

the **thimble** society

Volume 9, Issue 7

Spring 2005





Members please note that most thimbles in this Spring magazine come from two private collections

Front cover

- 1 Refined English early 19th two coloured gold thimble. Exquisite applied gold flowers, each set with a turquoise. Excellent condition in original hinged leather case £420

Inside front cover

Mainly twentieth century British china, no longer in current production

Top photo, 20th century hand painted Royal Worcesters and other.

- 2 Yellow roses, signed L.Cox £38
3 Chaffinch, by J.Collins £38
4 Violets, by R.Dunkley £38
5 Pansies, good hand painting. No trade mark or signature £30

Second photo. British hand painted, no longer in production, and one other

- 6 Jasper's of Yorkshire 1999. 'E.S entwined to commemorate the wedding of Prince Edward and Sophie. Limited edition exclusive to the Thimble Society £45
7 Ditto Jaspers 1997. No 9 of a limited edition for the Thimble Society £38
8 Hand painted limited edition exclusive to the Thimble Society. 'None but the brave' 'VE&VJ day 1939-1945' £40
9 Printed design by Royal Worcester, showing flowers £15

Third photo. Humphrey the cat and others

- 10 'Kanno patchwork quilt school 1999 20th anniversary' printed £10
11 'Many Happy returns Humphrey to number 10. 27.9.95' printed limited edition for the Thimble Society to celebrate the return of the Prime Minister's cat £10
12 Printed couple by Theodore Paul £5
13 Caverswall china, 'Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 11 birthday 21st April' £15

As we cannot accept orders under £10, please add another thimble to make up to at least £10.

Fourth photo. Painted plastic and others

- 14 Hand painted for the Thimble Society cir 1995 £15
15 Plastic thimble with painted birds and flowers £15
16 Printed design by Royal Worcester £12
17 Spode transfer pattern in pink £18

Subscriptions

If you have not already paid for this year, please do so if you want to continue your membership, we don't want to lose you. A grateful 'thank you' to all prompt paying members, it saves us hours of work and costs. Please let us know if we can use your card to take subscriptions, and let us have your current card expiry date.

TELEPHONE ORDERS AND POSTAL MAILING ADDRESS ▼	
Tel and Fax (anytime): +44 (0)20 7419 9562. Thimble Society, 1 Cathcart Street, London NW5 3BL	
RETAIL SHOP ADDRESS ▼	
THE THIMBLE SOCIETY, "Geoffry Van Arcade", 107 Portobello Road, London W11 2QB (Saturday only) Telephone +44 (0)20 7229 3135	
Open Fridays 10-1pm by appointment Saturdays 7am to 3pm	<p>Notting Hill Gate Tube</p> <p>E-mail & web www.thimblesociety.com</p>

Regular procedures: Members will be sent reminders with the winter issue when subscriptions are due. Please pay within 6 weeks else your name is cancelled on the computer. All subscriptions are due January 1st each year, £19 (UK), £21 (Europe) and £23 (rest of the world) Subscribing for 2 years gives a discount. £35 (UK), £39 (Europe) £43 (elsewhere). Spring Magazine March 1st, Summer Magazine July 1st, and Winter Magazine November 1st.

Posting: UK: We recommend 'signed-for' for goods valued over £50. Rates for UK 'signed for' items are £3.75 plus £1.50 for p&p, in total £5.25. This rate insures goods valued up to £500. Rest of the world: we recommend 'Airsure' and insurance for valuable goods. We cannot be held responsible for loss of goods which are uninsured. All items in the magazine are described in good faith and we cannot be held responsible for errors.

We would be grateful if members paying in euros would calculate at the current rate when actually paying and also add the equivalent of £3 to cover bank charges. Credit cards are easier. Please do not pay in Sterling on a USA dollar bank account as we pay double charges.

We cannot reply to our members in the UK wanting advice, etc., unless a stamped addressed envelope is included as our postage costs are getting so high. It also saves so much time. We cannot hold a thimble or post one off unless the full price is paid within one week, if members wish to return a thimble please do so within two weeks, money refunded if thimble not satisfactory.

Dear Members

The Thimble Society shop [see address page 1] is going to experiment with Friday openings, as well as Saturdays. Most of the stand holders in the Geoffrey Vann arcade have elected to open on Fridays from this February 2005. The decision was taken because many of our regular customers told us they prefer to come to the Portobello Road when it is quieter. It is easier to park outside on Fridays, or in the adjoining streets on the 'pay-and-display' meters. Some of the other arcades may follow suit depending on attendance. The Notting hill area is now very chic, with clothes boutiques as well as cafes and restaurants, and there is nowhere finer to buy food-fruit and vegetables of every imaginable sort. Do come and visit us for a fun day out. Openings times will be approximately 10.30am until 4.30pm. For the first few Fridays it will be a good idea to phone on 020 7419-9562 first, to let us know you are coming.



Annie and Bridget

The Thimble Society Silver Jubilee weekend celebrations in 2006 are under way. Thanks to all the help we have been receiving from member Margaret Norton [also President of the Hat Pin Society] a full report will be printed. My apologies for printing *Margaret Russell* instead of Margaret Norton, in the Autumn issue, I can only plead builder's dust in the little grey cells. As we are planning a three day event in 2006, we have decided not to hold our one day meeting in 2005. However, so as to avoid any disappointment amongst members planning to meet this year, our Portobello arcade is planning a three day antiques fair in June, just before Olympia. It will be from Thursday June 9-Sat 11th. All the specialist dealers, including ourselves, will be saving our rich and rare objects, for a preview fair at the 'Alternative Olympia.' Wine and food will be served in the Geoffrey Van arcade with our compliments, and a good time had by all.

If any members are thinking of selling goods in auction, phone and check the commission, catalogue charges and vat rates first. To sell an item at most auctions, allow a cost of approximately 40% to be deducted from the realised price sent to you the vendor. This occurs because auction rooms deduct approximately 20% from the vendor and 20% from the buyer. There is the auction's commission, insurance, and photos charged to the vendor. Then the vendor must allow that, if the buyer wants to spend £100 they will only bid £80 knowing the extra costs they will incur will bring the price up to £100, so in effect, the vendor is losing 40%.

