

Thimble Collectors Club Thimbles

Dai-Ichi <--> Dublin Pottery

Thimble Collectors Club

Peony DAI-ICHI, Japan

When we admire a piece of fine Japanese porcelain, we are looking at the culmination of centuries of experience in making porcelain and a tradition of portraying all that is most graceful and beautiful in the Eastern world. Dai-Ichi was founded by Shunzo Kato during 1917. In the words of his successor, Dai-Ichi "looks to the past for knowledge of craftsmanship which is combined with a feeling and sympathy for artistry".

In Japan respect for the old is linked with the belief that they have much to teach the young. Hence they combine old and new techniques to the very finest effect. The Peony, like the Chrysanthemum, is a regular feature of Japanese art. It is admired for its colour, shape and beauty, qualities that are equally important for a fine thimble.

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The Peony Flower Thimble



DAI-ICHI
japan

DAIICHI PORCELAIN - Japan

The extravagantly-petaled peony, one of the favorite flowers of Japan, gives this lovely thimble from the house of Daiichi a motif steeped in tradition. A recurrent theme in Japanese art, the showy, aristocratic peony is seen again and again on the walls of temples and palaces.

In the Orient, flowers are chosen for use in decorative art both for their beauty and for their symbolic significance. The peony, which was first cultivated in the Japanese islands in the 8th century, is known as "the flower of prosperity," because of its abundant petals and because it retains its beauty for so long. A single blossom may last for twenty days.

Since its establishment in Tajimi eighty-five years ago, Daiichi's artisans have specialized in intricately decorated pieces representing Japan's finest porcelain-making traditions. Daiichi means "number one", and this outstanding porcelain house's dedication to quality can be seen in "The Peony Flower Thimble."

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682
9/95

Garland Cameo

A thimble in homage to DAVENPORT, England

We have voted this to be one of our loveliest thimbles ever, and know that it will be a favourite with all our collectors. A gorgeous garland of leafy red and yellow blooms, interspersed with pink roses, twines around a silhouette portrait of an eighteenth-century beauty wearing a stylish coiffure of piled curls. A golden frame adds a further touch of elegance to make a fine cameo, and pink ribbons and bows flutter above. A scalloped base reminds us of the hem of a lady's crinoline, and perfectly completes this exquisite miniature masterpiece.

John Davenport took over a pottery in Staffordshire, at Longport, Stoke-on-Trent, in 1793, and with other members of his family produced creamware and stoneware pots and domestic wares, decorated with underglaze blue prints and landscapes. Twelve years later porcelain production began. Some of the best-loved pieces were tea sets and dessert plates and dishes, all colourfully decorated and gilded. These painted wares were of a very fine quality, and included highly realistic roses and other floral subjects. Davenport had the honour of producing tableware for the coronation of William IV in 1830. Our charming Garland Cameo carries on the fine traditions of this respected porcelain house.

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Playing Cards

A thimble designed in tribute to DAVENPORT,
England

Nobody quite knows how playing-cards came about. When and where they were first used is a mystery which is never likely to be solved, for even as early as 1377, it was written that their origins were unknown! Whatever the solution, it is clear that they are here to stay. All over the world, cards are played in a hundred different ways, and although special packs are made for particular games, the European 'standard pack' of fifty-two, with four suits of thirteen cards, Ace to ten and Jack, Queen, King, is recognised everywhere. The cards so colourfully illustrated on our new thimble are from a standard pack in a delightful design, typical of a style which became popular in Europe about a hundred years ago.

This thimble is designed and produced in homage to an early porcelain house. A small pottery in Longport, Stoke-on-Trent, was taken over by John Davenport in 1793. The Davenport family started making porcelain from 1805, and such was its success that the tableware used during the celebrations for the coronation of William IV bore the Davenport mark. Brightly coloured enamelled work was a speciality - and it is this which our present thimble so attractively commemorates.

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Playing Cards Thimble



DAVENPORT - England

"Aces are high and Jacks are wild!" The cards are shuffled and wait to be dealt from the face of this thimble which bears the hallmark of one of England's most illustrious porcelain houses.

Founded in 1793 by John Davenport in the tiny little village of Longport, Davenport Pottery was one of the leading porcelain manufacturers in the world-famous Staffordshire district. For nearly a century, Davenport and his descendants produced both earthenware and fine bone china of outstanding quality. Renowned for its dessert services decorated with landscape scenes and for tea sets adorned with colorful gilt-embellished Japanese patterns, the factory eventually fell upon hard times and was forced to close its doors.

A fitting tribute to the Davenport legacy in both its vivid colors and artful craftsmanship, the "Playing Cards" thimble is available by special arrangement only to members of the Thimble Collectors Club.

