

# British registered design numbers (RD) thimbles

I hadn't planned to field a topic where there is a published book on the subject. This topic extends the book *British registered design thimbles* by Norma Spicer and Diane Pelham Burn in 2003. This has been brought about a few thimble designs, which they had not previously been recorded.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century (from 1850) was the most innovative era in thimble design. To protect these new designs the maker could register his new design. This registered number granted was then stamped on the band.

I thought I had sorted out the difference between a registered design on thimbles and a patented design. The latter protects the new use or type of thimble being patented.

Charles Horner used both ways of protecting his Dorcas thimbles. Patent No. 8954 of 1884, patented his improved thimble, which was to produce a steel-cored sterling silver thimble. These thimbles were marked PAT. or PATENT. Once he began to register new designs for his Dorcas and sterling silver thimbles, the R<sup>D</sup> No. would be added as well.

I have lettered the date in blue when the registered number is included on the band. This shows the period when they were lettered.

I have included an unknown registration number at the end, in the hope that someone knows it.

The topic concludes with thimble holders with registered design numbers.

Many of these thimbles feature throughout the topics.

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## THIMBLES

Tho some of the photos don't show the RD No they all are part of the registered design. Some may have been made later, or I don't have a view of the R<sup>D</sup> No. I have included as many relevant photos, to try and show their rarity – or not.

### R<sup>D</sup>73626

Registration holder and thimble maker: Charles Horner

Registration date: 11 May 1887

R<sup>D</sup>73624 was the actual registration number but Horner only ever used the incorrect number as above. The presence of the R<sup>D</sup> No enabled us to identify Horner at the maker of the sterling examples with other sponsors marks. Part of the thimble has his diamond design

 <p><b>PAT.6</b> early Dorcas</p>	 <p><u>Charles Horner</u> 1896</p>	 <p><u>Charles Horner</u> 1897</p>
 <p><u>Charles Horner</u> 1898 silver-gilt</p>	 <p><u>Charles Horner</u> 1899</p>	 <p><u>Charles Horner</u> 1899 9ct</p>



H J Cooper & Co Ltd (HJC)  
1896



Deakin & Francis Ltd (D&F)  
1898



Robert Pringle  
1900



Tandy & Sons (T&S)  
1899



John Thompson & Sons (JT&S)  
1900



William Harrison Walker (WHW)  
1896

**RD73871**

Registration holder and thimble maker: Alfred Taylor  
Registration date: 26 November 1850



brief description of new design: Great Exhibition of All Nations (Crystal Palace) 1851



**R<sup>D</sup>75400**

Registration holder and thimble maker: David & Lionel Spiers (manufacturing jewellers) (DLS or LS)

Registration date: 14 June 1887

brief description of new design: Girls' names

other names: Alice – Anne – Clara – Jane – Maude – Sarah



**R<sup>D</sup>86699**

Registration holder and thimble maker: Alfred Taylor

Registration date: 26 November 1850



brief description of new design: Sydenham Crystal Palace 1862

thimbles not hallmarked, no maker's mark, no R<sup>D</sup> No - some only bearing the diamond registration mark



**R<sup>D</sup> 103216**

Registration holder: Samuel John Boosey

thimble maker: James Fenton

Registration date: 7 July 1888

brief description of new design: Gripper



1887

usually their design has a wrigglework band, this is plain pre-registration



1888



1888



1891



1892



1893



1898



1901



child's metal inscribed Anne's



yes



yes



yes

**R<sup>D</sup>108544**

Registration holder and thimble maker: Charles Iles

Registration date: 20 September 1888

brief description of new design: panelled band



base metal

**REG.112123**

Registration holder: Alfred Constantine & William Henry Floyd (manufacturing jewellers)

Thimble maker: Charles Horner

Registration date: 29 October 1888

brief description of new design: cross-type indentations

There is no indication why the form REG. was used instead of R<sup>D</sup>

The presence of the R<sup>D</sup> No enabled us to identify Horner at the maker of the sterling examples with other sponsors marks

not featured in Spicer and Pelham Burn



Constantine & Floyd (C<sup>F</sup>&F<sup>D</sup>)  
Chester 1888 - 1889

**R<sup>D</sup>120715**

Registration holder: Clement Richard Hall

Registration date: 2 March 1889

brief description of new design: teardrop indentations



brass thimble

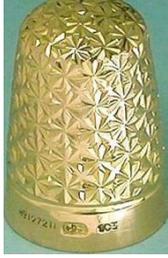
**R<sup>D</sup>127211**

Registration holder and thimble maker: Charles Horner

Registration date: 18 June 1889

brief description of new design: Louise pattern

The presence of the R<sup>D</sup> No enabled us to identify Horner as the maker of the sterling examples with other sponsors marks. Part of the thimble has his Louise design