Bear in mind that from delivering your goods, to receiving your cheque, there will be a minimum of three months wait. Each lot must be valued at least £100 so it is rarely possible to put single thimbles into separate lots. The auction room may only have one specialised sale a year and many collectors abroad do not receive notification. Very best wishes for the coming Spring and summer, your next magazine will be with you June 1st.

Bridget

American Dorcas Thimbles, by Dan Walbrun

A long-time thimble collector once advised me, "You cannot own them all." Be that as it may, it seems we all desire to possess certain items in our collections. They may be thimbles that are far beyond our normal price, or simply impossible to locate at any price.

Yet somehow we all manage to acquire several of these 'impossible' items, don't we? I find the stories behind their acquisition just as interesting, sometimes more so, than the items themselves. And so it was with a recent acquisition of Mickey and I.

4-5 years ago a business acquaintance of mine and I were talking, and somehow, but I can't imagine why, the subject of our thimble collection came up. He mentioned that his mother-in-law also had a collection, and that they had been trying to dispose of it for some time. I offered to take a look at it, and several weeks later he brought the collection to a meeting we were both attending. A quick glance identified several wonderful pieces that Mickey and I agreed to purchase.

The remainder of the 200-piece collection was picked over by our thimble club members, and even made a trip to the TCI Convention in Orlando. The remainder of the collection then sat undisturbed in our home for the next two years. When I learned that my acquaintance was retiring this year I returned the collection to him.

Two or three days after returning the collection, I was browsing eBay and noticed an item listed as, Rare "American Dorcas" Thimble, with an extraordinary open bid price. This obviously caught my attention. I wasn't overly impressed with the thimble, but it looked strangely familiar.

A quick family consultation resulted in agreement that a similar thimble might have been in the collection we had just returned. Several phone calls confirmed that fact, and the purchase of the thimble was made. We then began our homework in earnest.

We learned that Charles Horner of Halifax, England, who had been manufacturing his steel core thimbles in England since the late-1800's, patented the American Dorcas thimble for manufacture and/or sale in the United States in 1889. He had developed a process of wrapping silver around a steel core, which made a thimble that was nearly indestructible under normal use. They basically came with a lifetime guarantee. It is not known whether the thimbles were actually manufactured in the United States, or more likely, simply imported from England. All American Dorcas thimbles are clearly marked in the apex "DORCAS, PAT. JUNE 11, 89".

The American Dorcas is known to have been produced in two different patterns: the 2-band wave scroll, and the Greek Key. Additionally, there are at least two known examples of the 2-band wave scroll pattern with enamelling on the upper band. One such example is pictured in Gay Ann Roger's "American Silver Thimbles" on page 191, photo #75. Research for this article also located a Greek Key pattern set with three turquoise stones, and a Greek Key pattern with enamel band (see photos). We now have a total of five different variations of these two patterns.

Discussions with several collectors led me to believe that there were only 8-10 known examples of these thimbles in collections today. They seemed to know exactly who owned, or at least did own them at one time, although several of these collectors have disposed of their collections since then. We have now identified at least two more examples that were previously unknown, so there may be more than originally thought.

Whether American Dorcas thimbles are actually that scarce or simply not being properly identified by collectors is worthy of further discussion. Some suspect that Horner may have only produced a limited number of each pattern to test the American market, and that the higher costs of his thimble doomed it to failure, and resulted in its extreme scarcity.

But the common external appearance of these thimbles (except for the enamelled versions) could easily confuse them with similar looking 2-band wave scroll patterns that were manufactured by Waite, Thresher (see American Silver Thimbles page 124, photo 37, #6) by Simons (see American Silver Thimbles page 101, photo 42, #10) or even Muhr (page 157, photo 17). Additionally, nearly every American manufacturer of thimbles produced a Greek Key pattern, and to the casual observer all may appear alike. Once you own one or two variations, the tendency may be to get a little lazy, and not actually look at the hallmarks when shopping. This was very much the case for all that had looked through the collection in our possession for nearly five years, including myself.

Even more likely is, that other examples exist in collections, but have not been properly identified as American Dorcas. The markings in the apex only identify them as DORCAS, which may lead one to believe that they are a much more common English Dorcas thimble with a patent date. English Dorcas thimbles are hallmarked on the exterior of the thimble, not in the apex.

We would certainly be interested in documenting other such examples if collectors would share the information with us. Mickey and I can be contacted at thimbuc2@aol.com or by phone at (920) 725-9478 with any additional information. *Photos supplied by Barbara Hluboky and Kit Frobel USA. By kind permission, article and photos first printed in the TCI Report USA.*



A Nordic Mystery

Every Autumn I visit my former Norwegian teacher Gerda, for a long weekend near Aberdeen. Last year I was telling her about 'The Thimble Society' and what a successful enterprise it is, when she started looking in her sewing basket and produced a gold Norwegian thimble with a carnelian top. She then proceeded to tell me this curious story.

It happened that Gerda had grand-parents who were land owners and much to the fury of her grandmother – a huge load of horse manure was dumped outside their house. She was about to remonstrate when she saw something glinting in the steaming manure. She asked one of the farm hands to pull it out, and lo and behold it was a gold thimble. It did not belong to her, nor did she ever find out where it had come from!

In due course she passed it to her granddaughter Gerda who sews beautifully. Unlike her mother, who disliked it. Her granddaughter has used it ever since.

The mystery of where it came from has never been solved.

Annie Elkins



Large letter place names

18 'Tenby' Hll mkd 'HG&S B'ham 1931'	£80
19 'Blackpool' Hll mkd 'HG&S B'ham 1931'	£80
20 'Aylsbury' hll mkd 'HG&S B'ham 1930'	£80
21 'Crouch Newport' hll mkd Hll mkd HG&S Sterling silver	£90

Large letter place names in good condition are very hard to find. Many of the ones shown in this issue are rare names that we have not seen before and may never have the opportunity of seeing again.



