

Thimble and needlework tool books

I was often asked about thimble and needlework tool books: which ones to buy them. Being a librarian and being passionate about books, it was easy for me.

Most of the books listed below are out of print, so you will have to look for those that interest you thru the second-hand market. Where I know the books are still in print, I have listed them as such, with an address or email link where one is known and the ISBN.

I was a member of Thimble Collectors International (TCI) between 1986 and 2019 and as part of their annual membership, up to 2002, one received a booklet published by their Grants Committee.

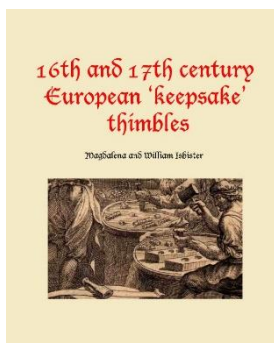
The ideal book has to have a good balance between photographs/illustrations and the text. In my opinion tho, one can never under-estimate the value of photographs as this is the link when you have an unidentified thimble - once you have found a matching photo you can then chase further information! Price guides are useful as a guide, but they date the book so quickly.

Auction catalogues have become collectable in their own right, as well as being the benchmark in prices. There were accompanying coloured advertising postcards for most of these catalogues in the 1990s. It is a while now since paper copies of auction catalogues have been produced - all are now produced electronically.

I have opted not to include the published prices as these vary so from country to country. ** indicates that the original published price was in excess of AU\$100.

Books about Thimbles

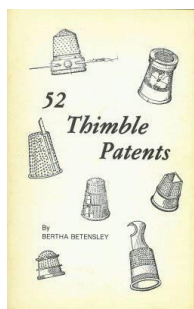
Listed in alphabetical order by title



Magdalena & William Isbister

16th and 17th century European 'keepsake' thimbles (2015)

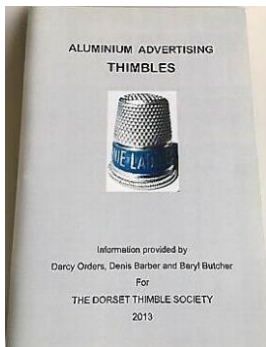
The art and/or craft of thimble making arguably reached its zenith in the 16th and 17th centuries. Silversmiths and porcelain manufactures were experimenting with new techniques and the results were keepsake thimbles of unarguable beauty. This book contains a series of papers researched and written about 16th and 17th century keepsake thimbles and their makers.



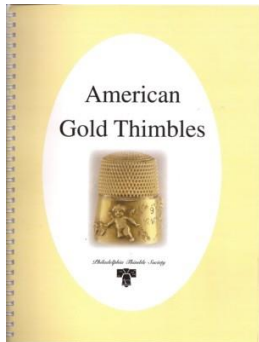
Bertha Betensley

52 thimble patents (1980)

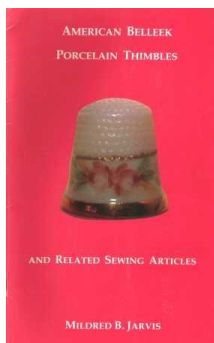
Privately published, this is a very useful booklet on thimble patents includes the patent drawings and descriptions. Arranged alphabetically by the patentee.



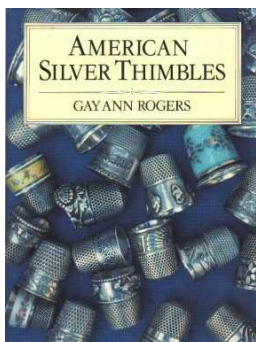
Darcy Orders, Denis Barber and Beryl Butcher
Aluminium advertising thimbles information collected by ... for Dorset Thimble Society (2013)
List of aluminium slogans on thimbles arranged alphabetically



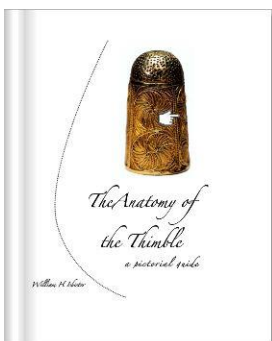
Philadelphia Thimble Society
American gold thimbles (2009)
This long-awaited publication won't disappoint those looking for the gold thimble makers on the USA!! In full colour.



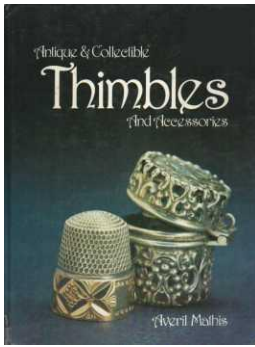
Mildred B. Jarvis
American Belleek porcelain thimbles and related sewing articles (1991)
From TCI. This booklet is aimed at the American market as these thimbles are rarely seen outside American collections.



Gay Ann Rogers
American silver thimbles (1989)
This is the bible for American silver thimbles. There is a wealth of information as well as many clear black and white (which is perfect for silver thimbles) photographs, with succinct descriptions. There is a separate price-guide, which was available from the author.
ISBN 1869812034



William H Isbister
The anatomy of the thimble (2015)
This book describes in detail both the structure and the materials that make up the simple thimble. The various anatomical parts are described and illustrated in detail. It is the first book of this kind which addresses the anatomy of the thimble in such detail. Copious photographs.

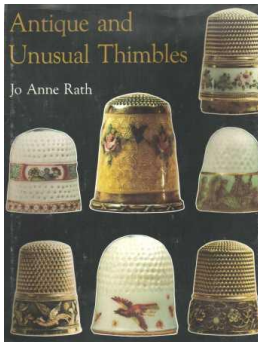


Averil Mathis

Antique & collectible thimbles and accessories (1991)

The beauty about Mathis' book, is the large clear black and white photos, which includes a section on thimble holders. The text is minimal; there is a 1991 price guide in US\$.

ISBN 0891453229



Jo Anne Rath

Antique and unusual thimbles (1979)

A general guide with mainly black and white photos, with good descriptions; predominantly US silver thimbles.

Rath Shepherd died in 2017.

ISBN 0498020657



Don Griffin

The Artistry of Nicholas Gish: a catalog of design and thimble manufacturing and mastery (2019)

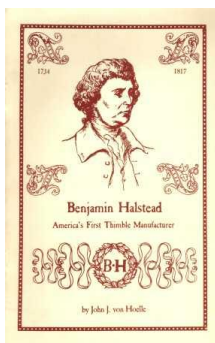
History of the Gish companies – biography of Nicholas Gish by his son Randolph – 200 thimbles documented.



Jean and Don Griffin

A Beginner's guide to thimble collecting; an essential and informative guide for every thimble collector (2014)

With over 500 colour photos and a price guide. Also available in digital format.



John J. von Hoelle

Benjamin Halstead: America's first thimble manufacturer (1985)

This is one of a series of booklets on the American thimble makers, privately published by von Hoelle.



Myrtle Lundquist

The book of a thousand thimbles (1970)

This book caused great excitement on its publication as it was the first book published specifically for thimble collectors. After 30 years it has not stood the test of time with the quality of photos.

Lundquist died in 1985.

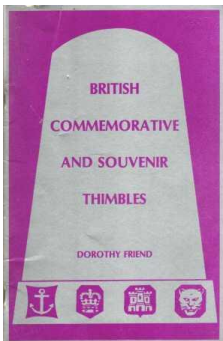
ISBN 0870690086



Christina Bertrand

Brass thimbles (1986)

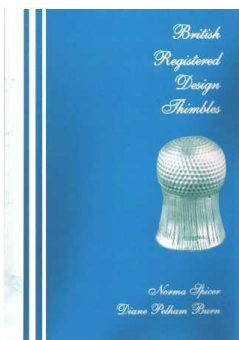
From TCI. Tho it is 16 years since this was published, this booklet is still of use as it is the only one to concentrate on brass thimbles. It would be great if Christina could be persuaded to update this to cater for the collectors who specialise in brass thimbles.



Dorothy Friend

British commemorative and souvenir thimbles (1987)

From TCI. As the title suggests, this has a wider audience than the US where the booklet was published. Concentrates on the pre-1900 thimbles, with black and white photos.

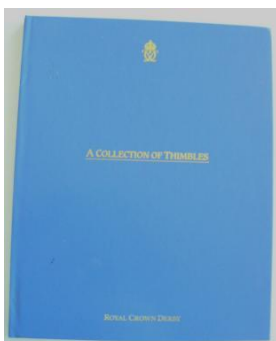


Norma Spicer & Diane Pelham Burn

British registered design thimbles (2003)

Clear photos with text of 30 British mainly silver thimbles that have registered designs.

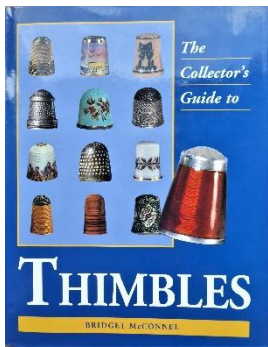
Pelham Burn died in 2012.



Royal Crown Derby

A collection of thimbles (1986)

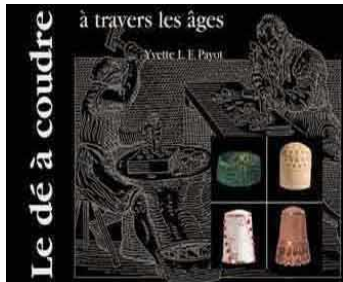
This book was issued to accompany the set of 15 thimbles issued by Royal Crown Derby. Black and white illustrations.



Bridget McConnell

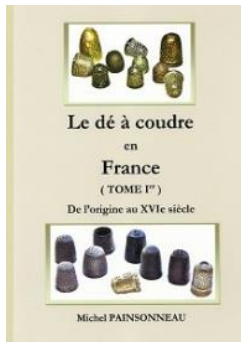
The collector's guide to thimbles (1996)

A general book on thimbles by the well-known owner of The Thimble Society of London.