 <p><b>PAT.6 – PAT.11</b> early Dorcas</p>	 <p><b>PATENT 4</b> early Dorcas</p>	 <p><u>Charles Horner</u> 1911</p>
 <p><u>Charles Horner</u> 1890s</p>	 <p><u>Charles Horner</u> 1908</p>	 <p><u>Charles Horner</u> 1897</p>
 <p><u>Charles Horner</u> 1897 9ct</p>	 <p><u>Charles Horner</u> 9ct</p>	 <p><u>Carrington &amp; Co (C&amp;Co)</u> 1897</p>
 <p><u>Turner Bros (TB<sup>S</sup>)</u> 1894</p>	 <p><u>William Harrison Walker (WHW)</u> 1897</p>	 <p><u>Henry Williamson Ltd (HWL<sup>D</sup>)</u> 1898</p>

**R<sup>D</sup>139132**

Registration holder: George Henry Griffith

Registration date: 26 March 1861

Brief description of new design: International Exhibition 1862



**R<sup>D</sup>143397**

Registration holder: George Cartwright & Horace Woodward

Registration date: 29 September 1861



brief description of new design: International Exhibition 1862

thimbles not hallmarked, no maker's mark, no R<sup>D</sup> No - some only bearing the diamond registration mark

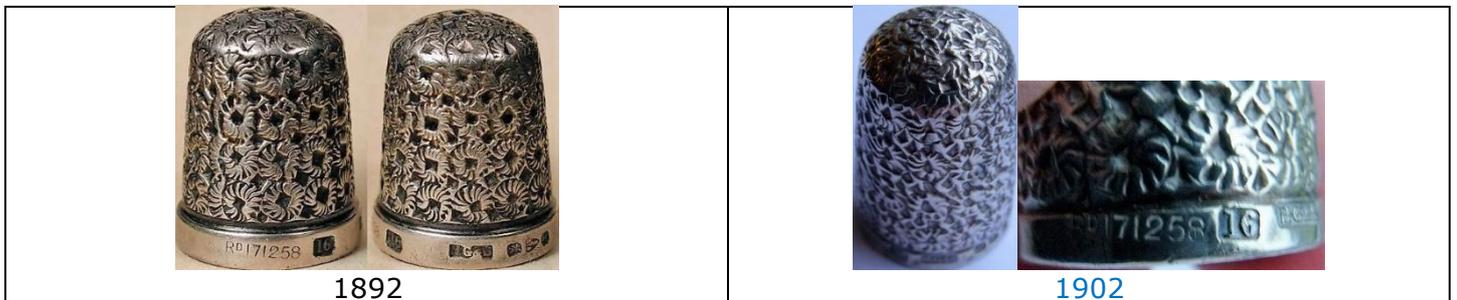


**R<sup>D</sup>171258**

Registration holder and thimble maker: Henry Griffith

Registration date: 12 May 1891

brief description of new design: daisy pattern



**R<sup>D</sup>171259**

Registration holder and thimble maker: Henry Griffith (HG&S, HG&SLtd)

Registration date: 12 May 1891

brief description of new design: daisy and blocks design, known as his Dorothy



Henry Griffith & Son Ltd  
Birmingham 1900 #16



Henry Griffith & Son  
Chester 1902 #14



Henry Griffith & Son Ltd  
Chester 1902 #15



Alfred Bromet & Co (AB&Co)  
Chester 1900 #14

**R<sup>D</sup>173502**

Registration holder and thimble maker: Bent and Parker (B&P)

Registration date: August 1893

brief description of new design: girls' names  
originally PP14988 – pre-registration number

