidence — and has presented the British people with two heirs to the throne, the Princes Will and Henry.

Founded in 1876 by Alfred B. Jones, the prestigious firm now known as Royal Grafton achieved instant acclaim for its elegant, hand-decorated tea sets. Over a century later, Royal Grafton prides itself on its dedication to the time-honored hand-crafting techniques still employed for its wide range of bone china by the skilled artisans at its factory in Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire.

Thimble Collectors Club

Sumatra ROYAL GRAFTON, England

The Sumatra pattern is a proud new addition to the famous designs of Royal Grafton porcelain. Designed by the Royal Grafton artist Aileen Jones, it subtly brings to mind the intricate patterns of Oriental art, as its name implies. With its delicate pink blooms framed in pastel shades of blue, yellow and lavender, it induces the harmony and peace of mind that is a constant theme in Buddhist art and philosophy. This porcelain gem captures the beauty of the world of nature in a charming way.

The first piece of bone china to display the illustrious Grafton name was made in 1876 by A. B. Jones, and so popular did his works become that he was able to take his sons into the business and to found a family firm that has since gone from strength to strength. The Grafton China Works was soon producing wares for the 'Home, Colonial and American markets', among them the heraldic miniatures which since have become very collectable. Today Royal Grafton still maintains the standards of quality laid down by Mr Jones all those years ago — standards which are typified in the delicacy of this beautiful thimble.

Thimble Collectors Club

Sumatra Thimble



ROYAL GRAFTON - England

Exquisite flowers rendered in muted shades of peach, lilac and green and accented with exotic bands of lavender and yellow pyramids, lead an oriental mystique to this thimble from England's prestigious Royal Grafton China.

Founded in 1876 by Alfred B. Jones, Royal Grafton achieved instant acclaim for its elegant, hand-decorated tea sets. Over a century later, Royal Grafton takes pride on its dedication to the time-honored, hand-crafting techniques their skilled artisans still employ in producing their wide range of fine bone china items. Their factory is located in the heart of England's historic porcelain-making district in Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire.

This attractive thimble, its pristine white china base

Thimble Collectors Club

Autumn River ROYAL KENDAL, England

Autumn is a time of mists, bonfires and pale, bright sunlight. Although the air carries a chilly nip to remind us of the coming of winter, we may still see a late bumble bee scrambling clumsily over the remaining flowers to collect the last of the pollen while, in the woods, squirrels are busily gathering a store of nuts to provide a larder until spring. Many water birds have departed for warmer climes, leaving the rivers ornamented by the red and gold leaves that drift silently down from the overhanging trees.

This delightful thimble is brought to you by Royal Kendal, one of the leading names among the fine bone china houses in Stoke-on-Trent. Skilled craftsmen and women hand cast, decorate and hand gild each thimble, following a tradition which stretches back 140 years.

In this evocative illustration, artist Colin Newman has drawn on his deep love of the countryside. At art college he specialised in wildlife illustration and since then he has devoted himself to depicting the flora and fauna of England. His collaboration with Royal Kendal has produced a charming thimble which will enhance the collections of thimble lovers everywhere.

Thimble Collectors Club

Dutch Windmill ROYAL MOSA

This traditional windmill design, delicately captured in Royal Mosa's usual superb style, creates a clear picture of the traditional relaxed and simple Dutch way of life.

Royal Mosa was established over a century ago by Hubertus Gerardus Louis Regout and are now one of the leading manufacturers of china products in Western Europe.

Their initial factory, situated in the Netherlands just outside Maastricht, produced many Chinese style bone china goods. Tea services were extremely popular and often carried typically oriental names. The 'Blue Chinese' look remained popular until well into this century when Mosa began using typical Dutch scenes on their products such as the windmill on this lovely thimble.

MADE IN HOLLAND

Thimble Collectors Club

Dutch Windmill Thimble



ROYAL MOSA CHINA - Holland

This traditional windmill design, delicately captured in Royal Mosa's usual superb style, creates a clear picture of the traditional relaxed and simple Dutch way of life.