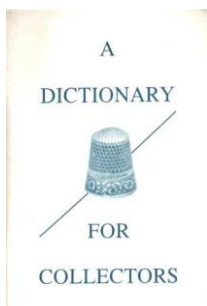
Yvette L E Payot; edited by Societe du Musee de Montreux, Switzerland

Le dé à coudre á travers les âges (2005)



Michel Painsonneau

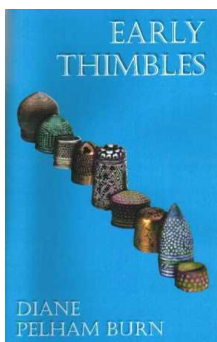
Le dé à coudre en France. (Tome 1er) De l'origine au XVIe siècle (2013)



Lucile Bloomquist, Merle and Paul Sauvé

A dictionary for collectors (1992)

From TCI. Useful, tiny booklet of terms for thimble parts, materials, thimble makers and decorations.



Diane Pelham Burn

Early thimbles (2001)

From TCI. Di covers thimbles of the period where they were made by hand, in a scholarly way. A must for collectors of thimbles of this era. Full colour photographs for easier identification; arranged by the European country of origin.

Pelham Burn died in 2012.

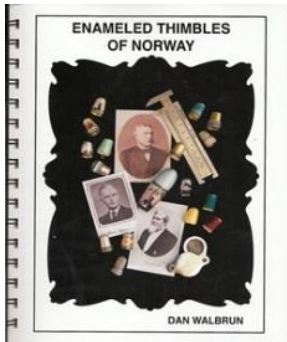


Cecile Dreesmann

Een vingerhoedje... A thimble full... Dreams, vol 3 (1983)

A bilingual - Dutch and English - small book on thimble collecting in general with clear photos and matching text.

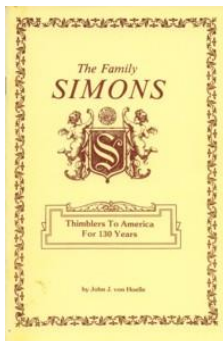
ISBN 9066550112



Dan Walbrun

Enameled thimbles of Norway (2012)

This is the latest booklet from Thimble Collectors International and it is lavishly illustrated with these glorious thimbles.



John J. von Hoelle

The family Simons: thimblers to America for 130 years (1985)

Another in the series of booklets privately published by von Hoelle on the largest of the American thimble makers. Based on the early records of the late Elizabeth Galbraith Sickels.

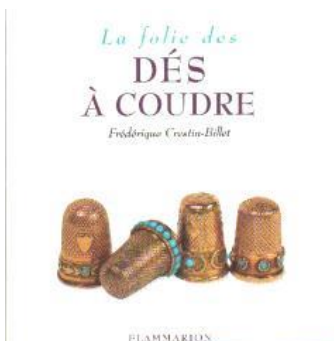


Franz Groiss

Fingerhut-fabrik Gebrüder Gabler Schorndorf (Warttbq.), gegründet 1825.

(vol 1) Fingerhüte in Gold, Silber und unedlen Metallen

(vol 2) Preisliste (1990)

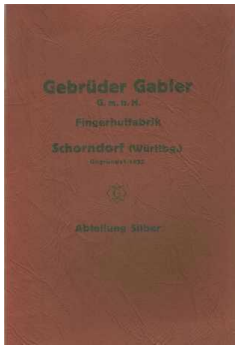


Frederique Crestin-Billet

La folie des dés à coudre (2003)

Clear colour photographs; brief French text. No maker's marks.

ISBN 2082008894

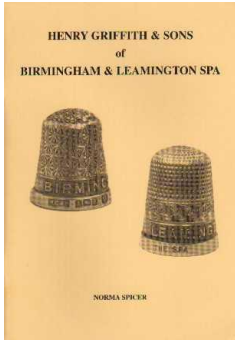


Paul H. Jungbludt

Gebruder Gabler G.m.b.H. Fingerhutfabrik [cover title]
Preise und Abbildungen von Gebruder Gabler [title page]
(1988)

There is little information about Gabler and this booklet goes a long way to remedy this gap. The illustrations are from 1930 Gabler catalogues. The introduction is in English and German - the catalogue of thimbles is only in German.

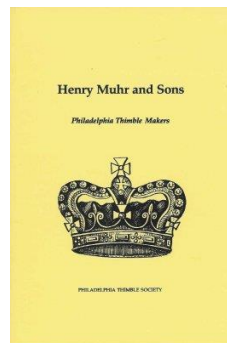
ISBN 3992031862



Norma Spicer

Henry Griffith & Sons of Birmingham & Leamington Spa
(1999)

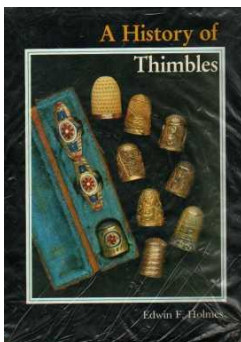
Norma's name is synonymous with the Victorian thimble silversmiths. This is the first of four titles and there is a neat balance about the life of Griffith and his thimbles.



Philadelphia Thimble Society

Henry Muhr and Sons: Philadelphia thimble makers
(1985)

Many black and white pictures of the different styles and patterns in this slim booklet.

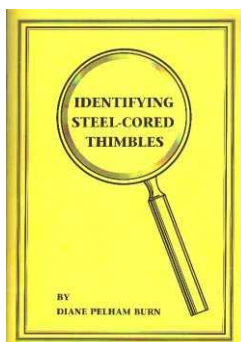


Edwin J. Holmes

A History of thimbles (1985)

In my opinion this is the most authoritative book on thimbles ever written. It succeeds his first book of 1976 entitled 'Thimbles' [German title *Fingerhüte*]. If I am looking for detailed, scholarly and accurate information, it is usually to be found in Holmes. The photos are mainly in black and white throughout the text. Arranged by what the thimbles are made of. It was supplemented by issues 1-20 of *Thimble Notes & Queries*, which Holmes published quarterly between 1998 and 1993, available to 200 subscribers worldwide. His untimely death in 1997, robbed the world of its finest thimble scholar.

ISBN 0845347616

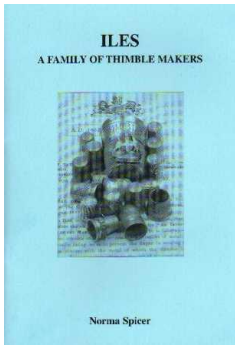


Diane Pelham Burn

Identifying steel-cored thimbles (1993)

Published by the Dorset Thimble Society. A Supplement was published in 1997. This is an invaluable booklet for collectors of Dorcas thimbles as there are illustrations throughout.

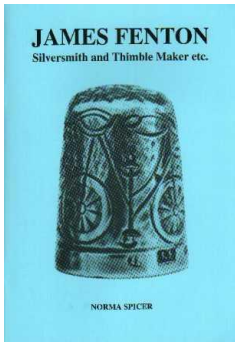
Pelham Burn died in 2012.



Norma Spicer

Iles: a family of thimble makers (2001)

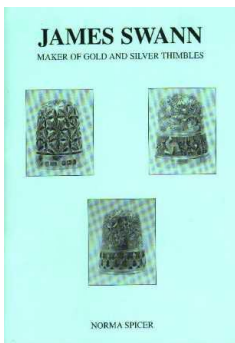
The final booklet in Norma's quartet of British thimble makers. As silver thimbles become scarcer, this booklet on Iles will open up a whole new world of collecting base metal thimbles. A good balance between history and his actual thimbles.



Norma Spicer

James Fenton: silversmith and thimble maker etc. (1995)

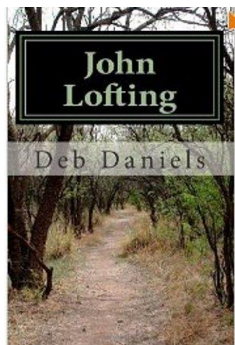
For collectors of this Victorian English silversmith's thimbles, this authoritative booklet is a must.



Norma Spicer

James Swann (& Son) makers of gold and silver thimbles 1887-present (1997)

If you'd like to know more about Swann the silversmith, as well as his thimbles, including the current makers of JS&S thimbles, this booklet is for you.



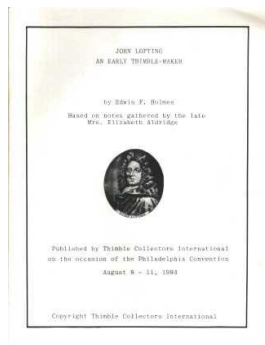
Deb Daniels

John Lofting (2012)

"It is a drama but the most important sections are factual. Especially significant in that regard is the court case of 1700 which was an early precursor to the American revolution. John may have understood the significance of the case in which he had inadvertently become embroiled, but he did not live to see the revolution".

This means the book will have little relevance to thimble collectors, tho Lofting was the "father" of British thimbles.

ISBN 13 978-1477602539



Edwin J. Holmes

John Lofting: an early thimble maker (1984)

From TCI. The booklet is based on the notes gathered by the late Mgrs. Elizabeth Aldridge. Scholarly.

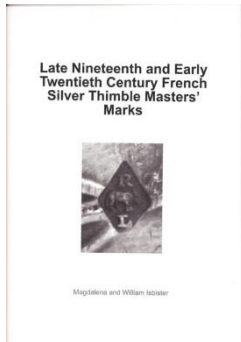
Holmes died in 1997.

Colin Millett



Ladies of 'The porcelain' – Royal Worcester lady modellers and painters (2021)

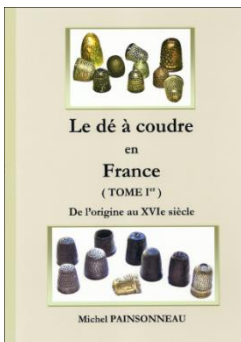
This is Colin's third booklet on Royal Worcester, all concentrating on illustrating the big pieces of RW. This volume has a small section showing thimbles painted by the lady painters.



Magdalena & William Isbister

Late nineteenth and early twentieth century French silver thimble masters' marks (2007)

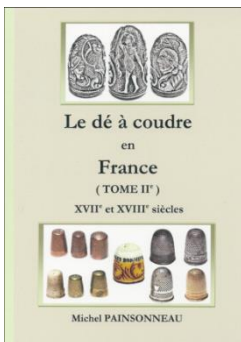
The first booklet to unravel some of the mystery surrounding French thimble makers' marks.