not featured in Spicer and Pelham Burn



1893



EDITH  
PP14988



MAGGIE  
PP14988



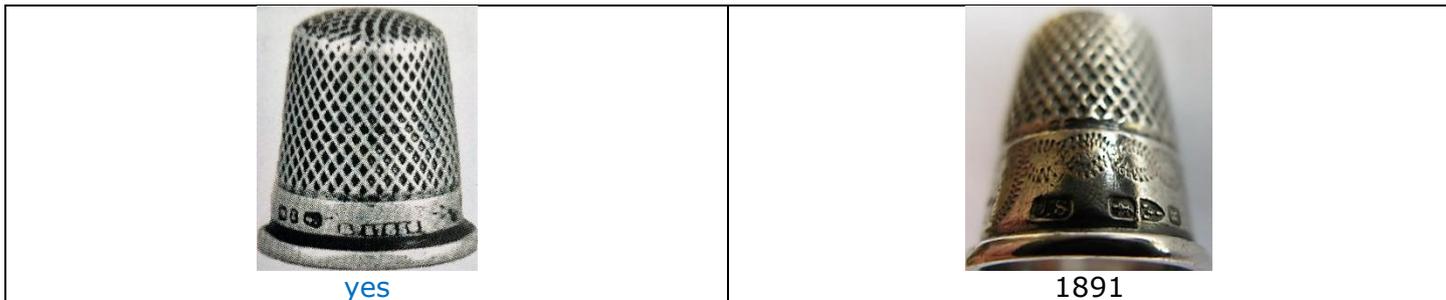
POLLY  
PP14988

**R<sup>D</sup>178362**

Registration holder and thimble maker: James Swann

Registration date: 11 September 1891

brief description of new design: diamond Gripper

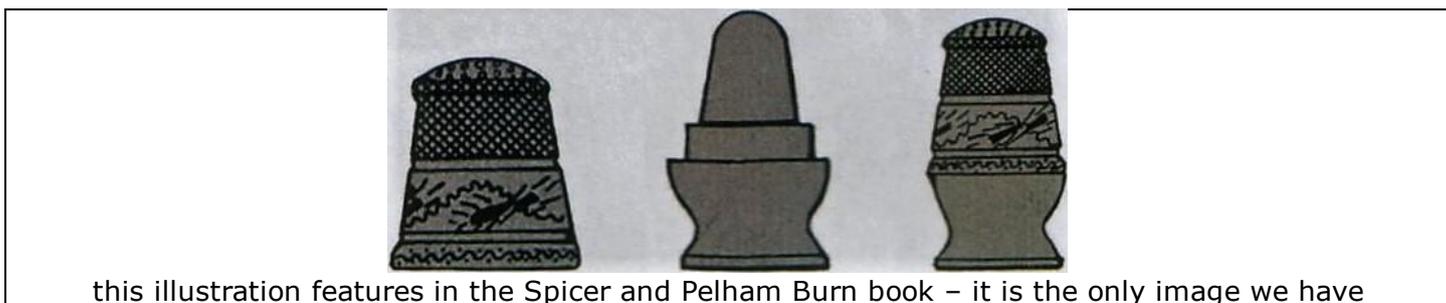


**R<sup>D</sup>201557**

Registration holder: Frederick Keller (druggist's assistant)

Registration date: 28 October 1892

brief description of new design: thimble over a base



**R<sup>D</sup>202312**

Registration holder: Alan Edward Elkington

thimble maker: James Fenton

Registration date: 9 November 1892

brief description of new design: multi-stone Scottish pebbles band





salt cellar

**R<sup>D</sup>202533**

Registration holder Alan Edward Elkington

thimble maker: James Fenton

Registration date: 14 November 1892

Brief description of new design: shamrock and harp band



1902

stone tops - Connemara marble [right](#)

**R<sup>D</sup>206738**

Registration holder Alan Edward Elkington

thimble maker: James Fenton

Registration date: 23 November 1892

Brief description of new design: salt cellar

not featured in Spicer and Pelham Burn – not used for sewing



James Fenton

1892

**R<sup>D</sup>210799**

Registration holder and thimble maker: Charles Horner

Registration date: 18 April 1893

brief description of new design: shell design

The presence of the R<sup>D</sup> No enabled us to identify Horner at the maker of the sterling examples with other sponsors marks. Part of the thimble has his shell design



**PAT.8**  
early Dorcas



Charles Horner  
1897



Charles Horner  
1901  
9ct



Charles Horner  
1915



John Thompson & Sons (JT&S)  
1893

**R<sup>D</sup>210800**

Registration holder and thimble maker: Charles Horner

Registration date: 18 April 1893

brief description of new design: Princess May design

The presence of the R<sup>D</sup> No enabled us to identify Horner at the maker of the sterling examples with other sponsors marks. Part of the thimble has his Princess May design