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Holländische Windmühlen

ROYAL MOSA

Das traditionelle Windmühlenmuster ist ein typisches Beispiel für holländische Lebensart.

Royal Mosa wurde vor über einem Jahrhundert von Hubertus Gerardus Luis Regout gegründet und ist jetzt einer der führenden Hersteller von Porzellanprodukten in Westeuropa.

Die Stammfabrik stellte – in Holland nahe Maastrich gelegen – besonders BONE-CHINA-Porzellan im traditionellen chinesischen Stil her. Diese Teeservice waren außergewöhnlich populär und trugen oft typische orientalische Namen, wie zum Beispiel das Blue Chinese-Porzellan, das bis in dieses Jahrhundert hinein als eines der bekanntesten Porzellane von Royal Mosa galt. Heute stellt Mosa typisch holländische Szenen auf seinen Produkten dar, wie zum Beispiel diese Windmühle auf dem wunderschönen Fingerhut.

Thimble Collectors Club

Milkmaid ROYAL MOSA, Netherlands

When Royal Mosa began making porcelain back in 1883 the world was a very different place. There was no electricity to work machines, few telephones and all correspondence was still written with a quill pen, as the typewriter had still to be invented. Times have changed but the appeal of Mosa's traditional blue and white porcelain has remained undiminished.

Did you realise that you may already have examples of Royal Mosa craftsmanship in your home, for not only are they a leading porcelain house, they are one of the world's largest producers of fine ceramics tiles? For the Thimble Collectors Club, Royal Mosa have chosen the Milkmaid, a typically Dutch character, to portray on a quality porcelain thimble.

Thimble Collectors Club

Picnic Afloat ROYAL MOSA, Holland

Surely there is no lovelier sight on our rivers and lakes than that of a swan, sailing majestically on its tranquil way. According to legend, Richard the Lionheart brought the first mute swans home from the Third Crusade, although in reality they were probably breeding wild here long before. Whatever the truth, unmarked swans on the Thames today are still the property of the Sovereign. These beautiful birds form close family units, bonding for life and tending their cygnets with care.

This exquisite thimble comes from the house of Mosa, which was founded in Maastricht in 1883. Over the years, the company crest has undergone over twenty changes, and the current hallmark dates from 1983, when 'Royal' was added to the name by virtue of the company's appointment by Queen Beatrix. Mosa porcelain is renowned worldwide, and has won many prizes at international expositions. Artist Sue Camm, who painted this charming depiction of a family of swans, has had an abiding love of natural history since she was a child, and her delight in minute detail is evident in all her work. This thimble combines her delicate touch with the skills of the fine bone china craftsmen of Mosa, to provide collectors with an item of the highest quality.

Thimble Collectors Club

Picnic Afloat Thimble



ROYAL MOSA - The Netherlands

Majestic swans glide serenely among lush water reeds near a river bank in the beautiful summer scene created for this thimble by Holland's house of Royal Mosa.

Hubertus Gerardus Louis Regout established Mosa just outside the Dutch city of Maastricht in 1883. The firm gained its initial popularity for bone china of a Chinese style, but in recent times it has become renowned for blue and white chinaware charmingly decorated with typical Dutch scenes. In 1983, exactly a century after its founding, the firm was appointed purveyor to Holland's royal family by Her Majesty Queen Beatrix. Now the word "royal" has been added to the company name and hallmark.

The superb bone china and outstanding decorative artistry of this thimble testify to the quality which has made Royal Mosa one of Western Europe's leading china manufacturers. Royal Mosa is producing the "Picnic Afloat" thimble exclusively for The Thimble Collectors Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

Elegance ROYAL PORZELLAN, West Germany

There can be no greater symbol of elegance than the rose — so much so that one beautiful species has even been given the name of *elegans*. Down through the centuries, the rose has inspired men of art — writers, poets and painters — to use it as an expression of beauty, and at the same time it brings simple, heartfelt joy to everyone who sees it bloom. Whether it is the sweetbriar or wild rose, the loveliest of wild flowers to grace our country hedgerows, or a full-blown, lovingly cultivated rose, with a deep velvety bloom on its petals and a strong, heady fragrance, it touches all of us with its natural beauty. No wonder there is no more expressive — or more elegant — token of love than the rose.