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Scene through the Rose Arbour

In the style of DAVENPORT, England

Imagine yourself in a romantic English garden, and roses will be the first flower that comes to mind. Whatever your favourite colour or fragrance, there's sure to be a rose to delight you. Over the centuries these flowers have woven such a spell over gardeners that many have devoted their lives to creating new varieties with an enchantment all of their own. Beloved of many are the old French roses, whose very names bear the hint of romance: Louise Odier, Madame Grégoire Staechelin, Aimée Vibert - who were they, these ladies who inspired the naming of a rose? As we sit in a rose arbour in a tranquil country garden, we can dream of far-gone days when aristocratic ladies were wooed in a bower where the air was heavy with the very same perfumes that we enjoy today.

The Davenport pottery was founded in Longport, Stoke-on-Trent, in 1793 by John Davenport. For the first few years it produced mainly creamware and stoneware decorated with landscapes. In 1805 the first porcelain was produced and the company gained its illustrious reputation for its exquisitely painted floral subjects. Sadly, Davenport ceased trading in time, but its fine tradition is commemorated in the evocative decoration of this charming thimble.

1251

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The Stitch in Time Thimble



DAVENPORT - England

The tailor's adage "A Stitch in Time Saves Nine" is seemingly embroidered onto this finely crafted bone china thimble marked with the historic English name of Davenport.

The factory, founded in 1793 by John Davenport in the little village of Longport, was one of the leading porcelain manufacturers in England's famous Staffordshire district. For nearly a century, Davenport and his descendants produced both earthenware and fine bone china of outstanding quality. The firm was especially well known for dessert services decorated with landscape scenes and for tea sets adorned with colorful gilt-embellished Japanese patterns.

This delightful "Stitch in Time" thimble, with its quaint tapestry design and acorn-shaped crown, is available by special arrangement only to members of the Thimble Collectors Club and honors one of England's most illustrious porcelain houses.

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Van Gogh Sun Flowers Thimble

Davenport
Fine Bone China

A design inspired by the celebrated series of "Sunflowers" paintings of Vincent Van Gogh is brilliantly reproduced on this porcelain thimble marked with the historic English name of Davenport.

The factory founded in 1793 by John Davenport in the little village of Longport was one of the leading porcelain manufacturers in England's famous Staffordshire district. For nearly a century, Davenport and his descendants produced both earthenware and fine bone china of outstanding quality. The firm was especially well-known for dessert services decorated with landscape scenes and for tea sets adorned with colorful, gilt-embellished Japanese patterns.

This finely crafted thimble, now available through special arrangement from The Thimble Collectors Club, honors one of England's most illustrious porcelain houses.

Imari

With the mark of DON POTTERY, England

OVER three hundred years ago, Dutch traders began shipping colourful Japanese porcelain to Europe, loading it on board at the busy port of Imari. The wares, which were made especially for export in factories set up for the purpose, became known as 'Imari', rather than 'Arita', where they were actually made, and are still often known by this name today. They were very decorative, with strong colours – predominantly a rich red – gold, and motifs based on textile patterns. They became so popular in Europe that the Chinese soon began to copy them, in order to cash in on the trade! Later, a number of European factories also copied the Imari style, such as Worcester, with its well-known Queen Charlotte's pattern. This striking thimble shows us the deep red and gold, and the 'brocade' pattern, typical of many Imari pieces.

Our Imari thimble bears the lion and banner mark of Don Pottery, a small pottery at Swinton, in Yorkshire, which was working from about 1790 to 1893, producing various types of earthenware. An early proprietor was named Green and another, later, Barker. Little more is known about this pottery, and early wares are rare. To commemorate Don, we are delighted to produce this handsome Imari thimble.

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"Gold Imari" Thimble



DON POTTERY - England

Since the early 16th century when the technique was first developed, Imari porcelain has been among the most highly-prized in the world. The tiny Japanese village of Arita, the birthplace of the Imari artform, has also played host to the most famous Imari artists as one small street in the town (called 'The Street of the Colour Decorators') produced hundreds of remarkable designs.

One of England's earliest porcelain houses was Don Pottery, founded in 1790 by entrepreneur William Green. Located in Swinton, Yorkshire, the pottery produced various types of earthenware gift items and table settings, eventually becoming one of the most heralded factories of its day. By 1834, another respected craftsman, Samuel Barker, took control of the factory. Mr. Barker continued to produce the same high-quality porcelain which had made the hallmark so famous. Eventually, his sons took over the business and, in fact, control of Don Pottery remains with the Barker family to this day.

Adapting the Imari artform to bone china took years of arduous research for the artisans at Don Pottery. The "Gold Imari" thimble, available exclusively to members of the Thimble Collectors Club, is their first successful design.