Michel Painsonneau

Le dé à coudre en France (Tome I^e) De d'origine au XVI^e siècle (2012)

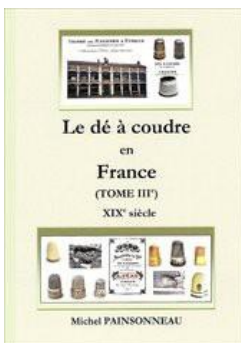
108 pages, with colour photos - in French.
ISBN 9782954215327



Michel Painsonneau

Le dé à coudre en France (Tome II^e) XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles (2012)

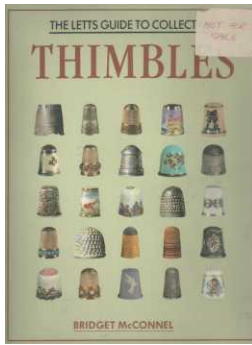
94 pages, with colour photos - in French.
ISBN 9782954215334



Michel Painsonneau

Le dé à coudre en France (Tome III^e) XIX^e siècle (2012)

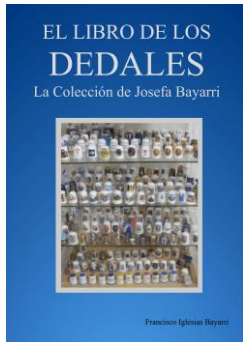
96 pages, with colour photos - in French.
ISBN 9782954215341



Bridget McConnell

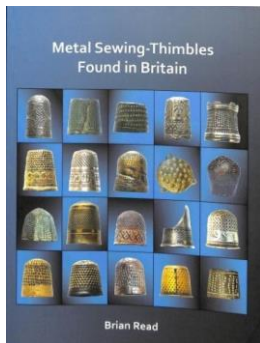
Letts guide to collecting thimbles (1991)

This is the first of McConnell's books. It is a general book on thimbles with a balance between text and photos. It has mainly colour photographs, reproducing some thimbles that appeared for sale in Thimble Society of London. Also published with the title "A Collectors Guide to Thimbles". ISBN 1852381205



Francisco Iglesias Bayarri

El Libro de los Dedales; la Colección de Josefa Bayarri (2013)



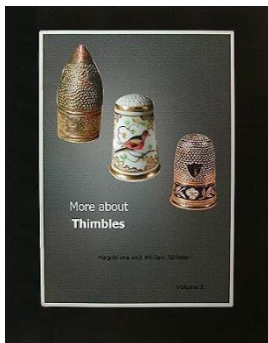
Brian Read

Metal sewing-thimbles found in Britain (2018)

Thimbles found mainly by The Society of Thames Mudlarks, who use metal detectors. There are fine hand-drawn illustrations of each thimble that are matched by the colour photographs. There are also very detailed descriptions of each thimble found: the thimbles have all been FOUND in Britain. A great proportion are thimbles made in Europe.

Also available as an eBook

ISBN 9781784919450



Magdalena & William Isbister

More about thimbles (2015-2017)

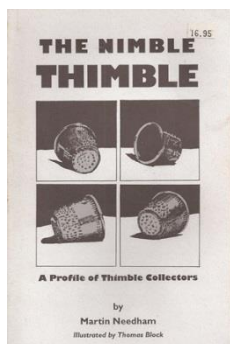
Written over five volumes, each of these scholarly volumes covers a different topic, ranging from French sterling silver thimbles, to enamelled thimbles etc

ISBN v.2 9781364806415

ISBN v.3 9781364789060

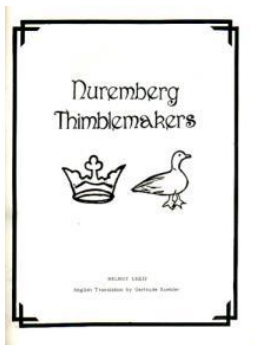
ISBN v.4 9781366447616

Volume 3



Martin Needham

The nimble thimble: a profile of thimble collectors (1993)

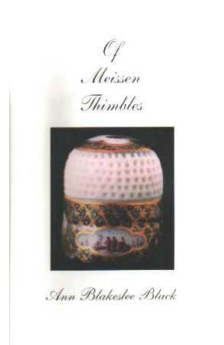


Helmut Greif

Nuremberg thimblemakers (1986)

From TCI. Lots of detail and the black and white photographs complement the text for this important era in the history of thimble making, being some of the earliest.

Greif died in 1996.



Ann Blakeslee Black

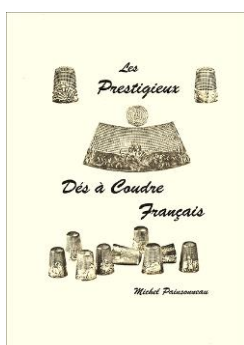
Of Meissen thimbles (2000)

From TCI. Many full colour, large photographs throughout the booklet.



Magdalena & William H Isbister

Precious thimbles (2017)

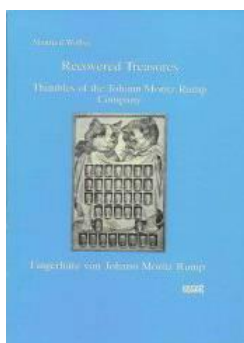


Michel Painsonneau

Les prestigieux dés à coudre français (2012)

194 pages, with black and white photos - in French. Literal translation "The prestigious French thimbles".

ISBN 9782954215303

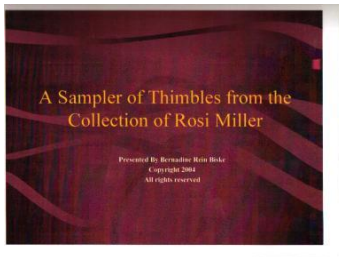


Manfred Wolber

Recovered treasures: thimbles of the Johann Moritz

Rump Company (1990)

Text in German and English.



Bernadine Rein Biske

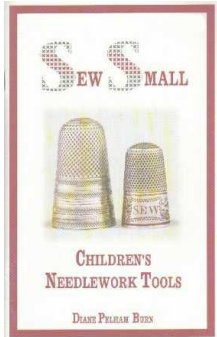
A sampler of thimbles from the collection of Rosi Miller (2004)

One colour photo per page, with many gold thimbles.

JB Publishing

47529 Cheryl Ct

Shelby Township MI 48315-4707 USA

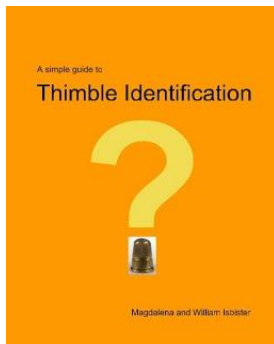


Diane Pelham Burn

Sew small: children's sewing tools (1986)

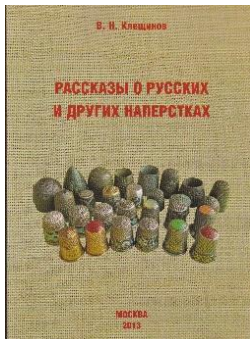
From TCI. Until this booklet was published there was no information on the plethora of thimbles and tools that were made for children. Wonderful photos. A reprint on superior paper is now available.

Pelham Burn died in 2012.



Magdalena & William Isbister

A simple guide to thimble identification

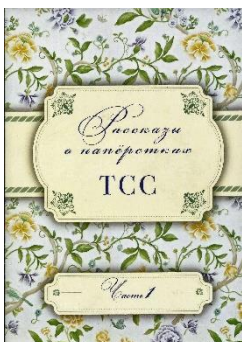


V.N. Kleshchinov (В.Н. Клепцинов)

РАССКАЗЫ О РУССКИХ И ДРУГИХ НАПЕРСТКАХ (English

translated title: Stories about Russian and other thimbles) (2013)

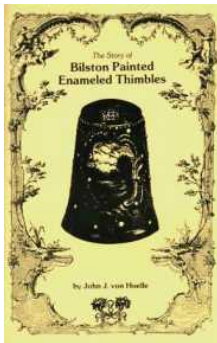
Text in Russian



Stories about thimbles TCC (2018-2024)

Text mainly in Russian and some English, from the Moscow Thimble Collectors group, who have used the TCC certificates to compile these volumes.

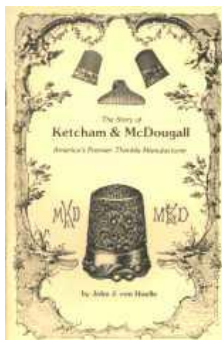
There are five volumes



John J. von Hoelle

The story of Bilston painted enameled thimbles (1988)

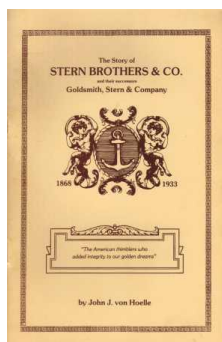
Another in the series of booklets privately published by von Hoelle, with black and white photos.



John J. von Hoelle

The story of Ketcham & McDougall: America's premier thimble manufacturer (1987)

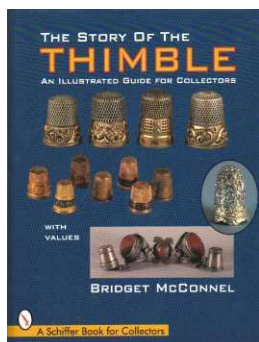
Another in the series of booklets privately published by von Hoelle. Based on the research of the late Elizabeth Galbraith Sickels.



John J. von Hoelle

The story of Stern Brothers & Co. and their successors Goldsmith, Stern & Company (1985)

Another in the series of booklets privately published by von Hoelle. Based on the research of the late Elizabeth Galbraith Sickels.



Bridget McConnel

The story of the thimble (1997)

This is profusely illustrated with colour photos, with less text - some photos from her first book and others from thimbles for sale thru Thimble Society of London. Arranged by period.

ISBN 0764303112



Helmut Greif

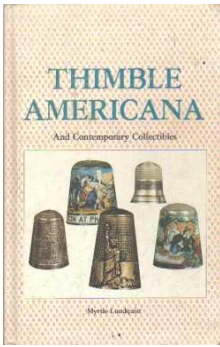
Talk about thimbles (1983)

One of the few books that deals with European thimbles, specifically German thimble makers.

Original German title: Gesprache uber Fingerhute

Greif died in 1996.