Royal Porzellan is proud to bring you the rose in all its glory on this delicate thimble. This porcelain house was formed in Thuringia, Germany, at the turn of the century by Claus Kutik, whose family are still active in today's production. Now established in the city of Kueps, Royal Porzellan is known for its high quality, hand-made porcelain. Among the company's specialities are beautifully designed dolls and angels. This example of its fine ceramic ware is sure to find favour with discerning thimble collectors everywhere.

Thimble Collectors Club

Pastel Flowers Thimble



ROYAL PORZELLAN - Kueps, West Germany

An elegant six-sided shape, smooth bisque finish and exquisitely painted flowers enhanced with glistening touches of gold distinguish the first thimble ever created by Royal Porzellan.

Herr Klaus Kutik founded his porcelain factory in Germany Thuringia/Saxony region around the turn of the century. After nearly fifty years of practicing the time-honored porcelain making traditions of this historic area, the Kutik family relocated to the West German city of Kueps shortly after the end of World War II. There, they re-established their business, carrying on the old hand-crafting methods. Today, Royal Porzellan employs forty highly skilled artisans and is widely acclaimed for its beautiful porcelain angels and dolls.

Now Royal Porzellan begins a new tradition with its first porcelain thimble, featuring delicate flowers painted in the naturalistic style of the famous porcelain decorators at Meissen. Available exclusively from the Thimble Collectors Club, the "Pastel Flowers Thimble" represents the pinnacle of Germany porcelain-making art.

Thimble Collectors Club

Apple Blossom ROYAL STAFFORD, England

One of the loveliest sights of spring must be the creamy pink masses of blossom adorning the apple trees which stud the British landscape like leafy jewels. In Kent, the garden of England, the orchards billow with foamy blooms as the thousands of trees set the fruit that will weigh their branches down in early autumn. And how the traditional names roll off the tongue! Egremont Russet, Worcester Pearmain, Laxton's Superb – the words conjure up the glossy, reddened skins and the tender, juicy white flesh which crunches deliciously between the teeth.

Royal Stafford China, based in Burslem, Staffordshire, is the result of a marriage between three long-established pottery companies – Thomas H. Poole, the Gladstone Pottery and John Maddock & Sons. The company of Thomas Poole was formed in 1845 and, in 1937, acquired Gladstone China. From 1948 the partnership was known as Royal Stafford China Limited, a name that became synonymous all over the world with fine ware. Finally, in 1973, the company was sold to John Maddock & Sons, a firm which was for years one of the foremost suppliers of vitrified hotelware. The combined expertise of these three companies make Royal Stafford a name truly to be reckoned with in the world of fine china.

Thimble Collectors Club

Apple Blossom Thimble



ROYAL STAFFORD - England

Pale pink apple blossoms and glossy red fruit simultaneously share a bough in the fanciful design that encircles this snow-white bone china thimble from the esteemed English porcelain house of Royal Stafford.

Founded in Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent, in 1948, the firm then known as Royal Stafford China Limited joined together two long-established Staffordshire porcelain-makers – Thomas H. Poole and the Gladstone Pottery. The oldest of these, Poole, was established in 1845 and brought to Royal Stafford its tradition of fine tea services and dinnerware. With the addition of John Maddock and Sons in 1973, the firm added high-quality hotelware to its line. Today, beautiful tableware bearing the Royal Stafford hallmark can be found in homes and fine hotels around the world.

Available exclusively from The Thimble Collectors Club, the "Apple Blossom Thimble" exemplifies the exceptional combination of superb bone china and imaginative designs for which Royal Stafford has become internationally famous.