PAT. 8  
early Dorcas



Charles Horner  
1894



Charles Horner  
1896



Charles Horner  
1898



Charles Horner  
9ct



Alfred Bromet & Co (AB&C<sup>o</sup>)  
1893



Alfred Bromet & Co (AB&C<sup>o</sup>)  
1896



Carrington & Co (C&C<sup>o</sup>)  
1900



Constantine & Floyd (C<sup>E</sup>&F<sup>D</sup>)  
1897



Deakin & Francis Ltd (D&F)  
1898



Walter & George Matthews (WGM)  
1893



Isaac Silverstone & Co (IS&C<sup>o</sup>)  
1897



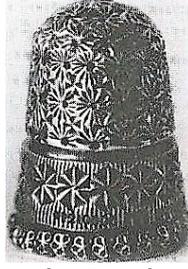
John Thompson & Son (JT&S)  
1898



John Thompson & Son (JT&S)  
1892



W Wilkinson Ltd (WWLtd)



(WEHW)

**R<sup>D</sup>212114**

Registration holder Alan Edward Elington

thimble maker: James Fenton

Registration date: 13 May 1893

brief description of new design: holly leaves band



1893  
with enamelling

**R<sup>D</sup>222443**

Registration holder: Hermann Poths & Co (merchants)

thimble maker: John William Kirwin

Registration date: 16 November 1893

brief description of new design: Scottish thistle shape



1893



1893



1893  
9ct gold

**R<sup>D</sup>227060**

Registration holder: Turnbull Bros (jewellers)

Thimble Maker: Charles Horner

Registration date: 2 February 1894

brief description of new design: bell-shape  
all assayed in Chester



**R<sup>D</sup>230818**

Registration holder and thimble maker: Saunders & Shepherd

Registration date: 17 April 1894

brief description of new design: glass Just a Thimble Full  
not featured in Spicer and Pelham Burn – not used for sewing



**R<sup>D</sup>265923**

Registration holder and thimble maker: Samuel Foscett

Registration date: 19 September 1895

brief description of new design: panelled, faceted, diamond shapes with daisy at each intersection



1892



Robert Pringle (RP)

1901

**R<sup>D</sup>272185**

Registration holder: Thomas E Peckett (manufacturer and merchant)

thimble maker: James Swann

Registration date: 6 March 1896

brief description of new design: rebus slogan for 'stick to me'

not featured in Spicer and Pelham Burn



1911



yes



**R<sup>D</sup>280564**

Registration holder Alan Edward Elkington  
thimble maker: James Fenton  
Registration date: 31 July 1896  
brief description of new design: bicycle design



apex with wheel in centre

the tyres are different on each thimble – there are birds hidden amongst the blackberries on the verso  
there are even different versions – ladies and gents with the crossbar on the gent’s bicycles

 <p>1896 #8</p>	 <p>1896</p>	 <p>1898 gent's bicycle</p>
 <p>1896 #10 gent's bicycle handlebars face left</p>	 <p>1901 #10</p>	
 <p>1896 \$10 gent's bicycle handlebars face left</p>		

**R<sup>D</sup>281980**

Registration holder Alan Edward Elkington  
 thimble maker: James Fenton  
 Registration date: 24 August 1896  
 brief description of new design: moon and stars band



**R<sup>D</sup>295282**

Registration holder and maker: Hamilton & Inches (goldsmiths)  
 thimble maker: Deakin & Francis Ltd  
 Registration date: 3 March 1897  
 Brief description of new design: Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee





Hamilton and Inches (H&I)

18ct

unassayed

**R<sup>D</sup>297020**

Registration holder and thimble maker: Henry Fowler

Registration date: 7 April 1897

brief description of new design: bright-cut design

Part of the thimble has his bright-cut design



1901

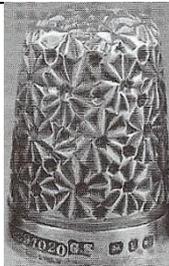


Constantine & Floyd (C<sup>F</sup>&F<sup>D</sup>)

1899



George Goodman (GG)



George Snook & Co (GS)

1897



George Snook & Co (GS)

1898

**R<sup>D</sup>310734**

brief description of new design: miniature chatelaine

Registration date: 1897

not featured in Spicer and Pelham Burn – not used for sewing



this R<sup>D</sup> is lettered on the penknife. Four chains with four pendants with a thimble, penknife, scissors and spoon