ISBN 385378206X

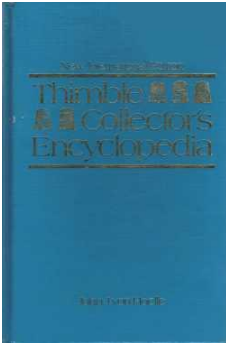


Myrtle Lundquist

Thimble Americana and contemporary collectibles (1981)

This is the third and final book in the trilogy by Lundquist. It covers thimbles in general, not just American thimbles and the pages alternate with photographs in colour and black and white, with captions. Lundquist died in 1985.

ISBN 0870693263

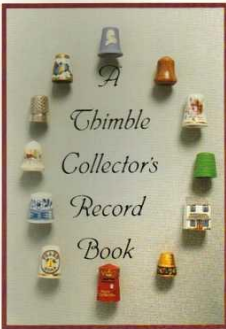


John J. von Hoelle

Thimble collector's encyclopedia. 3rd ed. (1986)

If looking for instant information, this must be the first port of call. The information is fleeting, but a good starting point. The mainly black and white illustrations are invaluable. There is a 1986 US\$ price guide.

ISBN 0870694847



Thimble collector's record book (1994)

Create a catalogue with a record of your thimbles in this 32 page book.

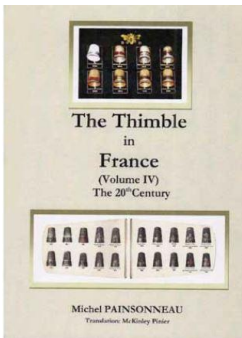


Franz Groiss

Thimble factory in Vienna (1990)

The illustrations of thimbles from the Settmacher factory in Vienna are from the trade catalogues. A good reference tool.

Groiss died in 2007.



Michel Painsonneau

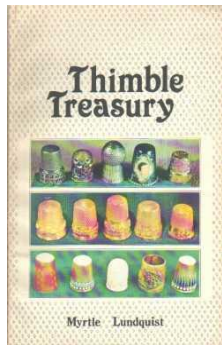
The Thimble in France (2017)

vol IV The 20th century



Evelyn DerMarderosian, Jeannine Connor and Marjorie Perkins
Thimble language: a thimble collectors glossary of terms (1988)

An alphabetic listing with illustrations of the thimbles being described. Pamphlet.



Myrtle Lundquist
Thimble treasury (1975)

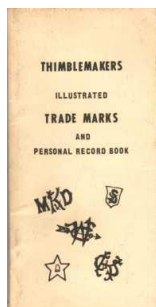
This second book from Lundquist has alternating pages of thimble photographs and captions. In colour and black and white. Softcover edition. Also available in hardcover (deep pink cover) Lundquist died in 1985. ISBN 0870691236



Bernadine Biske, Mary Frances Cataney, Peggy Carroll, Charlotte Goldberg, Rachel Himmelberger; edited by Mabel Rogers

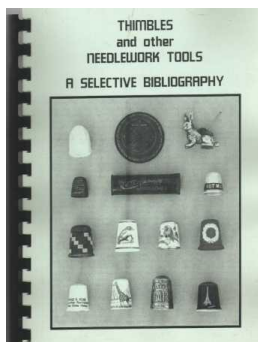
The thimble undercover in children's books (2001)

A listing of 428 titles of children's books [bibliography] where thimbles are mentioned or illustrated. Privately published.



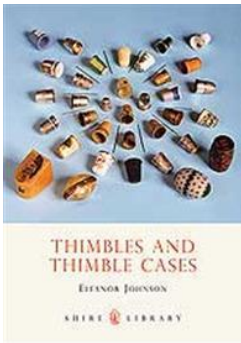
Averil D. Mathis
Thimblemakers: illustrated trade marks and personal record book (1981)

Most of the small-formatted book is for recording the items in your collection. The listing of thimble makers' marks is for American makers.



Susan Jean Gowan
Thimbles and other needlework tools: a selected bibliography (1995)

This is a listing of books and journal articles published until 1995. No photographs or illustrations, a reference tool. A very useful index, tho now dated. Privately published.



Eleanor Johnson

Thimbles and thimble cases. 2nd ed (1999)(Reprint with additional colour photos 2006)

Johnson's first edition first published in 1982 to English collectors, was what Lundquist's book was to American collectors - the first! This second edition came about when Shire Book had sold 100,000 copies of her first edition! This edition has introduced colour photos, retaining some of the black and white ones of the first edition. Though the thimbles are quite small, the accompanying captions are detailed, with lots of text. A general book, still excellent value for all beginners.

Johnson died in 2015.

ISBN 9780747804031

THIMBLES of AUSTRALIA



Susan Jean Gowan

Thimbles of Australia (1998)

One of the first thimble books that has attempted to cover the thimbles of an entire country. Mainly black and white photos, with useful illustrations of maker's marks. Arranged by what the thimbles are made of.

ISBN 0864179464

thimbleselect.com



Susan Jean Gowan

Thimbles of Australia: the colour photos (2012)

14 years after the publication of the book, this CD attempts to provide colour photos of the thimbles featured in the book - but much much more, totally over 1900 images - includes all new finds. Arranged in the same order as the book.

Thimbles of Clay

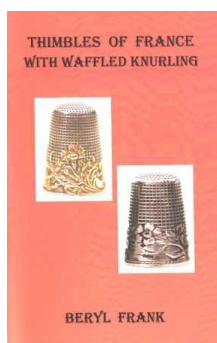


Mary Peckover

Mary Peckover

Thimbles of clay (1996)

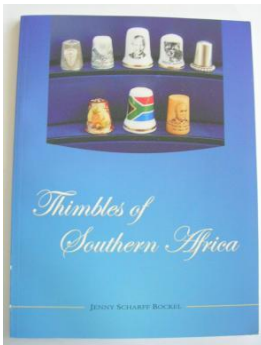
From TCI. An alphabetic listing of pottery, porcelain and china thimble makers. No photographs or illustrations in this booklet.



Beryl Frank

Thimbles of France with waffled knurling (2003)

The latest publication from TCI. Clear illustrations supplements the text, to be able to distinguish between the original and 1970s re-strikes of these prized silver thimbles.

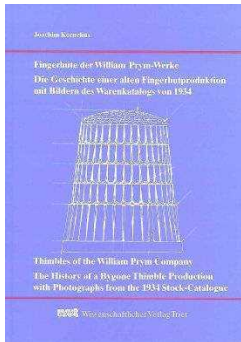


Jenny Scharff Bockel

Thimbles of Southern Africa (2005)

This is the first book ever published dealing with South African thimbles. The section on the sewing items from the Boer War is superb. Full colour photographs.

0620330996



Joachim Kornelius

Thimbles of the William Prym Company: the history of a bygone thimble production ... (1988)

In German and English. Photographs from the 1934 Prym catalogues.



Adrienne de Smet

De vingerhoed in het kunstambacht (1992)

A general book on thimbles, written in Dutch. There are clear colour photographs throughout. The arrangement is by the material the thimbles are made of.

ISBN 9074042015



Catherine A Langedijk and Herman F Boon

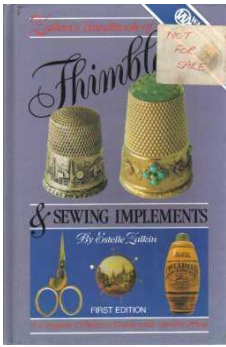
Vingerhoeden en naairingen uit de Amsterdamse bodem: productietechnieken vanaf de late middeleeuwen (2009)

Antique thimbles from under the past of Amsterdam



Herman Boon and Catherine Langedijk

Vingerhoedmakers en hun bedrijven in die tijd van de Republiek (2008)



Estelle Zalkin

Zalkin's handbook of thimbles & sewing implements (1988)

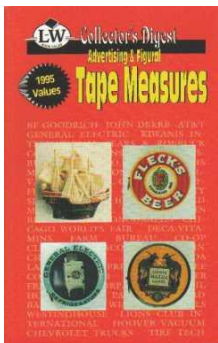
This book successfully combines what no other has - a good coverage of both thimbles and needlework tools. There are copious black and white photos for each section, with text at the beginning of each chapter. There is a price guide in US\$, which has been updated in succeeding reprints. The author has advised that this book will not be reprinted having been in print for 15 years = March 2003.

Zalkin died in 2014.

ISBN 0911594140

Books about Needlework Tools

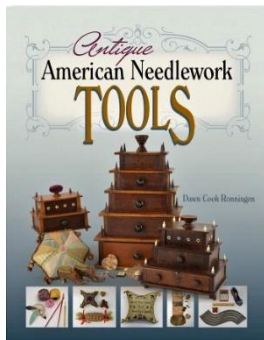
Listed in alphabetical order of title



Advertising & figural tape measures: collector's digest (1995)

A book of full colour photographs for easy identification of predominantly advertising tape measures. No text.

ISBN 0895380315

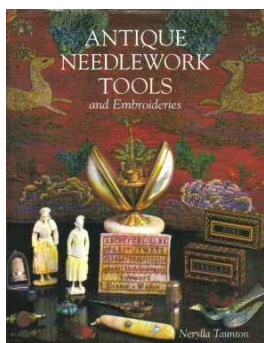


Dawn Cook Ronningen

Antique American needlework tools (2018)

The book offers historical background, detailed descriptions, and photographs of needles and threads, bodkins and awls, chatelaines, hoops, lucets, and more. The strong link between women's history and needlework tools is captured as well. 750 colour photographs.

ISBN 13: 9780764355493



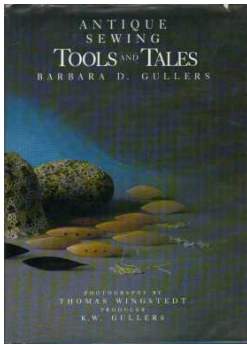
Nerylla Taunton

Antique needlework tools and embroideries (1997)

A more sumptuous and authoritative book on this subject will be hard to find. Twenty years in the writing Nerylla has divided the book into centuries until 1910 and each chapter has exquisite photos, along with the scholarly research we associate with Nerylla, with the relevant embroideries that were made by the tools of the period. We were privileged in Australia to have had this author as our guide and mentor until her death in 1998. The book will be republished in 2006.