Large letter place names continued

22 'Llandudno' hll mkd 'sterling silver'	£90
23 'Aberystwyth' hll mkd HG&S B'ham 1929	£90
24 'Bangor' hll mkd HG&S B'ham 1930	£90
25 'Penmaenmawr' hll mkd B'ham 1930	£90

The important thing is the 'name' on the thimble, the hall mark is not as important because they were all made about the same time. It does not detract from the value if the thimble is marked 'Sterling Silver' This was done to save costs of hall marking in some cases.



Extra large and other silver

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 26 Unusual design of half moons, hll mkd 'JF B'ham 1900' | £35 |
| 27 Pretty daisies and dots, hll mkd 'JF B'ham 1898' | £32 |
| 28 Extra large elegant facets, hll mkd 'SJR Lon 1965' | £35 |
| 29 Plain all over dimpling, hll mkd 'CH.Ches 1917' | £32 |

Don't forget to keep a plain thimble in your 'bits box' in case you buy a set, a holder or box, with the thimble missing. A plain thimble will always look better than a non matching pattern.



Daisies and fans

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 30 Pretty all over daisies, hll mkd 'WJM Ches 1896' | £30 |
| 31 Charming maiden size, hll mkd 'HG&S B'ham 1924' | £33 |
| 32 Alternate dots and daisies, hll mkd 'HG&S B'ham 1906' | £35 |
| 33 Elegant fans all over, hll mkd 'CH Ches 1894' | £38 |

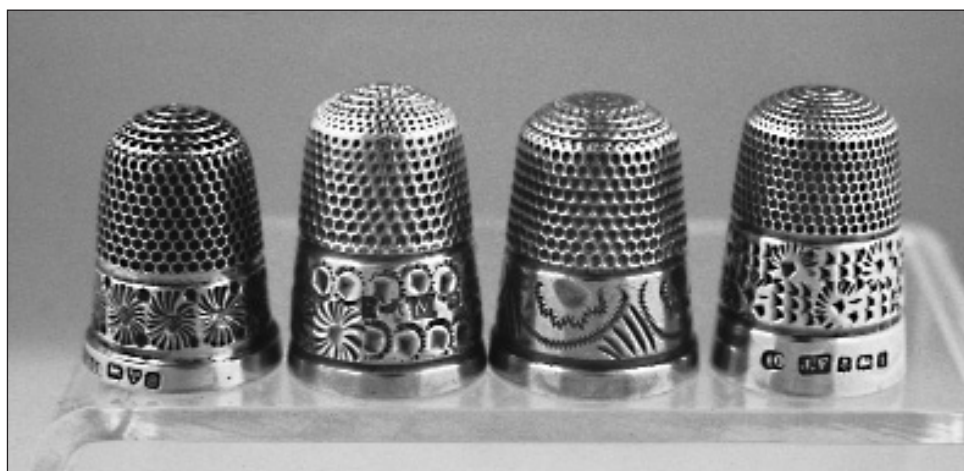
The fan pattern is the same as that used by Charles Horner on some of his Dorcas. Double pattern Dorcas are beginning to be scarce, so pick them up if you can.



Dorcas

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 34 A daisy pattern all over, with flat top | £25 |
| 35 All over stars, with domed top | £25 |
| 36 Another all over daisies, with flat top | £25 |
| 37 Waffles all over, with a domed top | £25 |

We still get serious sewers from all over the world, looking for a Dorcas to work with. They are considered the most hard wearing and comfortable. They have a wider fitting than many silver ones, all though the sizes are a nonsense.



Unusual half moon scrolls and others

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 38 Neat size, daisy border, hll mkd 'S.Bros. Ches.1902' | £32 |
| 39 Unusual spotted border, hll mkd 'CM.B'ham 1910' | £34 |
| 40 Very unusual crescent borders, hll mkd 'CM Lon. 1884' | £45 |
| 41 Pretty squares/flowers border, hll mkd 'JF Bham 1908' | £30 |

The design of half moons or crescents is most unusual. It is by Charles May, hall marked in London which was often a sign of quality. The date of 1884 is early, as most thimbles we have now date from the next decade.



English, Silver, Children's

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 42 Plain all over dimpling, hll mkd 'HG&S B'ham 1949' | £30 |
| 43 Tiny, all over dimpling, hll mkd 'JF B'ham 1910' | £35 |
| 44 Pretty flower border, mkd 'Sterling Silver' | £33 |
| 45 All over daisies, mkd 'Sterling' | £33 |
| 46 Smart all over dimples, hll mkd 'CH.Ches 1912' | £34 |

I still find it hard to believe that some of these tiny thimbles were worn. It is a wonder they were not all swallowed! I had to provide tiny needles for a bead work restorer friend. They were as thin as a hair, she worked under a magnifier.



Children's continued

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 47 Tiny brass, with faint engraved border and dots on rim, cir 1800 | £30 |
| 48 Charming decoration, silver, hll mkd 'C.Ches 1918' | £32 |
| 49 Tiny silver, adorable detailed engraved border and rim. Cir 1870 | £40 |
| 50 Pretty double flower and waffles, hll mkd 'CH.Ches 1912' | £35 |
| 51 All over flowers, engraved initials M.H. hll mkd. 'SBS.B'ham 1912' | £42 |

The two tiniest thimbles would seem to fit a baby or a doll but it seems unlikely that the brass one was made for a doll as it looks like a working thimble. There is a big demand for miniatures of every sort, we are all fascinated by tiny items.

Update on the 2006 Thimble Society Silver Jubilee Weekend

We have organised a three day-two night weekend, from Friday 8th, 9th to Sunday 10th, of September, 2006. We settled on the county of Warwickshire in the Midlands for reasons of accessibility, interest, and comfort in ratio to price. Through diligent enquiries, and detective work worthy of Sherlock Holmes, Margaret Norton put together reports on several hotels in Stratford, and Worcester. Having tried Stratford-on-Avon [Shakespeare's birthplace] where we were put off by unwarranted charges and lack of transport connections, we settled on the ancient historical city of Worcester. Travel arrangements were easier and value for cost superior. There is a near by airport, and an excellent direct rail service. The hotel offered much better service in relation to cost and the old City of Worcester has much to offer of interest.

