

# British royalty on thimbles

## HM King Charles III

Diana – Camilla

14 November 1948

I have followed the production of royal commemorative thimbles since I began collecting thimbles.

I lived in London during 1969 and tho I watched the Prince Charles's Investiture on television, buying a commemorative thimble never crossed my mind - commemorative stamps were more in vogue then.

The big occasion for commemorative thimbles in the United Kingdom was the marriage of Prince Charles to Lady Diana Spencer in 1981. I eagerly sought one for my new thimble collection in 1984.

What has amazed me in doing this study on British royal thimbles, is how it reflects the history of the modern thimble making industry in the UK. I don't think there is a British modern thimble producer who has not had at least one royal commemorative thimble created in the last 70 years (Royal Doulton does spring to mind but they are not big thimble producers). The first commemorative china thimbles by Caverswall was as early as 1977 for the silver jubilee and no royal occasion passed until 1991 without a Caverswall commemorative thimble - Sutherland seems to have taken over this role when Caverswall closed and they were one of the few china producers making thimbles in any quantity in Britain until they closed. The 1980s' production of royal thimbles reads like a who's who amongst thimble producers/manufacturers. To date **96** different British thimble makers have produced at least one royal commemorative thimble design.

There are **28** British silversmiths who have produced royal commemoratives of which 21 produced only one royal commemorative thimble design - they will be well worth seeking out. I hope that some of these royal thimbles produced in the last 70 years become the antiques of the future, matching the rare and highly desirable sterling silver thimbles produced in the middle of Victoria's reign.

Often there will be two thimbles for the same event by the same thimble maker - using the engagement photos of Charles and Diana for their wedding and then another with the wedding picture. Or "Birth of a royal baby..." thimbles designed before the actual birth and then a sequel with the actual details of the baby born.

The biggest number of different thimbles produced for any single occasion was that for the wedding of Charles and Diana: **79** different thimbles, many of which are sets!! Their marriage in 1981 was the heyday of modern collectables thimble making!!

I have chosen to list the thimbles in a manner which I hope will become familiar to you with use, and I know there are hundreds of royal thimble collectors out there - chronologically for each member of the royal family listing thimbles for all their various birthdays, marriages and in some cases memorial thimbles. I have grouped the family of each member of the royal family together ie Princess Anne's children are featured under the Princess Anne heading etc.

Being a British institution, 98% of royal thimbles produced were made in the UK, so it was surprising to find a few royals thimbles from Europe and three have now surfaced from the USA for more recent royal anniversaries.

The wording on each thimble is as varied as the number of thimbles produced - some have just a commemorative year; others fit an entire biography lettered on the verso. There are always official royal photographs issued at royal milestones. Most thimble producers have ignored these and created a unique design different from their competitors, reflecting their prestige in the souvenir market. Prince of Wales feathers feature prominently.

I am sure there are many royal thimbles that have not yet crossed my path - there are around **1800** recorded here across all the royal family- please be sure to share your favourite royal thimbles that I may have missed.

[For other British royalty topics see](#)  
[Queen Victoria commemoratives](#)