Thimble Collectors Club

Swallowtails and Harebells ROYAL SUTHERLAND, England

One of the loveliest sights of spring is the fragile, quivering harebell, most frail in form of all our native plants. Its wispy stems seem barely able to support the flower, yet the petals are so delicate they can weigh no more than a breath of air. While it will grow happily in gardens, to find a group of them in a meadow or on a mountainside, butterflies dancing about their drooping heads, gives a thrill of discovery and pleasure at the riches that nature has laid before us.

This exquisite thimble is a fine example of the acclaimed chinaware produced by Royal Sutherland. The factory was inaugurated almost a hundred years ago in Longton, Stoke-on-Trent, on land originally owned by the Duke of Sutherland, from whom it derives its name. During its long and illustrious history the backstamp has been redesigned a number of times – yet it has always retained a prancing lion, symbol of pride and of majesty. With this fine china thimble, with its enchanting scene from our native heaths, Royal Sutherland has produced another of the highly collectable items for which it is justly famed.

Thimble Collectors Club

Swallowtails and Harebells Thimble



ROYAL SUTHERLAND - England

Two of the most exquisite and treasured natural wonders of the English heath – the delicate Swallowtail butterfly and the fragile-stemmed Harebell flower – provide an enchanting motif for this fine English bone china thimble from Royal Sutherland.

Located in Longton, Stoke-on-Trent, the hub of England's famous ceramics-making district, Royal Sutherland has been acclaimed for its beautiful bone china tableware and gift items for nearly a century. This thimble, with its pure white bone china and magnificently rendered scene of butterflies and wildflowers, exemplifies the qualities which have made Royal Sutherland's wares so avidly sought by collectors everywhere.

Royal Sutherland's "Swallowtails and Harebells Thimble", available exclusively from The Thimble Collectors Club, will be an illustrious addition to any thimble collection.

Thimble Collectors Club

The Book of Kells ROYAL TARA, Ireland

Overlooking the Bay of Galway in Ireland stands stately Tara Hall. Once the home of wealthy merchants, this Georgian mansion now houses Royal Tara China. From this beautiful setting has come some of the finest examples of Irish bone china.

The famous Book of Kells, housed in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, is a splendid example of an early Irish illuminated manuscript. It was produced by the monks at the Monastery of Kells, in County Meath, in the late eighth or early ninth century.

The Book of Kells thimble shows the detail of the original design and colour displayed to its best effect on the pure bone china.

Thimble Collectors Club

Shamrocks Thimble



ROYAL TARA CHINA - Ireland

Overlooking the Bay of Galway in Ireland stands stately Tara Hall. Once the home of wealthy merchants, this Georgian mansion now houses world-famous Royal Tara China. From this beautiful setting have come some of the finest examples of Irish bone china.

This lovely thimble beautifully portrays Ireland's national emblem — the Shamrock. According to legend, the Shamrock was used by Saint Patrick to illustrate the Doctrine of the Trinity.

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Thimble Collectors Club

"Xmas Holly" Thimble



ROYAL WESTMINSTER CHINA - England

"Sleigh bells ring, are you listening . . ." Christmas cheer and holiday songs will fill your mind every time you gaze at this lovely "Xmas Holly" thimble designed by the artisans of Royal Westminster China.

While it remains one of England's most sought-after hallmarks, Royal Westminster China never really existed. The name was actually the hallmark utilized by the Anchor Porcelain Co., Ltd. Formed in 1901, the Anchor Porcelain Co., Ltd. was situated on Anchor Road in Longton, in very close proximity to the equally-famous Aynsley Porcelain factory. Noted for its highly sought-after floral pieces, the Anchor factory has continued to produce only the finest porcelain and bone china giftware.