Margaret has made sure there is wheel chair access as she uses one herself. Please let us know if you have special requirements as we do not want members put off coming because they are concerned about a lack of assistance. We are there to help.

We have chosen The Fownes Hotel, City Walls Road, Worcester WR1 2AP.

Tel: 01905-613151 Fax: 01905-23742.

Web site: www.fowneshotel.co.uk/fownes

The hotel is 5 minutes away from junction 7 off the M5, in a quiet street close to the city centre, with parking. There is a frequent direct train service to Worcester or you can fly to Birmingham and take a train [approx 30 miles journey] The famous Worcester Cathedral is 10 minutes away as are the shops, antiques market and cafes. The brilliant Royal Worcester factory seconds shop, is a few minutes walk. There are beautiful walks along the banks of the river Severn at the back of the hotel.

Prices are approximately £55 B&B single room and £75 B&B double. This is a delegate rate for us and may depend on numbers attending. There will be a small extra charge to cover the hire of the conference room, sales tables and equipment for talks.

As there is much to see and do, some members may like to book an extra night which the hotel will give you at the same rates.

We will arrange a tour of the Royal Worcester Porcelain factory and Dyson-Perrin Worcester Museum. We can also arrange a visit to the Redditch needle making factory near by and a talk from the famous Dent glove makers. The Fownes hotel used to be a glove making factory, built by John Fownes in 1882. Each room has an inscription describing it's original use. The business moved and changed it's name to Dents and is still in business today. We will be in Elgar country in the Malvern Hills, which may be of interest to music lovers.

The programme of talks will be extensive, with an International sales mall. Members and dealers can book tables and each member or dealer wishing to sell will be charged £5.

BOOKS FOR COLLECTORS	Price (£)	(postage & packing)		
		UK	Europe	RoW
"The Story of Antique Needlework Tools" by Bridget McConnel	45	6	14	17
"The Story of the Thimble" by Bridget McConnel	39	5	8	12
Binders: These hold eight magazines, are dark blue with gold lettering and logo, flexible rods placed in the centre of each magazine, reinforced brass corners	22	2	2.50	3
Videos – the first video is on the history of thimbles, and how to photograph small objects. the second video is on sewing tools, chatelaines and wares such as tartan, mauchlin, madras and sewing boxes. each video is £12 plus p&p. [UK, £2, Europe £2.50, ROW £3.] We can supply the USA video line system [PAL] for any members who require it.				
V.G. Cond = Very Good Condition	Hllmk = Hall Mark	B'ham = Birmingham		
Slight A.F. = Slightly Imperfect	T.M. = Trade Mark	Ches = Chester		
Mint = no wear	Ct = Carat	Cont. = Continental		
Circa (c.) = around	Kt = Carat	Lon = London		



Silver, German and French, 19th and early 20th century

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 52 French, with tiny hall mark on the rim, ovals and leaves | £30 |
| 53 French, with tiny hall mk, unusual engraved panelled border | £35 |
| 54 German, with Gabler petal top, unusual raised studs | £45 |
| 55 German, '925' silver stamp, pretty key pattern | £35 |

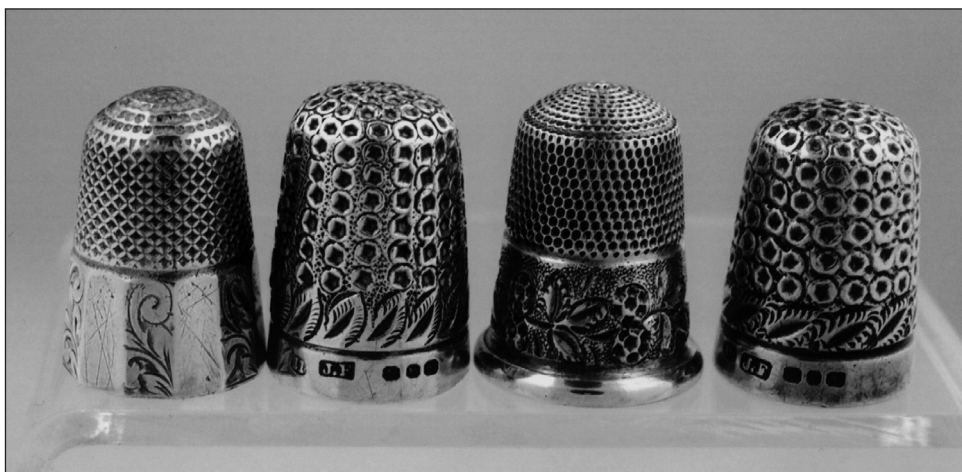
The Gabler silver thimble with the raised studs alternating with engraved panels is not a pattern we have had before. This one was bought in Holland.



Silver 19th century, Indian and French

- | | |
|---|------|
| 56 Classic French pattern of tiny dots, but with a Gabler top | £45 |
| 57 French, raised elegant neo-classic design of garlands | £65 |
| 58 Famous ornate repose Indian example made for the British Raj | £220 |
| 59 Tiny French hll mk on rim, but Gabler petal top. Star border | £38 |

When you see a French hll mk on the rim and a top typical of the German manufacturer Gabler, then these thimbles were probably made by Gabler for export to France. Gabler also exported to Scandinavia and Russia.



English silver Blackberries and others

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 60 Hll mkd in the dimpling, 'CH.Ches 1907.' Elegant engraved panels | £33 |
| 61 Blackberry design, leaves followed by berries. By 'JF Bham 1896' | £55 |
| 62 Unusual blackberry border, by' JF B'ham 1900 | £60 |
| 63 Blackberry design, leaves followed by berries. 'JF B'ham 1898 | £55 |

If you want to make silver, brass or copper cleaning easier, then buy a pair of impregnated mitts. One pair for silver, another for metals such as brass and copper, then dust them over your items.



Silver from Thailand and others

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 64 Tiny French hll mk, 19th cen. Delicate pierced border | £65 |
| 65 Thailand, wonderful elephant front and reverse, mid 20th cen | £49 |
| 66 Thailand, exquisite dancing figure front and reverse, mid 20th | £49 |
| 67 French, large size, rich applied border, 19th cen | £65 |

Thailand seems to have produced some of the most delicate, well modelled, imaginative thimbles for the export market. The figures and animals are in great detail and the silver is of a high quality.