## Prince Charles

### Birthdays

40<sup>th</sup> birthday 14 November 1988



**Tony Bouchet**  
agateware



**Caverswall**  
china



**Siegfried Flitsch** Pforzheim  
silver-plated & enamelled cameo  
some have a ruby in apex  
limited to 1000 pieces



**Woodsetton Peeps**  
lacquered copper  
two colours

50<sup>th</sup> birthday 14 November 1998



**Tony Bouchet**  
agateware



**Julie Menzies**  
china  
(decal)



**Museum Collections**  
fine bone china



china

55<sup>th</sup> birthday 14 November 2003



china

**60<sup>th</sup> birthday 14 November 2008**



china



china

**65<sup>th</sup> birthday 14 November 2013**



china

**66<sup>th</sup> birthday 14 November 2015**



china

**67<sup>th</sup> birthday 14 November 2016**



china

**70<sup>th</sup> birthday 14 November 2018**



china



china

# Investiture as Prince of Wales

1 July 1969 Caernarvon Castle Wales



**St George**  
bone china



**James Swann & Son**  
sterling silver & enamelling  
b&w photo



**James Swann & Son**  
sterling silver & enamelled band



**Peter Swingler/James Swann & Son**  
sterling silver & enamelling



**Peter Swingler (PS)**  
sterling silver & enamelling



pottery  
tailor's shape  
Tywysog Cymru 1969 on verso  
b&w photo

## 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary 1 July 1994



**Sutherland**  
china

## 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary 1 July 2009



china

## 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary 1 July 2019



china



55<sup>th</sup> anniversary 26 July 2013

the actual date Prince Charles became Prince of Wales 26 July 1958



china

Engagement

Lady Diana Spencer 24 February 1981



Caverswall

china

two different shapes – R: self-patterned flower apex



Caverswall

china



Highland China

bone china

no photo

Mount Royal

china pair

Marriages & anniversaries

Lady Diana Spencer 29 July 1981 St Paul's Cathedral



AJL

bone china



Ammonite [ALtd]

silver-gilt pair

Prince and Princess of Wales July 1981



**Ammonite [ALtd]**  
sterling silver  
Charles and Diana 29<sup>th</sup> July 1981  
St Pauls on verso  
also available in silver gilt



**Ammonite [ALtd]**  
sterling silver  
Prince and Princess of Wales July 1981



**Avalon**  
china



**John Michael Bickerton (JMB)**  
pierced sterling silver  
R image: William Isbister



**Brylian Porcelain USA**  
limited to 1500  
see also Heirloom Editions



**Clive Edward Burr (CB)**  
sterling silver  
see also identical design by **RL**



**Caverswall**  
china



**Caverswall**  
china  
different from above



**Caverswall**  
china pair



**Caverswall**  
china  
as Duke of Cornwall



**Caverswall**  
china



**Caverswall**  
china pair  
their coat-of-arms





**Caverswall**  
china



**Caverswall**  
china  
self-patterned floral apex



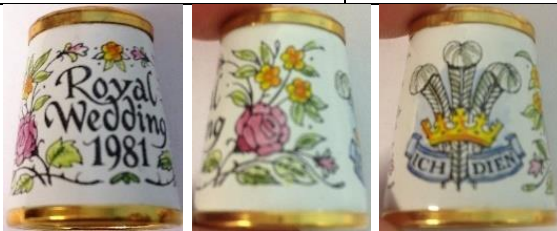
**Coalport**  
bone china pair



**Constantia South Africa**  
fine china



**Cottage China**  
fine bone china



**Crummles Enamels**  
enamelling & brass



**Crummles Enamels**  
enamelling & brass



**Crummles Enamels**  
enamelling & brass



**Michael I Dorman-Brailsford (DB)**  
9ct gold



**Michael I Dorman-Brailsford (DB)**  
sterling silver



**Fenton**  
fine bone china



**Fenton**  
fine bone china



**Fenton**  
fine bone china



**Fenton**  
fine bone china




**Finsbury**  
fine bone china




**Shirley Frost (SF)**  
sterling silver  
St Pauls Cathedral  
L image: William Isbister



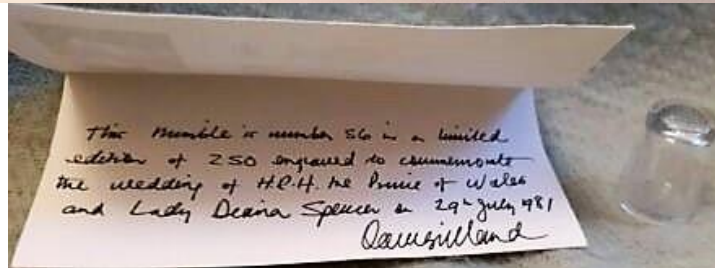
**Shirley Frost (SF)**  
sterling silver  
Welsh dragon

DAVID GULLAND was born in Edinburgh and studied glass design and engraving under Helen Munro Turner at the Edinburgh College of Art. He has worked in Scotland in teaching and in industry and has now established his own studio workshop in Kirkcudbright in the south west of Scotland where visitors are welcome to view his work. An appointment should be made beforehand Telephone Kirkcudbright 31072.



This symbol which marks David Gulland's work comprises the Medieval Glassmakers' sign and the initials of the artist surmounted by the castle of Edinburgh.