Antique Collectors Club
Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK

ISBN 1851492534



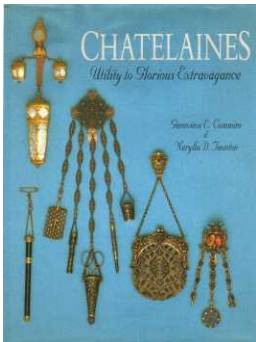
Barbara Gullers

Antique sewing tools and tales (1992)

The combination of her American and Scandinavian backgrounds make this book of tools unusual. Very little text, but the wonderful photos make up for this.

Gullers died in 1993.

ISBN 0941250024



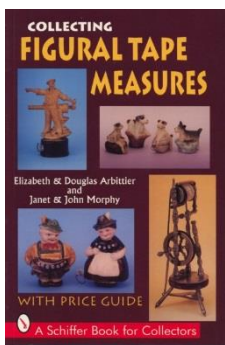
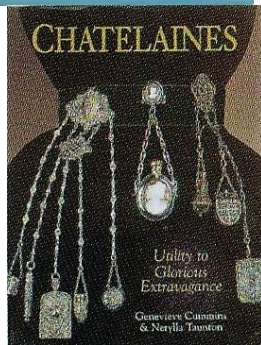
Genevieve Cummings and Nerylla Taunton

Chatelaines: utility to glorious extravagance (1994)

This highly specialised book is prized in the wider collecting world as there is only one chapter that deals with chatelaines that contain sewing tools. The scholarly research and wonderful colour photographs set the benchmark for quality publishing in our field.

Taunton died in 1998.

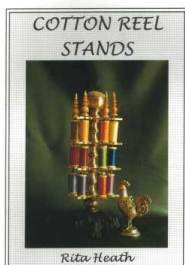
ISBN 1851492062



Elizabeth & Douglas Arbittier and Janet & John Morphy

Collecting figural tape measures (1995)

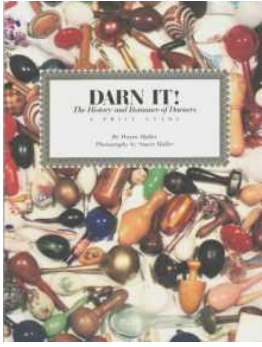
A complementary book on tape measures to that on advertising tape measures. Hundreds of colour photographs to help in identification. Has a price guide.
ISBN 0887408664



Rita Heath

Cotton reel stands (1999)

Published by the Dorset Thimble Society. A dream book for those collectors who specialise in collecting these antique stands. Contains black and white and colour photographs throughout, with good captions; little other text in this booklet.



Wayne Mueller

Darn it! The history and romance of darners (1994)

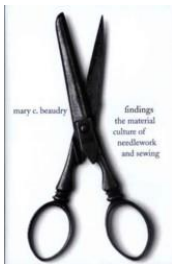
Copiously illustrated with clear colour photographs; text on opposite page.
ISBN 0895380722



Darlene Gengelbach

Encyclopedia of children's sewing collectibles (2006)

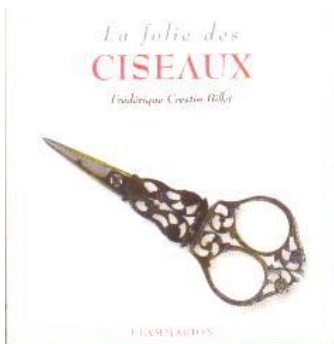
Colour photos of sewing tools for dolls. 700 pages
ISBN 9781574325263



Mary C Beaudry

Findings: the material culture of needlework and sewing
(2006)

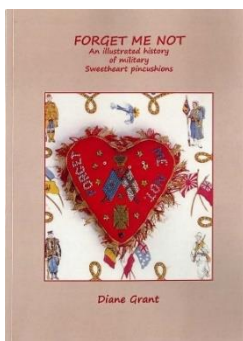
A scholarly work, with few illustrations. Thimble chronology needs investigation for accuracy.



Frederique Crestin-Billet

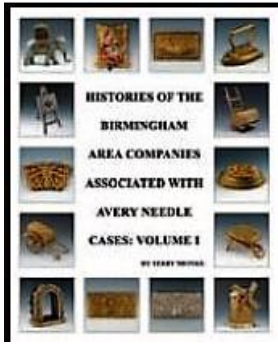
La folie des ciseaux (2003)

One pair of scissors per page with clear colour photographs; brief French text.
ISBN 2082008886

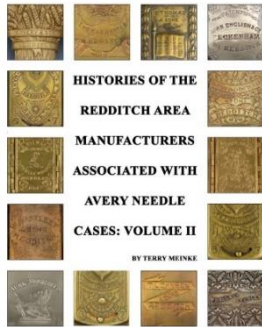


Diane Grant

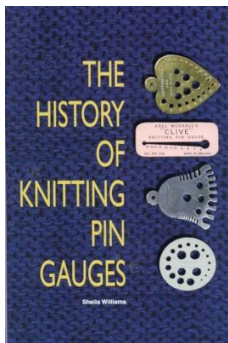
Forget me not: an illustrated history of military sweetheart pincushions (2017)



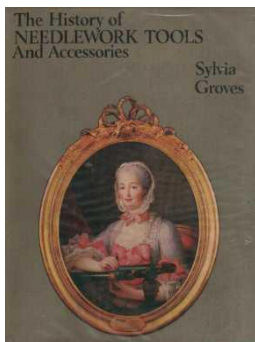
Terry Meinke
Histories of the Birmingham area companies associated with Avery needle cases (2022)
In two volumes



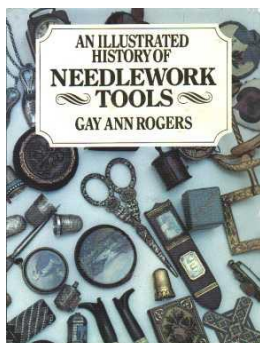
Terry Meinke
Histories of the Redditch area manufacturers associated with Avery needle cases (2020)
In two volumes
ISBN 978-1-71-512058-0 (I Avery - Haye)
ISBN 978-1-71-512066-5 (II Holyoake - Wyers)



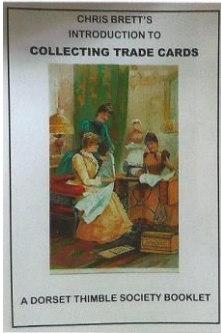
Sheila Williams
The history of knitting pin gauges (2006)
Another interesting, specialised topic with copious black and white photographs with lots of history of the English makers of these humble tools.
ISBN 1905226756



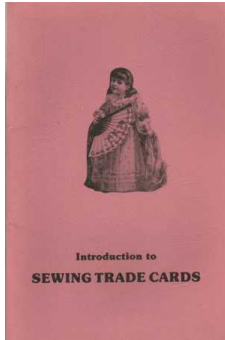
Sylvia Groves
The history of needlework tools and accessories (1966; reprint 1973)
One of the forerunners of her subject, this early book is much sought after. In black and white, the text predominates. Unusual tools illustrated as well the work they produced.
ISBN 0715359134



Gay Ann Rogers
An illustrated history of needlework tools (1983)
The first of her two books, Rogers' book is a joy of information. Plenty of photos in black and white, but the text predominates.
ISBN 0719540216



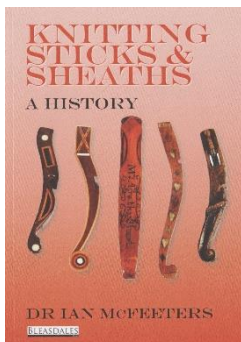
Chris Brett
Introduction to collecting trade cards (2015)
Dorset Thimble Society



Debbie Fuller
Introduction to sewing trading cards (1988)
From TCI. Contains black and white photos of American sewing/trade cards.



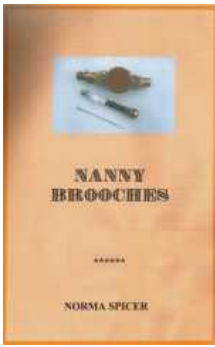
Susan Webster (with Joyce Poynter and Sheila Williams)
Knitting needle gauge – new finds (2017)



Dr Ian McFeeters
Knitting sticks & sheaths: a history (2016)
"He explores the forms and decoration of stick and sheath design across various periods of history and looks at how knitting was regarded by different social classes in Europe and Britain." (Bleasdales - the publisher)



Terry Meinke
My Avery needle case collection (2012)
Superbly photographed showing many views of these prized collectables.



Norma Spicer

Nanny brooches (2001)

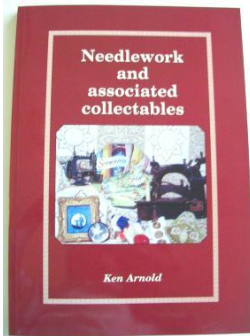
Privately published. The only comprehensive information on nanny brooches yet disseminated.



Jean Scott

Needle packet holders (2006)

Privately published. Full colour, showing Avery brass needle packet holders in the main.

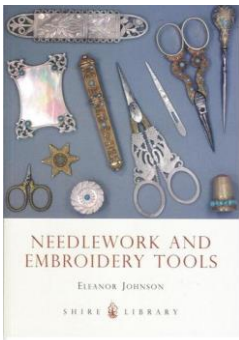


Ken Arnold

Needlework and associated collectables (2004)

Published in Australia, this book, made up mainly of old advertisements from long-gone magazine articles, includes handwork made from the tools illustrated.

ISBN 1875342443



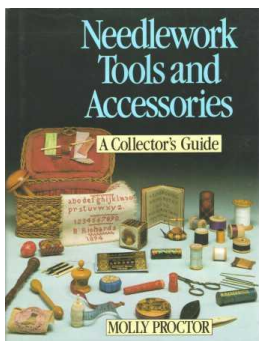
Eleanor Johnson

Needlework and embroidery tools. 2nd ed (2004)

This new edition followed the popular new edition of Johnson's Thimbles book! This edition has introduced colour photos, retaining some of the black and white ones of the earlier editions. Though the tools are quite small, the accompanying captions are detailed, with lots of text. A general book, still excellent value for all general tool collectors.

Johnson died in 2015.