Colour page opposite

Antique sewing tools

Anti-clockwise

- | | | |
|----|--|------|
| 68 | Decorative four piece, matching silver. French 19th century sewing set, in tan and gold tooled leather square box. A stiletto, thimble, scissors and needle case | £280 |
| 69 | Elegant matching silver gilt, French early 19th century five piece set in an oval plain ivory box. A stiletto, bodkin, scissors, thimble and needle case | £370 |
| 70 | Exquisite miser's purse in fine knitted red and blue silk decorated with steel beads in sparkling condition. Cir 1840, worn looped through your belt to hold coins | £85 |

Centre colour pages. Left side

Top photo, left to right

Antique gold on silver

- | | | |
|----|--|------|
| 71 | 'Semper.Fidelis' [always faithful] Applied gilded letters on this magnificent English silver thimble. The hll mk,[partly obscured under the lettering] is B'ham 1896 | £210 |
| 72 | 'Good Luck' either side of a horse shoe, hll mkd 'JF B'ham 1894.' Extremely rare to find this thimble now, especially in good condition | £220 |
| 73 | Beautiful gold flowers with a central gold heart, hll mkd' CH Ches 1900' | £125 |
| 74 | Rare combination of gold heart and berry border, hll mkd JS B'ham 1910 | £90 |

Jubilee crown and others

Second photo, left to right

- | | | |
|----|--|------|
| 75 | '1952-1977' on this Queen's jubilee. The silver thimble is covered by a silver gilt crown set with garnets. A very spectacular thimble | £90 |
| 76 | 'Queen Elizabeth 11 60th birthday 21-4-86.' Silver, delicate sparkling crown | £60 |
| 77 | Attractive hll mkd 9 carat gold [.375] by 'CH Ches 1900' and registration mk | £110 |
| 78 | Elegant gold thimble, bearing gothic initials, English cir. 1870 | £130 |

Child's shagreen case, thimble and others

Third photo, left to right.

- | | | |
|----|---|------|
| 79 | The famous 'Celtic harp' design with marble stone top. 'JS B'ham 1903' | £110 |
| 80 | Attractive gilt border set with turquoise, probably Gabler | £85 |
| 81 | Exquisite tiny [3cms] black shagreen case with tiny gold mounts and hinges Original faded dark green velvet interior. Gilt metal 18th cen thimble | £300 |

Antique porcelain and others

Fourth photo, left to right.

- | | | |
|----|--|------|
| 82 | Transparent porcelain like milk glass. A Robin. Probably Worcester, cir 1880 | £170 |
| 83 | Gold, by 'HG&S 9ct [.375] B'ham 1898.' Resembling it's silver sisters | £110 |
| 84 | A silver example of similar pattern. By 'HG&S B'ham 1902' | £36 |
| 85 | Pretty engraved USA, gold. Central elaborate initials | £120 |

Thimble E-mailing List – the Bee Chat Line.

If you would like to receive occasional e-mails of interest to members from Bridget, please send your name and email address to mailing-list@thimblesociety.com









Centre colour page. Right side Top photo, left to right.

Norwegian enamel on silver mid 20th century, and other

- | | |
|---|------|
| 86 By David Anderson cir 1960, lovely blue enamel on silver gilt | £90 |
| 87 Ditto by David Anderson, yellow enamel on silver gilt | £90 |
| 88 By David Anderson, enamel on silver gilt, reindeer pulling sledges | £150 |
| 89 Probably Gabler, cir 1920, delicate blue enamel with roses | £85 |

These examples by David Anderson's of Norway were probably made from the 1950's through to the 1970s, then I believe they ceased production. The earlier 19th century versions nearly always had moonstone tops.

Enamel on silver with stone tops. Also a Georg Jensen thimble limited edition

Second photo, left to right

- | | |
|--|----------|
| 90 Pretty Gabler, cir 1920, with white stone top and blue enamelling | £80 |
| 91 The world famous Danish silver designer Georg Jensen, made a few thimbles amongst his bigger commissions. His company contacted the Thimble Society recently, asking if they wanted to buy the few remaining thimbles as they will no longer be made. The thimbles have Jensen's typical restrained design, and elegant slim form. Each with coloured glass tops. We do not have many | Each £65 |
| 92 Green glass top probably by Gabler cir 1940, blue enamel border with roses | £85 |
| 93 Blue glass top, enamel border with roses, probably Gabler | £85 |

Antique USA gold and others Third photo, left to right

- | | |
|--|------|
| 94 Charming engraved maiden's size. USA, gold. 'Alice' engraved in cartouche | £120 |
| 95 Clearly engraved pastoral scene of dwellings and mountains. USA, gold | £110 |
| 96 Enamel on silver, '1952-1977' Silver jubilee of Queen Elizabeth 11 | £45 |
| 97 Good quality painted figure, enamel on silver gilt, by Hummel | £39 |

Dutch windmills in enamel and others Fourth photo, left to right

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 98 By 'JS&S B'ham 1972.' Engraved chevron design, blue stone top | £32 |
| 99 Silver, with enchanting Dutch scene of windmills in enamel | £78 |
| 100 Red stone top on this delightful, probably German, silver | £38 |
| 101 Mysterious coloured Moss Agate top, silver by 'JS&S B'ham 1972' | £34 |

Colour page opposite

Metal advertising, early 20th century Top photo

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 102 Aluminium, central motif of the Virgin Mary and Jesus | £15 |
| 103 Aluminium, 'Use Hudson's Soap' advertising thimble | £15 |
| 104 'Phenix Lessive' a French washing up liquid. Brass and blue enamel | £20 |
| 105 'Fil a La Tete de Cheval' 'Horse's head thread,' brass & green enamel | £18 |

Nixon and others Second photo

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 106 China Panda from Tokyo [stamped inside] | £15 |
| 107 'Nixon-Agnew '72' yellow plastic USA Presidential campaign thimble | £10 |
| 108 Aluminium, applied gilt flower, blue stone top | £10 |
| 109 Cir 1920 bakelite wrap around finger guard | £20 |