**David Gulland – Scotland**  
glass



**Hammersley**  
fine bone china



**Hammersley**  
fine bone china



**Harlequin Design Studio**  
handpainted china pair



**Healacraft**  
china



**Heirloom Editions**  
USA  
handpainted by Judy Krč  
black bisque porcelain  
limited edition of 1000  
see also Brylian Porcelain





**Hexagon Studio**  
china



**Highland China**  
bone china



**Hurley**  
handpainted porcelain by Wendy Bowen NY



**Iles & Gomms**  
silverplated



**RL**  
sterling silver  
see also identical design by **CB**



**Lady Eleanor**  
china



**Lysander**  
china



**Mappin & Webb (MN&WB)**  
sterling silver gilt  
R: gryphon from the Spencer coat-of-arms  
R image: William Isbister



**Mason's**  
ironstone pair



**Anthony Nicholls**  
brass & enamelling



**Oakley**  
china  
coronet and date on verso



**Olde England**  
china



**Queens**  
fine bone china



**Royal Albert**  
bone china



**Royal Brierley Crystal**  
boxed engraved crystal pairs  
L: frosted – R: clear  
made by Ullmanns glass of Germany



**Royal Staffordshire**  
bone china  
large size



**Royal Worcester**  
fine bone china



**Royal Worcester**  
fine bone china  
set of four



**GPS**  
sterling silver  
London  
shield on verso Prince Charles Lady Diana Spencer 29 July 1981



**Spode**  
fine bone china



**Staffordshire Enamels**  
enamelling & brass



**Staffordshire Enamels**  
enamelling & brass



**Sutherland**  
fine china





**James Swann & Son**  
sterling silver & enamelling



**James Swann & Son**  
sterling silver & enamelling



**James Swann & Son**  
sterling silver & enamelling  
this version shows the names on the incorrect side of the heart  
they were redone but the image is blurred  
b&w photo



**James Swann & Son**  
sterling silver



**James Swann & Son**  
sterling silver & enamelled cameos  
two different portraits of Diana



**Peter Swingler (PS)**  
sterling silver & enamelling  
plain apex



**Peter Swingler (PS)**  
sterling silver & enamelling



**Peter Swingler (PS)**  
sterling silver & enamelling  
apex is more ornate than the other examples with  
the date "1981"  
three different examples of of this thimble



**Toye Kenning & Spencer**  
brass & enamelling



**Victoria China**  
fine bone china



**Wedgwood**  
jasperware pair



**Wedgwood**  
jasperware





**Julius Wengert**  
sterling silver & enamelling



china



china



metal  
firehydrant



polished pewter



pewter or metal



silverplated pewter  
Charles & Diana 29<sup>th</sup> July  
St Paul's Cathedral on verso



silverplated



silver metal  
1981 and the Spencer coat-of-arms and bells, with floral emblems for Ireland Scotland England and Wales around the rim



handpainted commemorative **lace bobbins**

### 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary 29 July 1982



**Highland China**  
fine bone china  
a puzzle – was this made for Christmas 1982?

10<sup>th</sup> anniversary 29 July 1991



**Tony Bouchet**  
agateware



**Caverswall**  
china



**Caverswall**  
china



**Regal Etruria**  
fine bone china



**Sutherland**  
China  
limited to 1000



**Woodseton Peeps**  
lacquered brass

## Camilla Parker Bowles 9 April 2005 Windsor

some thimbles have 8 April 2005 date

 <p><b>Birchcroft</b> fine bone china</p>	 <p><b>Carol Ann Miniatures (UK)</b> handpainted pewter (8<sup>th</sup> April)</p>	 <p><b>Stephen Frost/Warwick Models</b> handpainted pewter (8<sup>th</sup> April)</p>	
 <p><b>Julie Menzies</b> china (decal)</p>	 <p><b>Julie Menzies</b> china (decal) (8<sup>th</sup> April)</p>	 <p><b>Museum Collections</b> fine bone china</p>	 <p><b>Peter Swingler (PS)</b> sterling silver &amp; enamelling</p>
 <p><b>Peter Swingler (PS)</b> sterling silver &amp; enamelling</p>	 <p><b>Woodsetton Peeps</b> lacquered copper</p>	 <p>china (8<sup>th</sup> April)</p>	 <p>china</p>
 <p>china</p>	 <p>china</p>	 <p>china</p>	 <p>China (8<sup>th</sup> April)</p>

## 1st anniversary 9 April 2006

 <p><b>Cottage Thimbles</b> china</p>
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10<sup>th</sup> anniversary 9 April 2015