ISBN 9780747803997

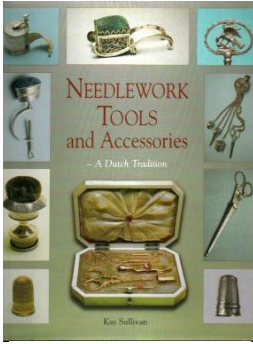


Molly Proctor

Needlework tools and accessories; a collector's guide

(1990)

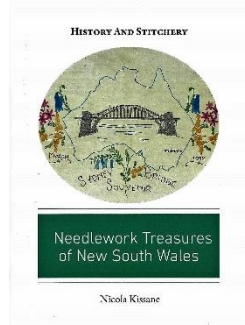
A good, general coverage of needlework tools - black and white photos for identification. Good chapter on scissors.



Kay Sullivan

Needlework tools and accessories; a Dutch tradition (2004)

Twenty years of research shows in this wonderful full colour addition to the stable of Antique Collectors Club, Woodbridge publications. Dutch marks are an invaluable source. Most photographs show previously unpublished items. ISBN 1851494715



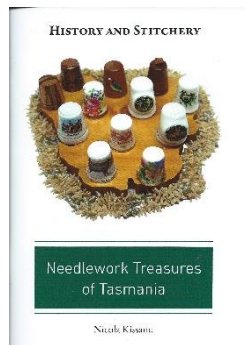
Nicola Kissane

Needlework treasures of Tasmania: history and stitchery (2017)

Tasmanian-born Kissane has a keen eye for the history of her native state, highlighting some of the earlier treasures from convict days. Arranged alphabetically, the sewing tools are illustrated on one page with text on the facing page. A long-awaited publication, with the help of Needlework Tool Collectors Society of Australia.

ISBN 9780646982168

email the author: nicolakissane@hotmail.com



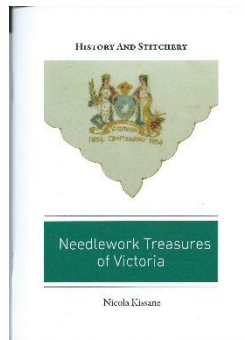
Nicola Kissane

Needlework treasures of Victoria: history and stitchery (2021)

Continuing with her series on sewing-related items around Australia, Kissane follows the pattern of her booklets established in 2017. Arranged alphabetically, the sewing tools are illustrated on one page with text on the facing page. Published with the help of Needlework Tool Collectors Society of Australia.

ISBN 9780645277005

email the author: nicolakissane@hotmail.com

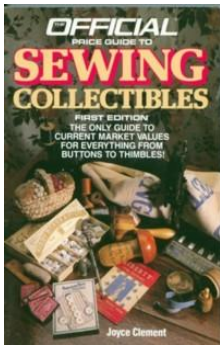


Christina Bertrand

Notions of war (1991)

From TCI. Highly specialised and comprehensive from 17th century to World War II, tho this booklet covers both tools and thimbles, it concentrates mainly on tools. Perfect for the thematic collector.

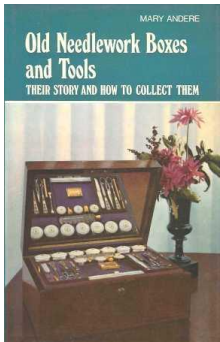




Joyce Clement

The official price guide to sewing collectibles; the only guide to current market values for everything from buttons to thimbles! (1987)

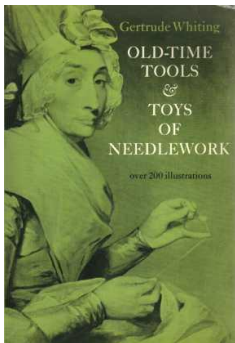
Tho very dated, this alphabetical listing of the prices are of interest as a guide for today's prices - eBay tho has changed pricing forever!!
ISBN 0876377479



Mary Andere

Old needlework boxes and tools: their story and how to collect them (1971)

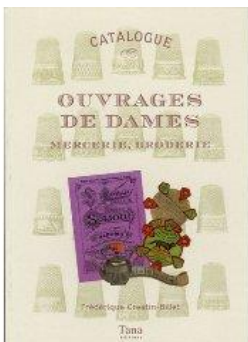
One of the earliest books available on the subject, with line drawings of sewing tools and photographs of sewing boxes.
ISBN 0715352601



Gertrude Whiting

Old-time tools & toys of needlework (1971)

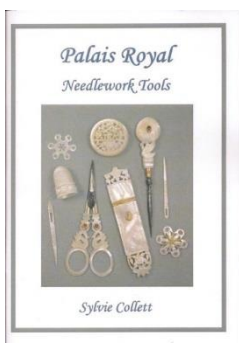
This book was first published in 1928 and reprinted at the start of modern-day collecting. Has black and white photos of unusual tools, with quite a few ethnic tools.
ISBN 0486225178



Frederique Crestin-Billet

Ouvrages de dames: mercerie, broderie (2005)

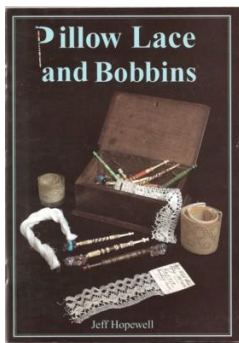
This book on French thimbles and sewing tools is taken form the early 20th century magazine ads in Au Bon Marche. Wonderful colour photos of superb French thimbles and sewing tools.
ISBN 2845672888



Sylvie Collett

Palais Royal needlework tools (2009)

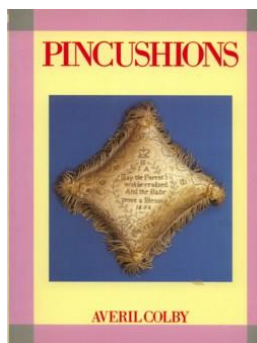
This slim unpagged, self-published booklet has full colour photos of wonderful French sewing sets.



Jeff Hopewell

Pillow lace and bobbins, 2nd ed. (200?)

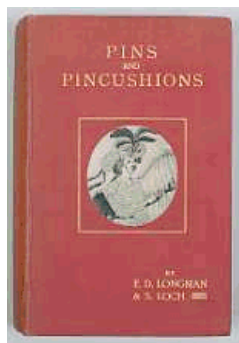
Shire booklet. The 2nd edition has moved on from black and white photos to mainly colour - many old lace bobbins illustrated.



Averil Colby

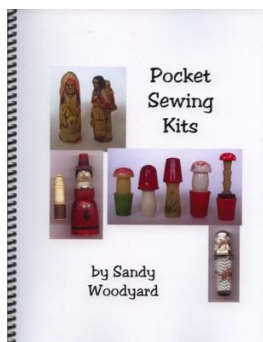
Pincushions (1975; paperback 1988)

There are very few books just on pincushions and in her book Colby combines antique pincushions and how-to-make your own pincushions.
ISBN 0713458801



E D Longman and S Loch

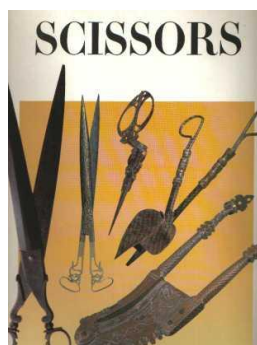
Pins and pincushions (1911)



Sandy Woodyard

Pocket sewing kits (2006)

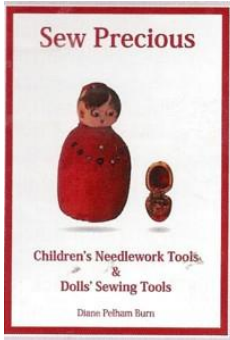
This is the first specialised coverage of this topic - in full colour with substantial captions accompanying the photographs. Privately published. Also available in CD format.



Massimiliano Mandel

Scissors (1990)

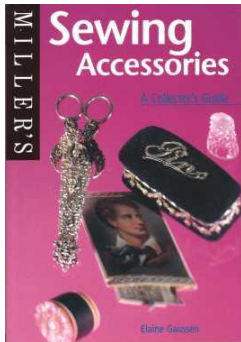
One of the only books available on this specialised topic. It's in A3 format: a bit tricky to scan. Full colour photos with several scissors per page. Brief captions and no text.
ISBN 1854221825



Diane Pelham Burn

Sew precious: children's needlework tools & dolls' sewing tools (2010)

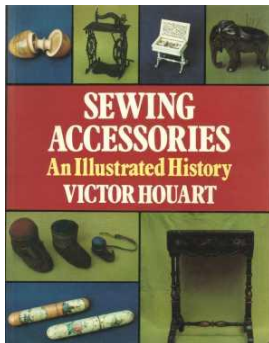
A history of these charming very collectable miniatures. Pelham Burn died in 2012.



Elaine Gausson

Sewing accessories: a collectors guide (2001)

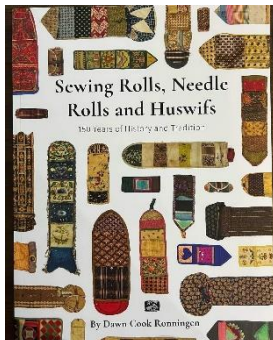
A very useful little booklet, in the series Millers Guides, aimed at the beginner. Each section is only two-pages long, but richly illustrated. Includes thimbles. ISBN 1840003537



Victor Houart

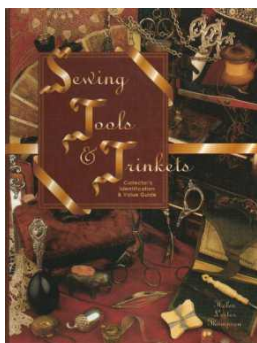
Sewing accessories: an illustrated history (1984)

Another early general book in the field. Sparsely illustrated but brings a European touch to the subject. Many errors have been found. ISBN 0285626345 or 0285626299



Dawn Cook Ronningen

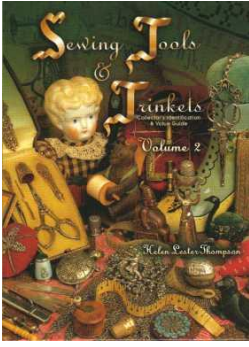
Sewing rolls, needle rolls and huswifs: 150 years of history and tradition (2022)



Helen Lester Thompson

Sewing tools & trinkets (1997)

A general book, lavishly illustrated. Little text, but comprehensive captions. ISBN 0891457364

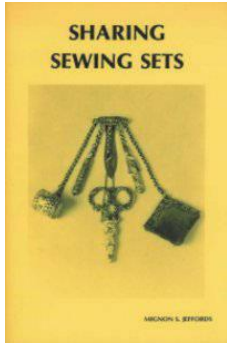


Helen Lester Thompson

Sewing tools & trinkets volume 2 (2002)

Following her successful formula, this contains more of the same as her first book.

