(TCC) Hallmarked Thimbles of the World's Great Porcelain Houses

Thimble Collectors' Club (TCC)

After the success of the 1980 Franklin Mint Porcelain Houses of the World set of thimbles known as **Thimbles of the World's Greatest Porcelain Houses**, this set of 50 thimbles, entitled **The Hallmarked Thimbles of the World's Great Porcelain Houses** was commissioned by the Thimble Collectors Club in 1985. The striking difference between this set and the earlier one, is that the thimble design is largely made up of the enlarged backstamp, registered mark or hallmark of the porcelain house being portrayed.

Obviously, there are a few thimble houses that are duplicated from the first set, but this collection is more representative of the large range of firms making thimbles in the mid-1980s - a decade later most of them no longer produced thimbles or even existed. This list also reflects many of the thimble houses that formed part of the Thimble Collectors Club, who issued monthly thimbles to the members of their Club. As well as issuing monthly thimbles, the TCC also offered special sets for sale. This Hallmarked set is one of many offered.

Some of the thimbles have their backstamp repeated inside the thimble, for others there is sufficient identification with the outer maker's mark. Each thimble was accompanied by an explanatory leaflet. Where available I had added the relevant certificates where I have them.

If you collect a specific porcelain house, it would be most worthwhile to find and add the relevant thimble to your collection.

I have now located the original magazine advertisement, placed by Thimble Collectors Club, Chessington UK. It is undated. They describe the hallmark as the central motif, not hidden away on the back. The original price was 9.95 pounds each (plus postage) and thimbles would be received at a rate of two a month. There is an accompanying glass domed display case.

I have noticed some anomalies in this advert that was issued by the UK TCC. Only nine thimbles are illustrated. The final colour for the Kaiser issue is blue; in the advert the example shown is red. Royal Copenhagen and Noritake are listed but do not form part of the UK set of 50 but they are featured in the US set!! I understand that the US accompanying brochure is different from the UK version and there are big differences between the sets issued for the UK and US markets.

I have separated the 2 sets for easier reference. If you have photos of the missing US set thimbles ... please share!! And now by 2015, I find there are 55 for the list for the US-set - if anyone has this complete set, please let me know which one doesn't belong!!

It is 30 years since the UK set was issued, so it is difficult to know why the sets varied so much between the US and UK! Which was issued first? When was the US set released?

Just to add to the confusion, there are five thimbles that are featured in neither the US or UK brochures!! - Bouchet - Moschendorf - Parbus - Thun - Uhlenhorst. I know that the marketers of these sets did not expect thimble collectors to communicate as easily as we can in the 21st century - exposing anomalies!!

And now, in 2015, to add to the merriment of thimble collecting, there are different shapes appearing for some of the US set thimbles! Maybe the smaller manufacturers ran out of their usual blank shapes and substituted them with those they could lay their hands on? I have tried to use the most-known shape for those that were issued with more than one shape.

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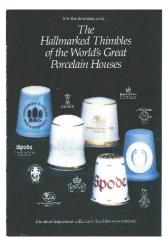
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USA brochure

UK CLUB THIMBLE SET OF 50









UK CLUB THIMBLE CERTIFICATES

ARITA - GOLD IMARI



Arita, Japan Founded early 1600s

COALPORT



Stoke-on-Trent, England Founded 1750

HAMMERSLEY

Hammersley

Stoke-on-Trent, England Founded circa 1860

HAVILAND Maviland Haviland, France Founded 1842

The words "Arita" and "Gold Imari", and the Japanese sign for Arita rendered in gilt comprise the hallmark on the finest wares of one of Japan's most prestigious porcelain houses.

The first porcelain-makers in Japan were trained at the original Arita factory, where an entire village of Korean craftsmen were brought to work under the guidance of Korean master-potter, Ri-Sampei, in the early 1600s. Sampei had discovered a native Japanese source of porcelain clay on the slopes of Mount Izumi. Soon Japanese aritsans excelled in porcelain-making, as well as in the art of porcelain decorating.

The Chinese method of overglaze enamel decorating was introduced at Arita in 1664 by Sakaida Kakiemon, Japan's legendary porcelain decorator. The heritage of Kakiemon's brilliant colours and his understated style of decorating with sparsely applied motifs can be seen today.