**Birchcroft**  
fine bone china



china

15<sup>th</sup> anniversary 9 April 2020



china

... picture of contentment ... on the doorstep of Birkhlaa, Scotland withtheir 2 adorable pups

# HRH Diana Princess of Wales

## Birthdays

21<sup>st</sup> birthday 1 July 1982



**Caverswall**  
china



**Caverswall**  
china  
two different shapes – R: self-patterned floral apex



**Highland China**  
bone china



**Settmacher**  
aluminium  
b&w photo



**Settmacher**  
tombac  
b&w photo

25<sup>th</sup> birthday 1 July 1986



**Royal Grafton**  
bone china

30<sup>th</sup> birthday 1 July 1991



**Tony Bouchet**  
agateware



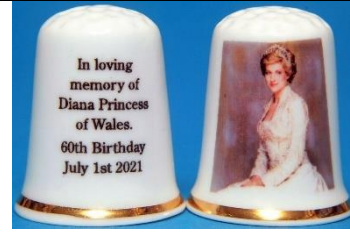
**Woodsetton Peeps**  
lacquered brass

60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her birth 1 July 2021



**Birchcroft**  
china

Diana A Princess remembered



china

In loving memory of Diana Princess of Wales 60<sup>th</sup> birthday ...

In Memoriam 31 August 1997



**Althorp**  
china



**Althorp**  
china



**Birchcroft**  
fine bone china



**Tony Bouchet**  
agateware



**Fenton**  
fine bone china



**Stephen Frost/Warwick Models**  
handpainted pewter



**Alicia Gordon (AG)**  
9 ct gold  
commissioned by Thimble Society of London  
designer: Kuo-chi Lin  
set includes two thimble guards



**Alicia Gordon (AG)**  
sterling silver & enamelling  
commissioned by Thimble Society of London



**Alicia Gordon (AG)**  
18ct gold & enamelling  
commissioned by Thimble Society of London



**Thorvald Greif**  
Germany  
sterling silver



**Thorvald Greif**  
Germany  
9ct gold & sterling silver



**Mayfair 1**  
china



**Mayfair 2**  
china





**Mayfair 3**  
china



**Mayfair 4**  
china



**Mayfair 5**  
china



**Mayfair 6**  
china



**Mayfair 7**  
china



**Mayfair 8**  
china



**Mayfair 9**  
china



**Mayfair 10**  
china



**Mayfair 11**  
china



**Mayfair 12**  
china



**Mayfair 13**  
china



**Mayfair 14**  
china



**Julie Menzies**  
china  
(decal)



**Sutherland**  
china



**James Swann & Sons** sterling  
silver & enamelling  
Diana on a blue ribbon and a  
flower  
limited to 100



**Peter Swingler (PS)**  
sterling silver & enamelling



**The Thimble Guild**  
china  
Diana lettered diagonally



**Trude Crafts**  
Penmaenmawr Wales  
bone china



china



china



china



china



china



china



china



china



china



china



china



china



silverplated



china

A queen of people's hearts



china

Rose of the nation 1961-1997



china

De rose van Engeland



china

The Diana Princess of Wales Memorial Fountain

10<sup>th</sup> anniversary 1997-2007



**Meissen**  
handpainted porcelain



**Harvey Sillis (HRS)**  
sterling silver  
roses on one side of her profile  
hearts on the other – her coat-  
of-arms on apex



**Wedgwood**  
jasperware



**Woodsetton**  
with her coat-of-arms



china



China  
Diana



china

15<sup>th</sup> anniversary 1997-2012



china



china



china

Remembering Princess Diana July 1<sup>st</sup> 2020  
marked the Princess's 59<sup>th</sup> birthday Over 20  
years since Diana tragically died She's still  
remembered with great love and affection



20<sup>th</sup> anniversary 1997-2017



**Julie Menzies**  
china  
(decal)



**Julie Menzies**  
china  
(decal)



china  
How proud Diana's two boys 20 years on Prince William with Kate & Prince Harry 2017

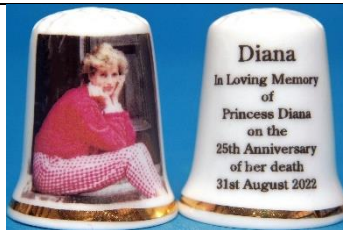


china  
Memorial garden. The White garden opened at Kensington Palace to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her death 1997-2017



china

25<sup>th</sup> anniversary 1997-2022



china  
... in loving memory ...