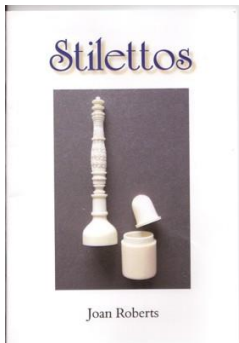
ISBN 1574322877



Mignon S. Jeffords

Sharing sewing sets (1984)

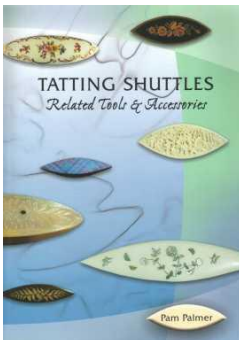
A gentle story of various sewing sets that Mignon has encountered along the way. Booklet size.



Joan Roberts

Stilettoes (2007)

Issued by the Dorset Thimble Society this specialist booklet is copiously illustrated with lovely examples.

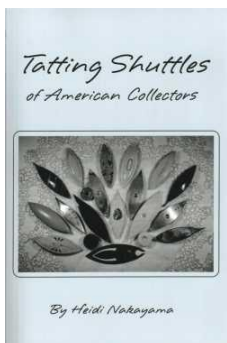


Pam Palmer

Tatting shuttles: related tools & accessories (2003)

The newest tatting book to hit the shelves. Excellent colour photographs. The definitive work.

ISBN 0953507629

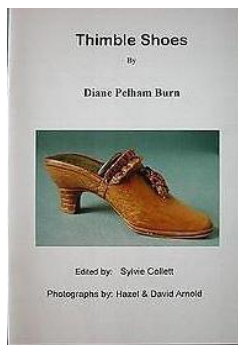


Heidi Nakayama

Tatting shuttles of American collectors (2002)

For the specialist collector. Excellent photographs. Concentrates on the American shuttle.

ISBN 0972062807



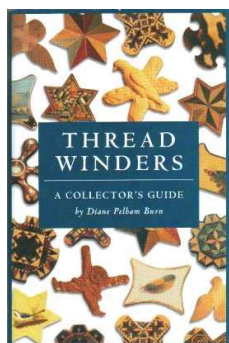
Diane Pelham Burn/edited by Sylvie Collett

Thimble shoes (2013)

Pelham Burns' collection of thimble holders in the shape of shoes covers over 200 years of elegance.

Dorset Thimble Society

Pelham Burn died in 2012.



Diane Pelham Burn

Thread winders: a collector's guide (2001)

This book, privately published, updates the earlier title. Scholarly treatment, with many colour photographs.

Pelham Burn died in 2012.

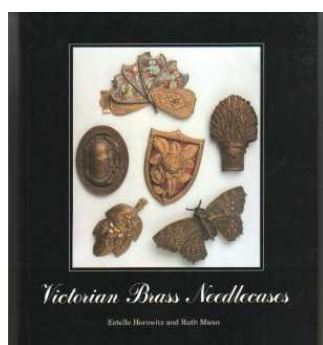


Diane Pelham Burn

Thread winders for collectors (1989)

From TCI.

Pelham Burn died in 2012.



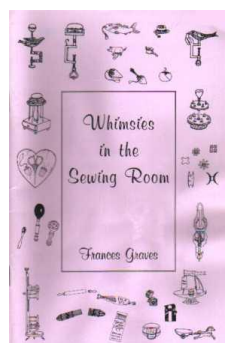
Estelle Horowitz & Ruth Mann

Victorian brass needlecases (1992)

These treasures are comprehensively covered, with wonderfully detailed photos of Avery needlecases.

Mann died in 2008.

ISBN 0962585327



Frances Graves

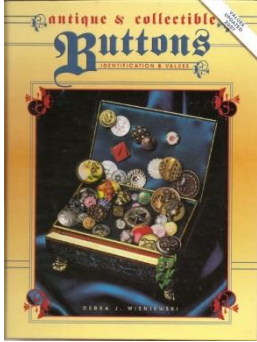
Whimsies in the sewing room (1997)

From TCI. Full colour, one item per page with detailed captions. Unusual tools included in this booklet.

Graves died in 2007.

Books about Other related items

Listed in alphabetical order of title

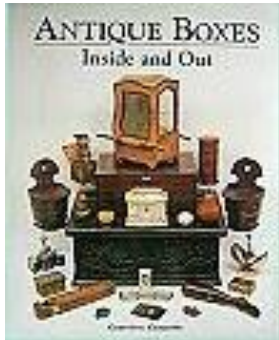


Debra J Wisniewski

Antique & collectible buttons: identification & values (1997,
+ values updated 2007)

Well laid-out guide with price guide.

ISBN 9780891457114

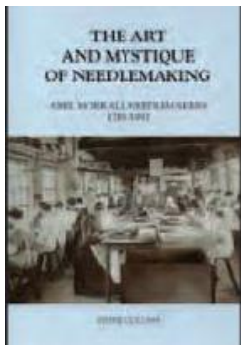


Genevieve Cummins

Antique boxes - inside and out ** (2006)

A comprehensive guide to the decoration, style, use and contents of all types of boxes, including sewing boxes.

ISBN 1851495029



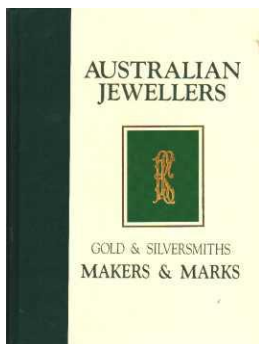
Peter Collis

The art and mystique of needle making: Abel Morrall needlemakers 1785-1991 (2017)

b&w and colour photos – soft cover – 110 pages

Nonnykettle Books

karencording@hotmail.com

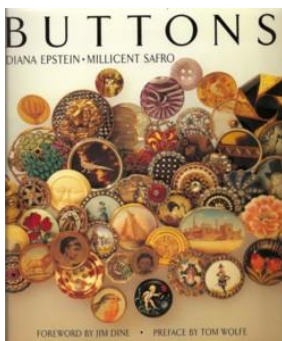


Kenneth Cavill, Graham Cocks and Jack Grace

Australian jewellers: gold & silversmiths - makers & marks ** (1992)

The definitive work in glorious colour. Very useful for identifying Australian silver marks.

ISBN 064611042X

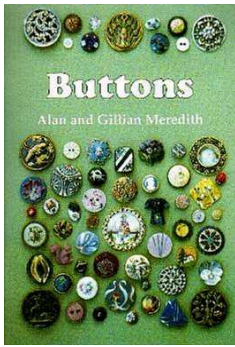


Diana Epstein and Millicent Safro

Buttons (1991)

Museum quality buttons, copiously illustrated.

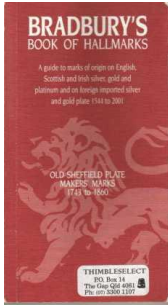
ISBN 0810931133



Alan and Gillian Meredith

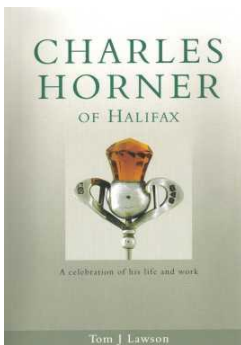
Buttons (2000)

The latest Shire Book button book. Plenty of photographs.
ISBN 0747804664



Bradbury's book of hallmarks (2000)

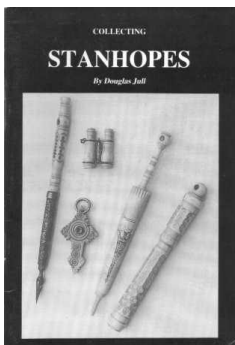
You can't collect English silver thimbles without a pocket-sized book to identify hallmarks. The definitive work.
ISBN 0709067690 (2000 ed)



Tom Lawson

Charles Horner of Halifax: a celebration of his life and work ** (2002)

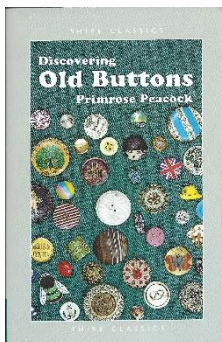
The long-awaited, glorious book on Charles Horner, the Victorian silversmith. There is a great chapter on his thimbles, by Norma Spicer.
ISBN 0954235401



Douglas Jull

Collecting Stanhopes (1988)

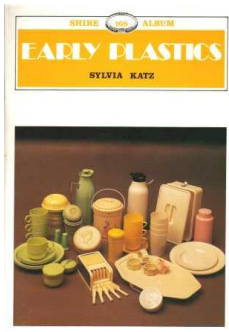
Jull whetted our appetite for this subject, with this slim volume. Privately published, with copious black and white photos, with good captions; little text. More than just needlework tools. Unpaged.