From the crown hallmark to the golden leaf pattern trim, this thimble marks the history of one of England's most renowned china makers.

Coalport came into being in the mid 1700s, when Squire Brown began making "Salopian" earthenware at a pottery high above the River Severn. In 1799, ownership of the firm passed to the Rose brothers, John and Richard, who made the transition to fine bone china production.

During the early 1800s, Coalport built a reputation for beautiful flower-decorated ornamental wares, and in 1820 gained a Royal Society of Arts Gold Medal.

Royal recognition came to Coalport during the Victorian era. In 1845, Queen Victoria commissioned the firm to create a lavishly decorated dessert service. The set was displayed at the great 1851 Crystal Palace exhibition in London, representing the epitome of British design. It was later presented as a state gift to Czar Nicholas I of Russia.

Local and national pride are reflected in the distinctive Hammersley hallmark, which combines an acorn, oak leaves and a crown. It has been the symbol of one of England's most prestigious makers since the mid 1800s.

The Hammersley family has been creating magnificent china for nearly three centuries. Its formal ware has carried the heraldry of many of England's most historic regiments, as well as of royalty. The firm's proud hallmark appears on table services used at Oxford colleges, the houses of the aristocracy, and the famous Ritz hotel in London.

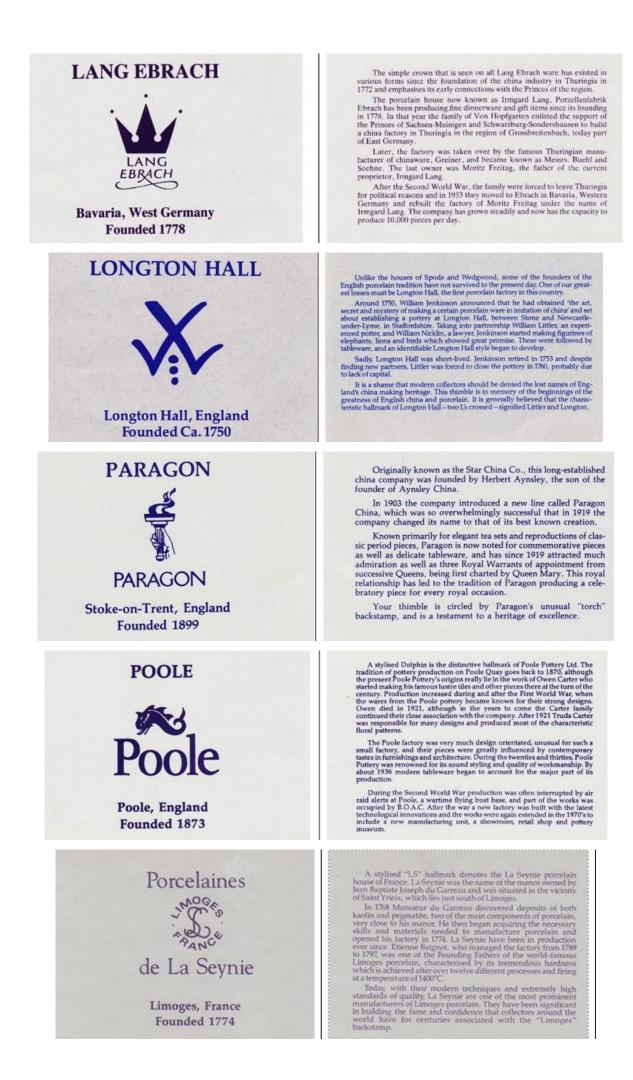
Knowledgeable collectors from many nations are eager to acquire pieces bearing the Hammersley hallmark. Its designers are recognised for their ability faithfully to translate the forms and colours of fine art to pieces as small as this thimble and as large as a serving platter.

The house of Hammersley is located in Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, in the centre of one of the most renowned porcelain areas in the world.

The Haviland family can be traced back to a document dated 1066 which reports that the Lord "de Havylland" left Normandy to take part in the battle of Hastings. The family coat-of-arms used on Haviland porcelain today is virtually unchanged from that carried by William Haviland when he accompanied Richard the Lionheart on a crusade.

the Lonheart on a crusade. Much later, in 1821 the family emigrated to New York where David Haviland set up a business importing porcelain from England. Recognising a need to offer customers a wider range of wares he visited Limoges in France, in 1842, impressed by the quality of undecorated porcelain being produced in Limoges he moved to live there and set up his first china decoration workshop. By producing dinner services specially designed for the United States market the company rapidly became successful. In 1853 Haviland was entrusted with the creation of Franklin Pearce's dimer service and subsequently services were produced for Lincoln. Grant, Hayes and F. D. Roosevelt.