Designed to harken back to the heyday of Royal Westminster China's past, this "Xmas Holly" thimble clearly demonstrates the care and precision which goes into each of their products. Topped with a glistening band of 24kt gold and a shimmering crystal, this thimble is a holiday treasure designed exclusively for the enjoyment of Thimble Collectors Club members.

Thimble Collectors Club

Chipmunk Thimble



ROYAL WORCESTER - England

An adorable chipmunk scampers among the forest greenery on this fine white bone china thimble from Royal Worcester — England's oldest operating porcelain maker.

The distinguished porcelain house of Royal Worcester was founded in Worcester, England in 1751 as The Worcester Toukin Manufacture. From the beginning the firm produced a wide range of high quality tableware and magnificent ornamental articles including vases and urns. In 1788, the crown was added to the hallmark when the firm received patronage from the royal family. Today, this venerable firm is more widely admired than ever, producing fine bone china wares marked with the Royal Worcester name.

Available exclusively from the Thimble Collectors Club, the "Chipmunk" thimble, with its charming lithograph and band of luxurious gold, exemplifies the quality for which Royal Worcester is noted and is a delightful addition to any collection.

Thimble Collectors Club

DUP

Cottage Garden ROYAL WORCESTER, England

This is perhaps many people's ideal: a still summer's evening gently laced by the scent of honeysuckle; bees droning among the Briar Roses; a watchful Wren waiting for supper; the clink of teacups from the kitchen; and the subtle changes of colour as the sun slowly dips. The magic of a cottage garden has here been knowingly captured for us by Surrey-born artist Tim Hayward. Keenly interested in wildlife from childhood, Tim worked as an artist for several leading publishing houses before he felt ready to set up on his own, working from his studio in Bristol. He now works on a wide diversity of natural history projects.

Royal Worcester was founded in 1751 and, during its early years, it was England's most productive chinaware factory. The crown in the company hallmark was granted by permission of King George III in 1788, and has been used to this day.

The fine white bone china and delicate colouring of the Cottage Garden clearly demonstrate why Royal Worcester has become one of the most respected porcelain houses in the world today.

Thimble Collectors Club

Cottage Garden Thimble



ROYAL WORCESTER - England

A charming scene, featuring a typical thatch-roofed English country cottage and garden, has been selected for this fine bone china thimble from Royal Worcester — England's oldest operating porcelain-maker.

This world-famous porcelain house was founded in 1751 in the city of Worcester as "The Worcester Tonkin Manufacture." From the beginning the firm produced a wide range of high-quality tableware — as well as magnificent ornamental articles, including vases and urns. In 1788, the crown was added to its hallmark, when royal patronage was received. Today, this venerable firm is more widely admired than ever, producing fine bone china wares marked with the prestigious Royal Worcester name.

The snowy-white bone china, outstanding decorative artistry and beautiful colors for which Royal Worcester is acclaimed can all be seen on the "Cottage Garden Thimble," available exclusively from The Thimble Collectors Club.

Thimble Collectors Club

Country Garden ROYAL WORCESTER, England

The beauty of an English country garden, alive with a variety of colourful plants and flowers, forms the subject for this superb thimble created by Royal Worcester.

The history of Royal Worcester can be traced back to 1751 when it was originally founded. During its early years, it was the most productive chinaware factory in England. The crown, added to the company hallmark, was granted by permission of King George III in 1788 and has been used to this day.

The fine white bone china and delicate colouring on this thimble clearly demonstrate why Royal Worcester has become one of the most sought after and respected porcelain manufacturers in the world today.

Thimble Collectors Club

Country Garden Thimble



ROYAL WORCESTER - England

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Thimble Collectors Club

Finger and Thumb Thimble



ROYAL WORCESTER - England

Preserved from the Nineteenth century, this beautiful "Finger and Thumb" pattern of striking orange blossoms accented by sapphire blue and gold leaves is recreated on this fine bone china thimble from Royal Worcester — England's oldest operating porcelain maker.