Ruby Wedding and others Third photo

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 110 Commemorating the ruby wedding of Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip | £20 |
| 111 Silver plate, pretty example | £10 |
| 112 Interesting design, low grade foreign silver | £15 |
| 113 'Her Majesty' 'Thimble' 'England' in brass | £40 |

Wedgwood and others Fourth photo

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 114 Pretty, foreign silver plate | £12 |
| 115 Little maiden sized aluminium | £10 |
| 116 Limited edition made for the Thimble Society by Russell | £15 |
| 117 Josiah Wedgwood bust in white, on blue jasper ware | £28 |



English silver, ornate border and others

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 118 Unusual leaf and diamond border, by 'CM Lon.1880' | £38 |
| 119 Pretty daisy rim, by CH Ches 1900 | £45 |
| 120 Ornate engraving of roses, and pretty rim. By S of Lon.1893 | £75 |
| 121 Sparkly bright star border, by CH Ches 1898 | £38 |

Two of these thimbles were hll mkd in London, both have good quality designs. One possibly by Charles May, the other maker I don't know.



English silver, steel top and others

- | | |
|---|------|
| 122 Alternate engraved panels, hll mkd in dimples, 'Ches 1908' | £34 |
| 123 Glorious bright leaf engraved border, central Gothic initials, cir 1830 | £110 |
| 124 Delicately engraved panels, central Gothic initials, 'JS.B'ham 1890' | £59 |
| 125 Elegant steel top, cir 1820/30 | £120 |

How tall, slim and elegant the late Georgian, early Victorian silver thimbles look. Such a pleasing restrained design, without rims. Very few of these thimbles now remain to us. In my opinion, they are still under priced considering their rarity.



English silver daisy rims

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 126 Fresh daisies and waffle top, by 'CH Ches 1904' | £39 |
| 127 By 'CH Ches 1893,' plain top with daisy border | £38 |
| 128 Decorative all over daisies and on rim. By 'CH Ches 1897' | £40 |
| 129 Ditto, by 'CH Ches 1909' | £38 |

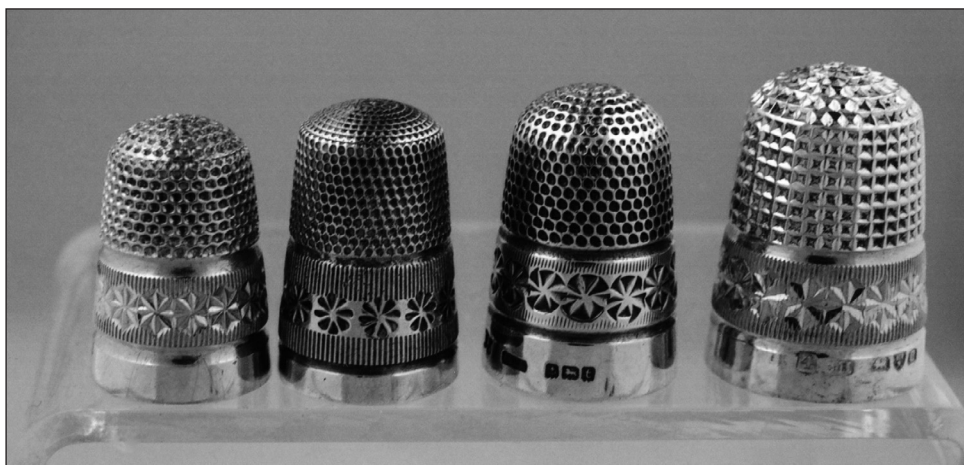
If you are thinking of buying a digital camera for photographing thimbles, proceed carefully. Unless you are prepared to spend a lot, you won't get a good enough lens for small detail and you cannot put on a polarising filter to alleviate silver glare.



Waffle and flowers

- | | |
|---|------|
| 130 Daisy border and top, by 'HG&S B'ham 1899' | £33 |
| 131 The very rare 'Doris' with all over waffle design | £110 |
| 132 Pretty all over crisp daisies, by 'CH Ches 1907' | £33 |
| 133 Deep border of engraved leaves, by 'HG&S Ches 1893' | £38 |

Reg. number is short for Registration number, when a patent has been applied for. The waffles were made as needle stops, to catch your needle and stop it sliding down the thimble and piercing your finger.



Versions of daisy borders

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 134 By 'CH.Ches 1912,' delightful crisp border | £38 |
| 135 Ditto, slight variation. By 'JF B'ham 1905' | £38 |
| 136 Ditto, slightly larger. By 'HG&S B'ham 1918' | £38 |
| 137 Even larger, very crisp. By 'CH Ches 1904' | £40 |

When you look at a thimble hall marked 1918, it is amazing to remember that was the last year of World War 1. What relief the owner must have felt to return to normal life.



Stratford-on-Avon and others

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 138 Elegant alternate diamonds and flowers. By 'JA B'ham 1898' | £35 |
| 139 Stratford-on-Avon, Shakespeare's birth place. 'HG&S Sterling silver' | £72 |
| 140 Charming flowers and waffles. By 'CH Ches 1924' | £35 |
| 141 Sparkly stars and waffles. By 'CH Ches 1892' | £35 |

Don't clean your thimbles too often as you will wear out the pattern. Try keeping them in a Muji miniature chests of drawers made from acrylic. Muji is a Japanese chain of shops specialising in stocking good quality acrylic storage units.



Important large letter place names.

- | | |
|---|------|
| 142 Rare, 'Lidgett. Lincoln.' By 'HG&S B'ham 1930' | £120 |
| 143 Rare Blackberry design with large applied letters 'Dundee.' 'JS B'ham 1898' | £150 |
| 144 Rare 'Mona' on reverse three legged symbol for Isle of Man. 'CH Ches1909' | £130 |
| 145 'Killarney' on double pattern, reverse 'Royal Spa' by 'HG&S B'ham 1905' | £110 |

These place names are hum- dingers. Some we have never seen before, such as a blackberry Dundee, or Killarney a rare name, and with 'Royal Spa' on the reverse. That sounds an unlikely mix ? Perhaps Irish members will enlighten us?