Grant, Hayes and F. D. Roosevell. In 1865 the company started to manufacture its own white china as well as decorating. Up to 1870 the company's designs changed little but the emergence of new art styles at that time prompted Haviland to produce exciting new designs, first in "Art Nouveau" then later in "Art Deco" style. These styles made admirable use of Haviland's skill at reproducing ancient chinese finishes, such as celadon and ivory, rediscovered only after persistent research by the company. Haviland's unquestionable technical skill and use of great artists such as Cocleau, Lurcat and Yves Brayer has made it one of the world's finest porcelain houses.





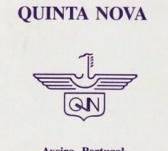
Limoges, France Founded 1774

A stylised "LS" hallmark denotes the La Seynie porcel house of France. La Seynie was the name of the manor owned Jean Baptiste Joseph du Garreau and was situated in the vicinity of Saint Yrieix, which lies just south of Limoges. wned by

In 1768 Monsieur du Garreau discovered deposits of both kaolin and pegnatite, two of the main components of porcelain, very close to his manor. He then began acquiring the necessary skills and materials needed to manufacture porcelain and opened his factory in 1774. La Seynie have been in production ever since. Etienne Baignot, who managed the factory from 1789 to 1797, was one of the Founding Fathers of the world-famous Limoges porcelain, charactered by its tremendous hardness which is achieved after over twelve different processes and firing, at a temperature of L4060C at a temperature of 1400oC.

Today, with their modern techniques and extremely high standards of quality, La Seynie are one of the most prominent manufacturers of Limoges porcelain. They have been significant in building the fame and confidence that collectors around the world have for centuries associated with the "Limoges" backstamp.

Version 2



Aveiro, Portugal Founded 1979



Fine Bone China Made in England

Stoke-on-Trent, England Founded 1974

ROYAL COURT



England Founded 1876 An eagle above the initials QN is the hallmark of Porcelanas De Quinta Nova, founded in 1979 by a large ceramics group. The eagle was chosen for its large wingspan and ability to fly at high altitude thus symbolising the company's aims to reach great heights across a wide market. The Quinta Nova factory lies in the region of Aveiro, the centre of Portugal's porcelain industry.

The pristine whiteness of this thimble is characteristic of Quinta Nova porcelain. It is the result of the fine day found in Portugal's Aveiro region, which has exceptional properties. With this cleap as a base, artisms and artists work in close harmony at the factory to create works of extraordinary quality and beauty.

Close harmony at the factory to create works or extraordinary quality and beauty. With a plant of 32,000 square metres the Quinta Nova factory is one of the largest of its kind to have been built in Europe in the last decade. The company employs 450 workers and has the capacity to produce 50,000 pieces per day. With the dedication to excellence exhibited by Quinta Nova the company have very quickly established a world-wide reputation for its high quality porcelain, mainty tableware, produced with modern technology and equipment. Indeed they now export seventy per cent of their production to more than 25 countries in 5 continents.

Ouinta Nova currently hold a position that they not only wish to hold on to, but now wish to consolidate. They believe that continued growth lies in the evolution of technology and in their quality and design. It is these three factors, combined with wise investment in both equipment and human resources that will lead them towards the accomplishment of their objectives.

The stylised 'Renaissance' is the simple hallmark of Renaissance International Limited. The company was founded in 1974 as the Renaissance Design Studios by Howard J. Wedgwood, a potter with 30 years experience, together with wo Staffordshire businessmen, Barry Nurser and John Key. The company later changed its name to Renaissance International Ld. with Barry Nurser at its Proprietor and Chairman. Renaissance in the classical sense of the word, is re-birth of all the fraint of Renaissance fine bone china is the re-birth of all the fraint of Renaissance fine bone china is by tradition made and craftsmanship and craftsmanship and and at Renaissance they use only the hand-skills of dedicated attriks and craftsmen to produce each piece. Today Renaissance have established a world-wide reputation freenaissance in dividually free-hand painted. This is highly-skilled work requiring very well trained and experienced utility appreciate the word's 'Hand-made and free-hand-painted'. In the same way, all pieces bearing the distinctive Renaissance fuerling the collector the same high standards of quality and craftsmanship.