**R<sup>D</sup>315477**

Registration holder and thimble maker: Charles Iles

Registration date: 8 March 1898

brief description of new design: Just a Thimble Full  
brass thimble

see also R<sup>D</sup>707065

not featured in Spicer and Pelham Burn – not used for sewing



this R<sup>D</sup> is lettered only on the thimble box

**R<sup>D</sup>350760**

Registration holder and thimble maker: Charles Iles

Registration date: 16 December 1899



brass thimble

R<sup>D</sup> not lettered on thimble

**R<sup>D</sup>350761**

Registration holder and thimble maker: Charles Iles

Registration date: 16 December 1899



brass thimble

**R<sup>D</sup>356736**

Registration holder and thimble maker: Charles Iles

Registration date: 2 May 1900



brass thimble

**R<sup>D</sup>356898**

Registration holder: Frederic Griffith  
thimble maker: Henry Griffith & Son Ltd

Registration date: 5 May 1900

brief description of new design: Empire design band



1899

Australia - Canada - England - India - Natal- New Zealand - Tasmania



1899



Alfred Bromet & Co (AB&C<sup>o</sup>)

1899 - 1900

**R<sup>D</sup>426659**

Registration holder and thimble maker: Charles Horner

Registration date: 14 February 1904

Brief description of new design: Louise with interlocking indents



**PAT.7**  
early Dorcas



**PAT.11**  
early Dorcas



Charles Horner  
1923



Henry Williamson Ltd (HWL<sup>D</sup>)

1906

**R<sup>D</sup>429537**

Registration holder and thimble maker: Charles Horner

Registration date: 25 March 1904

brief description of new design: Hardwood  
narrow band of shallow diamond band



1903



1908



1908  
ASH B<sup>R</sup>



1911  
WHEATLEY

**R<sup>D</sup>707065**

Registration holder: Charles Iles

Registration date: 17 July 1925

brief description of new design: Just a Thimble Full  
see also R<sup>D</sup>315477



yes



DURBAN  
nickel silver



MONTREAL  
brass

**REG. No.711917**

Registration holder: Jeremiah Williams

Registration date: 24 March 1925

brief description of new design: hexagonal thimble

like the earlier example there is no explanation why this REG, No. is used instead of the usual R<sup>D</sup>  
not featured in Spicer and Pelham Burn



brass thimble

**Unknown RD No**

Registration holder and maker: Horace Woodward

Registration date: 1888



diamond registered number

brief description of new design: pepper shaker

not featured in Spicer and Pelham Burn



Horace Woodward & Co (HW&C<sup>o</sup>)

## THIMBLE HOLDERS

The plush or velour coverings Iles uses velvet in his registration application papers) were not meant to last and some have survived for 120 years in reasonable condition.

### R<sup>D</sup> N<sup>o</sup>.128040

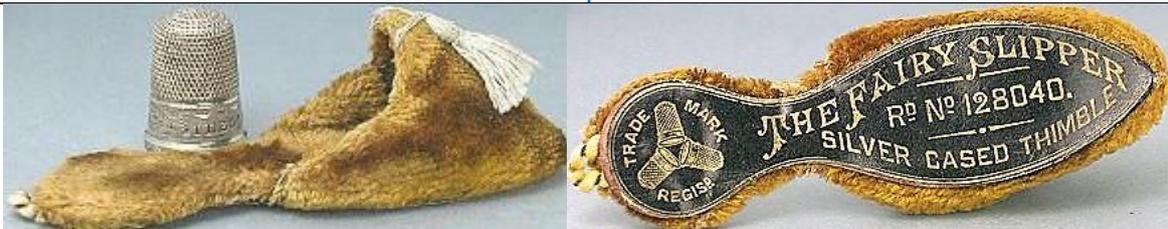
Registration holder and maker: Charles Iles

Registration date: 27 June 1889

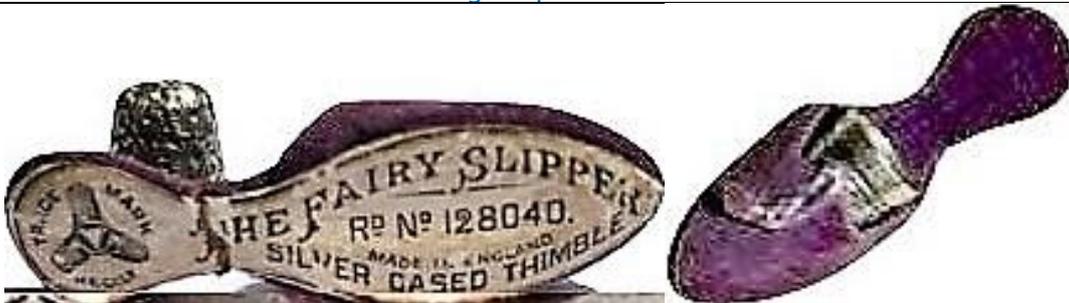
brief description of new design: The Fair Slipper