Variations on English silver 'waffle' designs

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 146 Interesting double waffle, by 'HF B'ham 1919' | £38 |
| 147 Single clear waffle, by 'WJP B'ham 1907' | £33 |
| 148 Larger all over crisp waffle by 'CH Ches 1903' | £34 |
| 149 Charming fans and waffles by 'CH Ches1910.' In original box from 'H.Samuel Manchester, London and Glasgow and all principal cities' | £38 |

Very nice to see a thimble in it's original pink card box. 'Watch maker, Goldsmith, Silversmith' on the front of the box and a small horse shoe card 'shape' inside to fit the thimble.



Various English silver cushion patterns

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 150 Lovely raised cushion pattern, by 'JF B'ham 1928' | £48 |
| 151 Similar on a smaller scale, by 'JF B'ham 1898' | £48 |
| 152 This has raised flowers, and patent number, by 'GS B'ham 1906' | £38 |
| 153 Another cushion variation, by 'JF B'ham 1903' | £48 |

James Fenton must have invented this cushion pattern as a good design to stop a needle slipping. Interesting to see how many variations there are.



19th century USA designs in silver

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 154 Stern Bros, delightful engraved grapes | £35 |
| 155 Petite egg and dart by Simons | £30 |
| 156 Attractive bright cut leaves by Simons | £35 |
| 157 Excellent village scene by Simons | £40 |

To see a collection of all the scenic USA thimbles, including the wonderful early ones would be a treat. If any American member would like to share a photo of some of their best scenic, UK members would be very interested.



19th century USA designs in silver

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 158 A lovely scenic design | £40 |
| 159 Alternating engraved and plain panels by Simons | £35 |
| 160 Elaborate scroll design by Simons | £38 |
| 161 Similar panels in a larger version by Simons | £35 |



British silver commemoratives

- | | |
|---|------|
| 162 The coronation of 'King George and Queen Mary 1911.' A central gold crown, flanked by Buckingham Palace, coach and horse, Westminster Abbey | £250 |
| 163 'Queen Victoria born May 24th 1814. Ascended the throne June 20th 1837. Crowned June 28th 1838. Heaven protect our sovereign lady' | £300 |
| 164 'E a crown R' to celebrate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1952 | £150 |
| 165 By 'JS&S B'ham 1972,' showing Montrose Castle. To celebrate... | £48 |

When you buy the Queen Victoria commemorative above, you will have a miniature history lesson in your antiques cabinet. The thimble must have been made the year of the coronation, otherwise the Queen's marriage to Albert one year later would be there on the thimble as well.



English silver

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 166 Charming all over daisies by 'CH Ches 1911' | £30 |
| 167 By 'JF B'ham 1921.' Rich deep border of flowers | £35 |
| 168 Useful plain example, by 'CH Ches 1916' | £30 |
| 169 Pretty daisy rim, by 'CH Ches 1902' | £43 |

If you put a polarising lens on your camera to minimise glare, you can photograph your thimbles in bright daylight or photo floods. You won't need to use an igloo or tent to shine your lights through. The lens also reduces glare from oil paintings.



Silver commemoratives

- | | |
|---|------|
| 170 '1981 Lady Diana Prince Charles 29th July' | £35 |
| 171 '1952- 1977 Silver Jubilee E11R' | £38 |
| 172 Ditto with a darker finish to the silver | £38 |
| 173 Silver plate. 'Silver jubilee King George V 1910-1935 Queen Mary' | £120 |

As it will soon be the silver jubilee of The Thimble Society, I need to find a silver smith willing to make us a celebration thimble. After all, we have been part of collecting history.



Silver Dutch thimbles and others

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 174 Elegant bee hive top, early 19th cen Dutch, engraved border | £80 |
| 175 Typical classic Dutch finger guard with maker's mark cir 1860 | £90 |
| 176 'Hovis Bread' by HG&S Ches 1926 | £50 |
| 177 Decorative French, scalloped border, cir 1880 | £55 |

For those of you lucky enough to have Dutch silver thimbles, you will see they have shot up in value due to scarcity. Kay Sullivan's book on Dutch thimbles and sewing tools is a must have for serious collectors, it is beautifully presented and researched.



Silver with coloured stone tops

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 178 By 'JS&S B'ham 1961,' blue chalcedony top | £30 |
| 179 By 'JS&S B'ham 1972,' green stone top | £30 |
| 180 Engraved border, yellow glass top.'935' silver | £30 |
| 181 'Sterling Germany' stamped in dimples, green glass top | £30 |

Foreign thimbles are going up in price rapidly because they are getting very scarce and it is a growing collectors field abroad. In France, Germany and Holland, it was nearly impossible to find any thimbles at all, let alone unusual ones.



Members visiting the Thimble Society shop in the Portobello on Saturdays



186 Admiral Horatio Nelson and Emma lady Hamilton's portraits adorn the wonderful silver and hand painted enamel thimbles, made by the legendary Peter Swingle. They are made in a limited edition and we only have a few left. Please do not leave your orders too late as it takes Peter quite a while to paint each portrait. Price per pair [not sold separately] £280. plus p&p.



**In memory of Dorothy
Friend 1910-2004.**



Dorothy was a founder member of the American TCI and a member of The Thimble Society for many years. Her collection of British commemoratives was extensive and her booklet 'British Commemorative Thimbles' added much new information to this popular field. I can remember selling her one of the rarest commemoratives ever, 'The Death of the Duke of Wellington,' she was a pleasure to work with because of her knowledge, wit, and intelligence and will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

Letter from Amsterdam, Holland

Dear Bees,

Excuse my English. Thanks for the nice booklet with beautiful photos.

Maybe some supplementary information on two thimbles: on the front cover and page 9. On the front page is indeed a Gabler thimble, ca. 1920, designed by Professor Christabeller of Stuttgart, Germany. This thimble is called 'Die Fleissige Thimble' (diligent family). See page 168 in 'A History of Thimbles' by Edwin F. Holmes. I am also in possession of an original example, only marked with 800 and a tax mark 1906-1953, but no raised letters of the maker.