Royal Court, of England, is part of the Royal Grafton group of companies which has been making high quality porcelain in the Potteries for more than 100 years.

For many years there have been connections between the Royal households and famous china and porcelain manufacturers, and Royal patronage has resulted in the addition of the word 'Royal' to many establised names.

Royal Court products were first made for the Canadian market which has a deep love of chinaware. More recently, special ranges of fine bone china tableware have been produced for the discerning German market and to satisfy the demand in Japan for traditional English chinaware.

Thimbles, however, are new to the pottery's range of excellence, and we are privileged here to bring you one of their very first!

ROYAL KENDAL



Stoke-on-Trent, England Founded 1975

ROYAL TARA



FINE BONE CHINA MADE IN IRELAND

Galway, Ireland Founded 1951

SPODE

Spode Fine Bone China ENGLAND

Stoke-on-Trent, England Founded 1770

VICTORIA



FINE BONE CHINA

England Founded 1900

VISTA ALEGRE



Vista Alegre, Portugal Founded 1824 The stylised 'Royal Kendal' and Crown is the simple hallmark of Royal Kendal. The company was founded in 1975 as part of Hudson and Middleton Ltd.

The Royal Kendal thimble epitomises the beauty and craftsmanship that are associated with the company's chinaware, produced at Sutherland Works, in Longton, Stoke-on-Trent, Despite the comparatively recent formation of Royal Kendal, pottery has been manufactured at the Satherland Works sile for over 140 years. At one time it consisted of two factories, one making eartheware and one producing hone china, the two separate entrance-arches still being evident.

The Sutherland Works was first owned by Skelton and Plant who started business around 1834. The site was later occupied by William Hudson & Co. who in 1941 merged with J.H. Middleton & Co. to form Hudson and Middleton Ltd.

Today Royal Kendal is 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 the tradition which stretches back in the Sutherland Works some 140 years. The company makes considerable exports to both Europe and North America.

Stately Tara Hall, overlooking the Bay of Galway in Ireland, is depicted in pastel tints of tan and green on the hallmark of Royal Tara. The Georgian mansion was once the home of wealthy Galway merchants. It now houses the kilns of one of Ireland's most distinguished makers of fine bone china.

The name Tara has a special meaning to Irishmen, since it figured prominently in local history. It has its roots in eastern Ireland, in County Meath on the Irish Sea. There, in about 2000 B.C., the Celts built Tara hill, a huge earthwork to defend themselves against hostile neighbours and invaders from the sea. There, too, was the original Tara Hall, home of a number of early Irish kings.

Royal Tara is a purveyor of china to royalty and discriminating collectors around the world. It is renowned for its intricate decoration, like the painting of Tara Hall on this thimble. The ornamentation is applied to the china after the initial hightemperature glazing. The pieces are then fired again at a lower temperature to protect the delicate pigments from fading in the intense heat.

For porcelain collectors around the world, the name "Spode" needs no introduction. The simple hallmark represents a firm that, for over 200 years, has been known for the extraordinary quality and artistry of its English bone china,

In fact, it was fosiah. Spode II, son of the founder, who developed the original formula for English bone china. It called for six parts bone ash, four parts china stone and three and a half parts china clay. The result was a strong, chip-resistant hybrid porcelain with a desirable ivory-white colour.

The ornate decoration of early Spode porcelain is reflected by the griffin, depicted on the back of the thimble. A creature from Greek mythology, said to have stood guard over a large store of gold, the griffin had the head and wings of an eagle and the body of a lion. Other 10th-century Spode pieces were inspired by lavish Oriental patterns.

From the start, demand for Spode far exceeded supply. This prompted many other English porcelain makers to begin utilizing the bone china formula.

After many years as Works Manager at the famous Mason's factory, Glyn Jones and his wife set up on their own. So it was that the Victoria China Company began life in a small workshop at the rear of the Post Office and general store in the beautiful little village of Caverswall. Because of Mr. Jones's skill and vast experience, the business quickly expanded and the works moved to a larger premises. Then in 1979 a further move was necessary to cope with increased demand and the present factory at Fenton, once a separate town and now a district of Stoke-on-Trent, was acquired and the Victoria China Company was formally founded.