blue plush



gold plush



purple plush

### R<sup>D</sup> N<sup>o</sup>.138883

Registration holder and maker: Charles Iles

Registration date: 1890s

brief description of new design: bellows shaped (Le Soufflet)



purple plush

R<sup>D</sup>169666

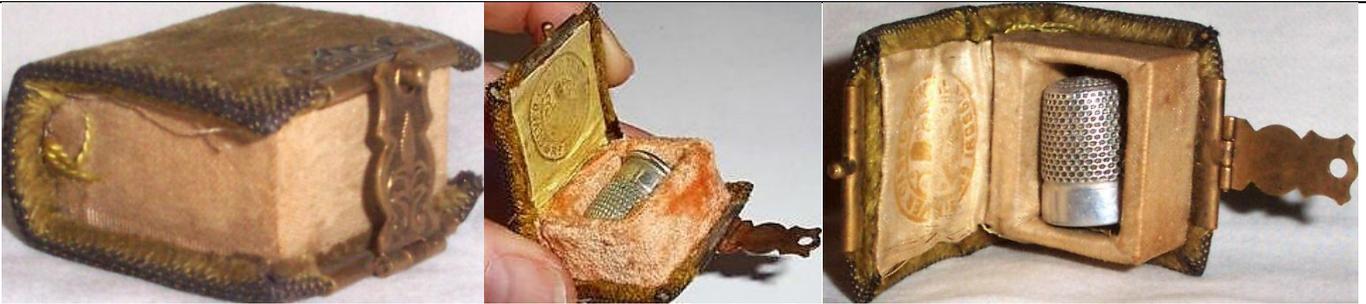
Registration holder and maker: Charles Iles

Registration date: 11 January 1892

brief description of new design: book-shaped



blue plush



gold plush



gold plush - largely worn off



red plush – amazing condition – even to remnant of the **bookmark**

**R<sup>D</sup>176058**

Registration holder and maker: Charles Iles  
Registration date:  
brief description of new design: The Fairy box



gold plush

**R<sup>D</sup>176058**

Registration holder and maker: Charles Iles  
Registration date: 11 January 1892  
brief description of new design: Pink box, green braid

no photo

no known photo

**R<sup>D</sup>186098**

Registration holder and maker: Charles Iles  
Registration date: 11 January 1892  
brief description of new design: book-shaped



leather-bound book



snakeskin

**R<sup>D</sup>194869**

Registration holder and maker: Charles Iles

Registration date: 1892

brief description of new design: horse hoof-shaped



red plush



Tho this is in the shape of a horse hoof, it may not be part of the R<sup>D</sup> above

**R<sup>D</sup>200439**

Registration holder and maker: Charles Iles

Registration date: 1892

brief description of new design: heart-shaped



blue plush



red plush

**R<sup>D</sup>210332**

Registration holder and maker: Charles Iles

Registration date: 18 April 1893

brief description of new design: cupid-shaped  
this case was made to hold the celluloid The Cupid thimble



blue plush  
The Cupid Heart case'



blue plush



red plush

**R<sup>D</sup>320491**

Registration holder and maker: Henry Matthews (HM)

Registration date: June 1898

brief description of new design: lined silver bucket holder



**R<sup>D</sup>392430**

Registration holder and maker: Charles Iles

Registration date: 1902

brief description of new design: The ping-pong bat



**R<sup>D</sup>430769**

Registration holder and maker: Sydney & Co

Registration date: 1904

brief description of new design: coal scuttle shape with cherubs



Birmingham 1906 - also lettered U



Birmingham 1907 - also lettered V



Birmingham 1907 - also lettered V

## References

Edwin E Holmes *Registered designs*. Thimble Notes and Queries summer 1989  
Bridget McConnel *Dating by a lozenge, or by a RD number* Thimble Society of London winter 1992  
Norma Spicer *Iles: a family of thimble makers*. 2001  
Norma Spicer and Diane Pelham Burn *British registered design thimbles*. 2003

## Contributors

This topic would not have been possible without Ray Nimmo's photos

Ros Forster | Nicola Kissane | Carolyn Meacham-Elegant Arts | Wolf-Dieter Scholz | Jean Taylor | Barbra Wallace

This listing of British registered design numbers on thimbles does not purport to be complete or accurate in all aspects.

Rather it invites comments and contributions to add to our knowledge. My thanks to the contributors.

EMAIL [thimbleselect@bigpond.com](mailto:thimbleselect@bigpond.com) TO SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

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