On page 9: A is the Dutch Queen Wilhelmina Wedding thimble. Encircling band shows her as a child playing with a doll, as a young maiden embroidering and as a sovereign with Royal Coat of Arms. Die engraved in 1902 and used to mint her wedding present thimble. Grandly restored 75 years later.

A similar thimble was made of the Spanish Royal wedding of King Alfonso XIII and bride princess Victoria Eugenia de Battenberg, die engraved in 1906.

Both above-mentioned thimbles are h.m. LXF (hinain), France and a mercury head.

Thank you for the interesting information. We are always grateful to receive details on foreign thimbles.

Dear Bees,

Please keep up the good work.

The Essex Thimble Circle has become a very informal group, of about a dozen to date. My co-founder lives in the Hornchurch area, and also received some publicity. We meet at pubs for lunch

and sometimes in each other's homes in the evenings. To date we have held about six meetings, average numbers seven or eight of us, most times. Everyone is so nice and friendly, and we so enjoy our social meetings, and natter on about our favourite subject, thimbles.

I wonder, might you just give us a mention.

The Essex Thimble Circle would like city members in that area to get in touch through The Thimble Society.

Dear Bees,

Thank you so much for sending this hall marker thimble and for remembering me.

I am thrilled with it and can I ask you to send me another hallmarked cable if ever you see one? The marks on this are very small, and I would like bigger ones, and the date is immaterial. I have the Manx cable thimble illustrated in Edwin Holmes 'History' – but sadly no hallmarks, so I don't know who made it.

I love them, and am definitely now collecting 'hall marked cable thimbles'! I do hope some more will come your way.

I haven't had any more pinwheels since your collection – but live in hope. A friend has just sent me post cards and a booklet about St Alban's Abbey, which come from your collection. It is fascinating and these little things satisfy my passion for history.

The thimble you sent is in wonderful condition and must have been treasured. Thank you again.

Herewith my subscription. I have so enjoyed your catalogue which contains many wonderful and mouthwatering items.

I am becoming very selective in my old age, but one thimble I long for is a David Anderson enamel with a lovely scene, c.1900.

Yours, Mary

Well, we have some 1950s and 1960s ones, but for the moment a c.1900 one eludes us.

Dear Bees,

The blackberry thimble has arrived safely and I am very pleased indeed. The photo did not do full justice to it. I think it is a lovely example of a blackberry design and whoever made it was a true artist as well as a craftsman. It fits my finger too. I hope that the original owner used and enjoyed it and I will use it in turn with my other favourite ones.

I have an odd question for you. I just acquired an

old aluminum advertising thimble. On a green band it has some decorative stars and the message 'Always use Restu and save your coupons' (in block capital letters). I think it is English but it might be American. I should like to find out what household product Restu might have been but have had no luck so far. Have you come across one of these thimbles?

Many thanks again for the blackberry thimble.

Yours sincerely, Lesley Green

Does anybody know what 'Restu' was? Let us know.

Dear Bees,

It was lovely to speak to you on the telephone the other day. We have been so busy travelling that we have missed several meetings recently and so have not kept up our meetings with our 'thimbling' friends. We hope to see more of everyone in 2005.

When the Autumn magazine arrived we both remarked how different in appearance it was from the first one we had (and we have kept every issue). Those drawings in Issue 1 must have taken hours to reproduce – and now the beautiful photographs. How things change! But not the service we receive when we browse through the magazine.

Unfortunately the cost of insurance constantly rises and we are having to contemplate lessening our

assets so we may be considering selling some of our thimbles in the near future. If and when we do we shall certainly approach you first to see if you can help us.

Until then we await the next publication in the New Year.

*Happy thimbling,
Joan and Milton Sykes*

If you are worried about insurance, I suggest an alternative. Why not buy a small second-hand safe? Normal cost £50. This can be hidden under a shelf or in a cupboard and will keep your thimbles safe. Your insurance will be reduced, or you could opt to be uninsured.

Dear Bees,

I enclose my cheque for £19, the renewal subscription. The journal continues to be a delight, so full of interesting information and worthwhile tips. Alas my one was minus the pages between 12 & 17, I feel sure they were special, so would it be possible to post them to me (stamp enclosed). I expect being coloured they were missed out when assembled.

Thank you again for the pleasure you give,

Best wishes, Gladys Etheridge

Please let us know if you receive a magazine short of pages, we will send you another one.

Inside back cover in colour

Antique sewing tools *Bottom row, left to right*

187 Amusing lucky ivory elephant book mark. English cir 1890	£60
188 Elegant agate top, gilded crochet hook, cir 1860	£98
189 Ivory umbrella needle case, containing 'Peep' with tiny views of Eastbourne	£55
190 Tortoiseshell rectangular cotton winder	£38

Second row.

191 Two pewter boot pin cushions	£30 each
192 Made for the USA, Mauchlin ware. A picture of 'Tomo-chi-chi Memorial Savannah, GA'	£78
192a Made for the French, mauchlin ware 'Pouges-les-Eaux, Source St Leger'	£85
193 Ornate repoussé silver thimble case showing flowers and foliage. Velvet lined	£120

Third row

194 Dutch silver knitting needle end protectors, cir 1870. Cavalier style boots	£125
195 Silver plate knitting needle end protectors, cir 1870/80	£69

Top row, left to right

197 Dutch knitting needle end protectors, silver, ladies hussar boots, cir 1870	£125
198 'Fifi' sewing doll with attached darning mushroom, perhaps for gloves. Cir 1920	£79
199 Painted tin holder 'Employez Le fil au Chinois' [Use Chinese sewing thread] the thread comes out through a tiny hole. Inside there is a metal advertising thimble 'Anker machine a coudre.' [Anker sewing machines]	£45

Back Cover.

200 Gorgeous pearl and onyx set gold thimble. English, cir 1860 in excellent condition. Made using a style of stone setting proud of the main body, called the Roman setting, which derives its name from Roman jewellery popular during The Roman Empire	£360
---	------





200