Further expansion took place when Mr. Jones's brother joined the company and fine hand-painted bird and animal figurines began to be produced under the name of Countryside Design Studio.

Whilst both companies flourish, the small team of highly skilled craftsmen who produce the wide range of porcelain goods take immense pride in maintaining the very highest standards of workmanship which is the hallmark of Victoria china.

> Among collectors, the initials "VA" denote Portugal's first and foremost porcelain house, Vista Alegre. The 1824 date on the hallmark commemorates the year in which the firm was founded by José Ferreira Pinto Basto. The other date, 1984, recalls the gala 160th birthday celebration when a travelling exhibition of Vista Alegre works toured the country and new designs were unveiled.

> This thimble is the product of the fine clay found in Portugal's Aveiro region, which has exceptional properties. With this clay as a base, artisans and artists work in close harmony at the factory to create works of extraordinary quality and beauty.

> The prestige which Vista Alegre enjoys is world-wide. For many years, the Portuguese government has presented porcelain gifts created by the firm to visiting dignitaries. Vista Alegre porcelain is used in the palaces of European royalty and in the residences of many heads of state. Individual pieces are also displayed in leading international art museums.



The mighty "Friedrichsburg" castle is not only the hallmark of the porcelain house Vohenstrauss, but also the chosen emblem of the city of Vohenstrauss, a small town in eastern Bavaria very close to the Czechoslovakian border. The Pfalzgraf Friedrich began construction of the castle in 1586 and the work was completed in 1593. The castle has survived both the wars of the 16th and 20th centuries and two severe fires in 1763 and 1839.

Johann Seltmann founded the Vohenstrauss factory in 1901, starting with three roundovens. The number of ovens soon increased to eight and rather than bring in workers from outside Johann recruited experts from Thuringen to instruct the local populus in the skills of pottery. The company grew quickly and by 1914 the factory employed more than 500 workers, specialising in the production of good quality dinnerware and beautiful gift items.

Despite the setback of the Second World War, Vohenstrauss resumed production in 1946 and in 1950 the factory was modernised: the roundovens were replaced by gas fired tunnelovens. Vohenstrauss has steadily grown over the years and today employs some 350 workers. Their fine porcelain ware is as well known today overseas as it is in Germany.

US CLUB THIMBLE SET OF 55 (?)

These six are not mentioned in original promotional brochure – thimbles found are for Avonvale - Epiag -Moschendorf - Parbus - Royal Georgina - Vale

These ten are mentioned in original brochure but missing thimbles photos – were some of these dropped in favour of above?

Belleek Noritake Okura Pickard Porcelanas del Ampurdan Portmeirion Raynaud Royal Adderley Royal Alma Royal Tudor

Now we still have to discover which four of these are only missing photos or were never produced?

I now also have photos for Asmar (Spain) – Augarten (Vienna) – Dresden (Germany) – Lin (Japan) Lindner (Germany) – Pirkenhammer (Czechoslovakia).

Where they ever part of this set? Do they belong with the red group?

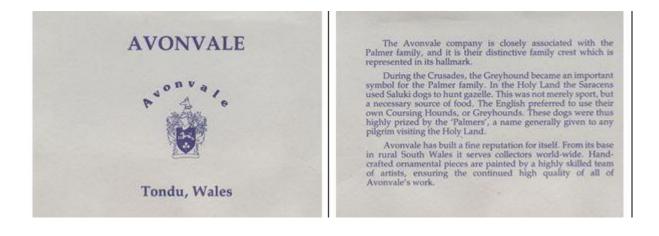








US CLUB THIMBLE CERTIFICATES



Contributors

Barbara | Linda Berkery | Betty Gerrits | Debby Hoover | Cathy Howgate | Willi Josten | Wanda Ralston Jina Samulka | Norma Shattock | Jean Taylor | Sharon Underwood | Joanna Waciorski Blackie-Sew Many Bits Ana Maria Werner & Hellmuth Leal | Mave Wiskin | Krystyna Zagajewska

This listing of The hallmarked thimbles of the world's greatest porcelain houses thimbles does not purport to be complete or accurate in all aspects.

Rather it invites comment and contribution to add to our knowledge. My thanks to the contributors.

EMAIL thimbleselect@bigpond.com TO SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

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