Hunting Scene

A tribute to DON POTTERY, England

THE hunt's out! A crisp autumn morning brings the start of the main fox-hunting season, and the thrill of the chase is on. Fox-hunting with dogs began in England in the seventeenth century, as a practical way of keeping down the foxes that preyed nightly on domesticated fowls. A hundred years or so later, it had become a sport, with its specially trained packs of hounds and many elegant trappings and ceremonies – 'pink' coats, hunting horns, stirrup-cups and all! The hunt in full cry is indeed a stirring sight.

Our hunting thimble bears the lion and banner mark of Don Pottery, a small pottery at Swinton, in Yorkshire, which flourished from about 1790 to 1893, producing various types of earthenware. An early proprietor was named Green and a later one, Barker – who was perhaps a relative of the founder of the Barker Pottery, the stamp of which appears on our Teapots thimble in this current collection. Little more is known about Don Pottery, and its early wares can rarely be found today. To help to keep its name alive, we are delighted to produce this handsome hunting thimble.

Thimble Collectors Club

Kingfishers DORSET, England

Strolling along a quiet river bank on a summer's afternoon you may be lucky enough to see a flash of iridescent turquoise as a kingfisher darts down from his perch in an overhanging tree to snatch a fish from the water. Although kingfishers also eat water-beetles and dragonflies, minnows and sticklebacks are their favourite food – and they even line their nests with fishbones! They always swallow the fish head first, as otherwise the fins and scales could choke them – so if you see a kingfisher carrying his catch tail first you can be quite sure it is a courtship gift for his mate!

The county of Dorset has been producing ceramic ware ever since Roman times and has a well-established reputation for high quality products. The pottery was founded in 1873, and its Dorset backstamp has traditionally been used for fine bone china. The countryside surrounding Poole harbour has large areas given over to nature conservancy where many rare species of bird are to be seen, making this delightful Dorset ware thimble a particularly fitting medium for the talents of internationally renowned artist Trevor Boyer.

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Fuchsias DUBARRY, France

What a pleasure it is to come across this most sublime of floral creations – the fuchsia. Long, slender stems bend gracefully under the weight of their dazzling burden – a host of vivid red and purple pendant flowers. A bunched petticoat of purple petals bursts boldly from the crimson sepals while long stamens extend from the very heart of the flower. Only Nature would have dared combine these dazzling colours in one creation and their brilliance echoes the fuchsia's native home – the exotic jungles of Latin America. A legend of how this wonderful plant came to England in the late eighteenth century tells of a sailor son bringing home a fuchsia to his widowed mother from his travels. She planted it in a window box where it was seen in all its flowering glory by a great nurseryman of the day, James Lee. He offered the widow eighty golden guineas for the plant; finally she accepted and the citizens of England soon had a glorious new flower for their gardens, tubs and colourful hanging baskets.

Now grown the world over, the fuchsia was chosen to decorate this elegant thimble by the French porcelain house of Dubarry. Heir to the fine traditions of French artistry and craftsmanship, the company has specialised in producing innovative designs on beautiful porcelain for more than a quarter of a century.

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The Blue Onion Thimble



DUBI CHINA - Czechoslovakia

A variation of one of the most famous and perennially popular chinaware motifs of all time — the "Blue Onion" pattern — decorates this lovely porcelain thimble from Czechoslovakia.

Established in 1864 in Dubi by Czechoslovakian entrepreneur, Anton Tschinkel, the new chinaware factory produced a wide range of high-quality coffee and tea service, candle sticks and open-work baskets, as well as everyday tableware. Ten years later, the factory was acquired by O. Teichert, an industrialist and owner of the historic German porcelain works at Meissen. From that day on, the Dubi name has been identified with exquisite porcelain wares patterned after Meissen's renowned blue and white designs.

This unique porcelain thimble — with its hand-painted "Blue Onion" motif and its extraordinarily brilliant glaze — exemplifies the outstanding artisanship which distinguishes Dubi among the handful of firms which specialize in beautiful blue and white porcelain. The "Blue Onion Thimble" will add charm and variety to any thimble collection.

Dragon

DUBLIN POTTERY, Republic of Ireland

Dragons represent the energy of the natural world in many different traditions and cultures. In the legends and folklore of the West, the dragon often symbolises natural forces that need to be tamed, and slaying the dragon is the test of the hero's mettle. In Christian symbolism, it is associated with fire and Lucifer, whom the Archangel Michael defeated and cast into Hell. In the East, however, the dragon is a symbol of happiness, representing the primal essence *yang* of Chinese philosophy — the active male principle — and is often used decoratively to ward off evil spirits. The splendid winged dragon on our thimble is a dragon of the air — symbolising the triumphant creative force that has been transformed from a dark, unconscious energy.

The mark is that of the little-known Dublin Pottery. When porcelain was first made in Ireland at the renowned house of Belleek in about 1863, it was under the supervision of David McBirney, a gifted potter from Dublin. This striking thimble celebrating the creative genius is produced in recognition of his achievements.