# Ascension to the throne

8 September 2022



King Charles III's royal cypher



**Birchcroft**

china

To Honour new King Charles III

# Coronation

6 May 2023



**Birchcroft**

china

God save the King & Queen



**Birchcroft**

china



**Birchcroft**

china



**Birchcroft**

china



**Birchcroft**

china

God save the King



**Birchcroft**

china

St Edwards's crown



china



china

designed by College of Arms



china

Others – Charles – Diana – Camilla



**Birchcroft**  
china

Princess Diana meets Mother Teresa Chrity Tour  
United States June 1997



**Birchcroft**  
china hats



**Birchcroft**  
China

Princess Diana Patron of International Red Cross



**Caverswall**  
china

Royal visit to Australia 1983



**Caverswall**  
china

HRH the Prince of Wales



**Caverswall**  
china

family of four at Highgrove  
self-patterned floral apex



**Caverswall**  
china



**Caverswall**  
china

birth of Prince William Diana becomes a mother 1982



**Caverswall**  
china



**Connoisseur Collectables**

china & handpainted  
 pewter  
 see also Sterling Classic



**Crescent Silver (CS)**

sterling silver 2012  
Ich Dien  
Highgrove

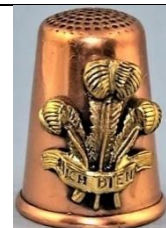


**Ipswich Collectors**  
fine bone china

Princess' visit to Suffolk Show  
Ipswich May 28 1986



**Felix Morel Bath**  
brass  
Ich Dien



**Felix Morel Bath**  
copper  
Ich Dien





**Felix Morel Bath**  
lacquered brass  
Ich Dien



**Ian Parry**  
beechwood & pewter  
Ich Dien  
b&w photo



**St George**  
fine bone china  
the Royal family set



**St George**  
fine bone china  
with Prince William and Prince  
Harry



**Sterling Classic**  
china & handpainted pewter  
see also Connoisseur Collectables



**Sutherland**  
china  
Visit for Australian Bicentenary  
1988



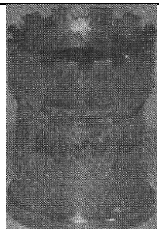
**Sutherland**  
china  
The Prince of Wales



**Sutherland**  
china



**Peter Swingler (PS)**  
sterling silver & enamelling  
Birmingham 1982  
H.R.H The Prince of Wales



**Woodsetton Peeps**  
Pewter  
Royal Princes peep with their  
mother 1985



**Woodsetton Peeps**  
lacquered brass  
Prince of Wales  
Australia Bicentenary visit 1988



**Woodsetton Peeps**  
lacquered brass  
Visit to Hungary **1990**  
painted in their national colours



china  
1987



china  
Camilla Countess of Cornwall  
63rd birthday  
17 July 2010



china  
Camilla Countess of Cornwall  
65th birthday  
17 July 2012



china

Camilla Countess of Cornwall awarded Dame Grand Cross ... 2012



china

1969 Investiture of the Prince of Wales - 2013 the Prince, husband, father, grandfather



china

longest heir apparent 2014



china

HRH Prince Charles & Princess Diana Australia 1983  
produced for Will & Kate's visit 2014



china

Christmas card 2016



china

visit to Hull February 2017



china

Camilla 70th birthday 2017



china

Prince Charles with Camilla at Birkhall Gardens Scotland Christmas card 2020



china

King Charles III releases first Christmas card of his reign 2022



china

The King & Queen wave to the crowds after the King's first Trooping the Colour as monarch 17th June 2023



china

firehydrant



china

... wearing the ceremonial uniform of the Welsh Guards



china

Charles with sons



china



china

Prince Charles leads tribute at the Remembrance Day Service at the Cenotaph London ...



metal  
Ich dien



china

greetings from Charles & Camilla



china



china

Great Britons



plastic  
Ich dien



china  
magazine covers featuring Diana  
Match – Newsweek – Sun – Sunday Mirror – Vanity Fair – Vogue – Woman's Weekly

## References

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The Thimble Society [of London] *Catalogues*

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This listing of British royalty on 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](mailto:thimbleselect@bigpond.com) TO SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

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