The Worcester Towkin Manufacture was founded in 1751 in the city of Worcester, England. Its small staff of skilled artisans produced a wide range of exceptional tableware, vases and urns, which quickly gained royal attention. Upon receiving royal favor, the crown was bestowed upon its hallmark, and the humble firm became "Royal Worcester."

In 1810, one of Worcester's most noted potters, Thomas Grainger, produced an innovative design based on the Japanese "Imari" style, and christened it the "Finger and Thumb" pattern. Items decorated in this fashion were highly prized for their exceptional style and color and quickly became so rare that an original plate from that time was placed in the Dyson Perrins Museum in Worcester, England, where it remains to this day.

The breathtakingly beautiful "Finger and Thumb" design, recreated in white bone china, is a true masterpiece. Being the original Royal Worcester hallmark and the only thimble ever made from the "Finger and Thumb" pattern.

Thimble Collectors Club

River Romances ROYAL WORCESTER, England

Time was, it seems, when the English summer was bathed in sunshine, the lush meadows and stately trees providing a verdant backdrop to the quieter pleasures of yore. Poling gently down a river, past the overhanging fronds of willow swirling in the water's eddy, the only sounds the splash and gurgle of the river under the bows of the punt, the lowing of cows in the pastures, and perhaps the distant sound of a church bell — what better way to enjoy the glories of our countryside?

This evocative thimble is from the house of Royal Worcester, which was founded as long ago as 1751. The company quickly gained a formidable reputation and while still in its early years was the most productive chinaware factory in England. During the nineteenth century it began to produce large numbers of hand-painted thimbles, mostly made in Parian ware; the most popular designs were of butterflies, grasses, flowers and birds. These are now rare and are greatly prized by collectors. This proud tradition of thimble manufacture is reflected in the quality of the fine bone china and the delicate, glowing colours of our "River Romances" thimble.

Thimble Collectors Club

Swans

ROYAL WORCESTER, England

There is no more serene sight, on a calm stretch of reeded river or a shallow, glassy lake, than a pair of mute swans with their brood of fluffy cygnets. The devoted pair share the responsibility of bringing up their young. The male will defend the family from any threat by surging forward in the water, his large wings folded high behind him. Often the youngsters will hitch a ride with their mother, nestling in the soft feathers of her back, protected by the white shields of her raised wings. That snowy white plumage of the mute swan is miraculously made up of some 25,000 feathers. The term 'mute' is something of a misnomer – mute swans are far from quiet and have an enviable vocal repertoire of noisy hisses, grunts and snorts!

This most graceful of thimbles has been produced for you by Royal Worcester, who have been making fine thimbles for more than two hundred years. In the first half of the nineteenth century the company specialised in thimbles with traditional patterns. These now rare and valuable pieces are much sought after by collectors, who equally prize the exquisite items produced by Royal Worcester today.

Thimble Collectors Club

Japanese Ladies

ROZAN, Japan

Japan is famous all over the world for the glory of the cherry blossom in spring, the breathtaking beauty of Mount Fuji, and the elaborate ritual which attends every social custom. Even today, costume and manner still denote a person's standing and profession far more minutely than in our Western society. In former times this was even more marked, particularly in the case of the women, with their exquisite silk kimonos and elaborate hairstyles. This delightful, informative thimble depicts five of these ladies of old: Okita Naniwaya, an eighteenth-century waitress from the celebrated Naniwaya restaurant; Ohisa Takashima, a nineteenth-century maiden from Tokyo; Yoshino Daiyu, an eighteenth-century geisha; Kikunoyjo Segawa, from the celebrated Kabuki theatre (actually a male actor playing a female role as tradition demands); and Toyhina Tomimoto, an eighteenth-century geisha girl of high repute.

The name Rozan comes from 'Ro', meaning pottery kiln and 'zan', mountain. The company was founded in 1955 in Tokistu, where there has been a thriving pottery industry since the eighteenth century. Rozan is well known for its highly decorated tableware, but its main claim to fame rests on its exquisite miniature items, such as this charming thimble.