Primrose Peacock

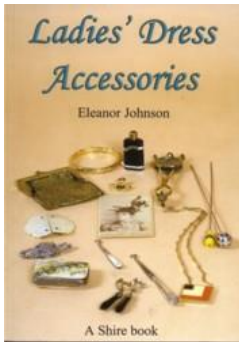
Discovering old buttons (2000)

An updated title by Shire Books.
ISBN 9780852634455



Sylvia Katz
Early plastics (1994)

Though this book does not deal with either thimbles or needlework tools, it is invaluable, but technical, in defining the different forms of plastic. A Shire Book. ISBN 0747802440



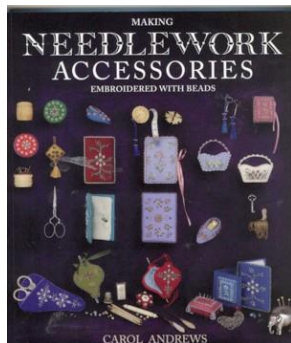
Eleanor Johnson
Ladies' dress accessories (2004)

Includes a few types of needlework tools. A Shire Book. Johnson died in 2015. ISBN 0747805709



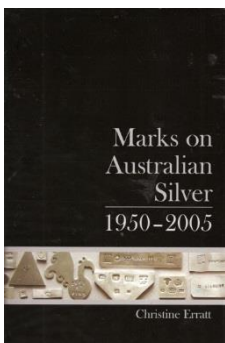
Leningrad porcelain plant named after M.V. Lomonosov 1994-2004 (2007)

This is the English title of this Russian book



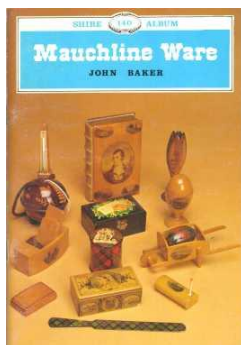
Carol Andrews
Making needlework accessories with beads (2004)

For the advanced embroiderer, make your own heirlooms of the future. ISBN 0903585332



Christine Erratt
Marks on Australian silver 1950-2005 ** (2010)

Comprehensive listing of the marks of Australian silversmiths into the 21st century with clear photos of maker's marks. ISBN 9780646523279

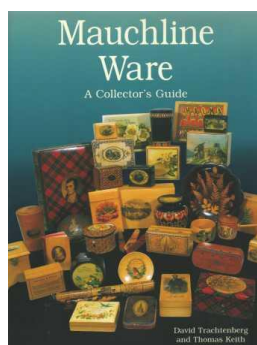


John Baker

Mauchline Ware (1985)

One of the Shire Books, which gives a general introduction to the subject, which covers many 19th century tools.

ISBN 0852637349

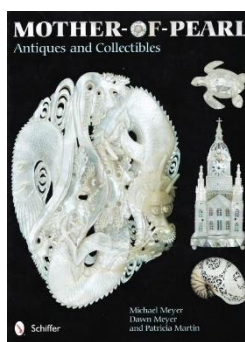


David Trachtenberg and Thomas Keith

Mauchline Ware (2002)

Comprehensive coverage. It's a sheer joy to own.

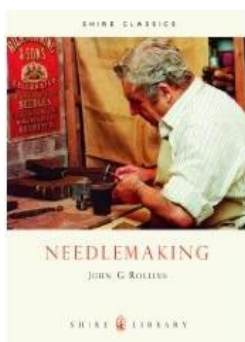
ISBN 1851493921



Michael and Dawn Meyer, with Patricia Martin

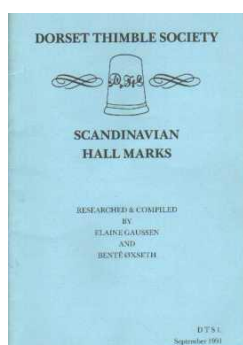
Mother-of-pearl antiques and collectibles ** (2013)

Two Queensland authors have co-authored with American antique specialist. There are over 60 pages devoted to MOP sewing tools and accessories



John G Rollins

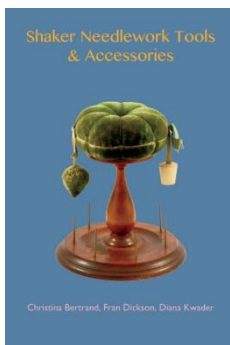
Needlemaking



Elaine Gausson and Bente Oxseth

Scandinavian hallmarks (1991)

Published by the Dorset Thimble Society, this booklet is an alphabetic listing of makers' marks.



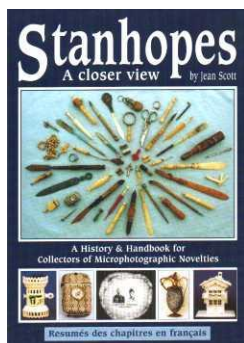
Christina Bertrand Fran Dickson Diana Kwader

Shaker needlework tools & accessories (2016)

Written by the members of the Priscilla Nutmeggers, a society of needlework tool collectors. A comprehensive look at Shaker tools covering 40 pages.

ISBN 9781367554559

[Shaker Needlework Tools & Accessories](#)

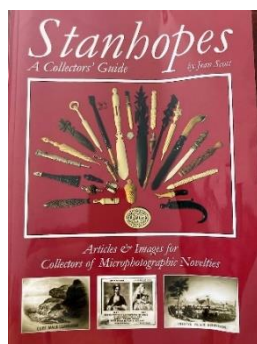


Jean Scott

Stanhopes: a closer view (2002)

A definitive scholarly work will have wider appeal than just tools collectors. Wonderful illustrations to accompany the in-depth text.

ISBN 1897738099

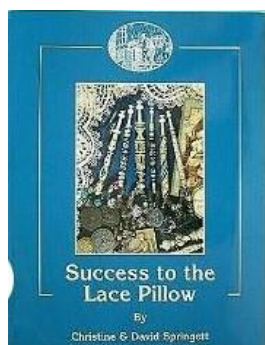


Jean Scott

Stanhopes: a collectors guide; articles & images for collectors of micrographic novelties (2022)

Companion volume to her 2002 edition

jeanstanhopes@yahoo.com

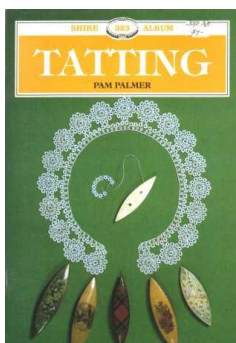


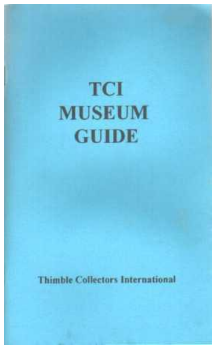
Pam Palmer

Tatting (1996)

A Shire Book that whets the appetite for all those who tat or collect the tools.

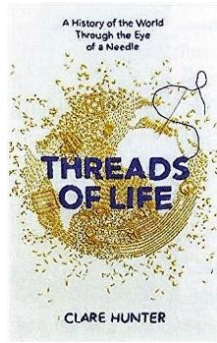
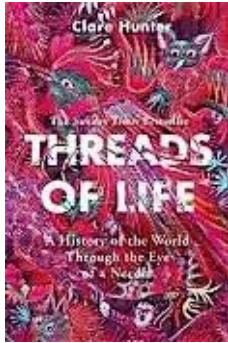
ISBN 0747803129





Thimble Collectors International
TCI museum guide (1998)

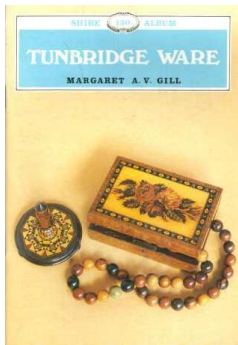
From TCI. A country-by-country guide to museums around the world that display or own needlework tools. Dates quickly.



Clare Hunter

Threads of life: a of the world through the eye of a needle (2019)

Starting with the story of Isaac Merritt Singer – sewing stitches and techniques and the endeavour to have stitchery accepted as an art form

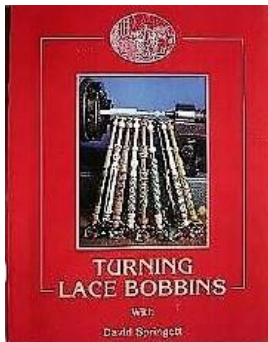


Margaret A. V. Gill

Tunbridge Ware (1985)

A Shire Book, this background work has very useful information on tools of this Victorian speciality.

ISBN 0852637128



Thimble catalogues & magazines

Listed in alphabetical order of title



Die Fingerhut Post/The Thimble Mail

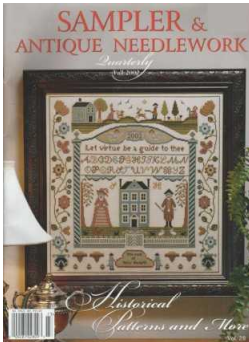
Feldman catalogues [Germany]

no. 1 - , 1987 - Quarterly; biennial from 1992.

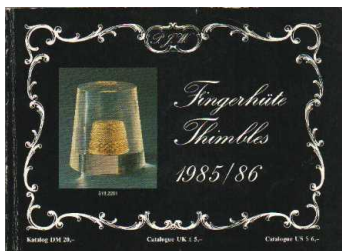
Dusseldorf.

Proprietor: Hans-Peter Feldmann.

in German and English.



Sampler & antique needlework quarterly [USA]



PJ Walter

Thimble catalogues [Germany]

Thimble Collectors Club [England and USA]

Chessington, Surrey/Norwalk CT.

no photo



TCI bulletin [USA]

1982 -

Thimble Collectors International



The Thimble Guild [Scotland]
 1988 – 2018 [paper format]
 previously: The Thimble Collectors Guild 1983-1988



The Thimble Society [of London]
<http://www.thimblesociety.com>
 paper copies 1981-2009



Het Vingerhoedje / Thimble Friends
 Nederlands-Belgische vingerhoedclub

Auction catalogues

Listed in alphabetical order of auctioneer name and then in descending order by date

All succeeding catalogues (2008-) are available on-line

These catalogues make excellent reference material

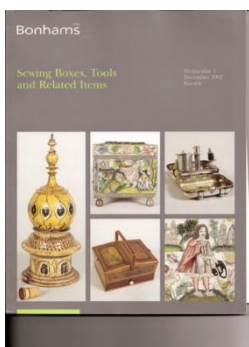
See Bleasdales 2009- online (two catalogues a year)



Bonhams - Knole

Sewing boxes, tools and related items (9 December 2008)

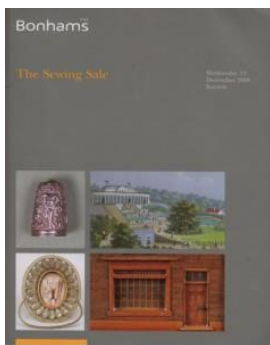
Sewing boxes, tools and related items



Bonhams - Knole

Sewing boxes, tools and related items (5 December 2007)

Mauchline, Tunbridge, Fern and Tartan ware including: Part Three of the Mauchline ware collection of the late Barry Kottler together with buttons, button hooks, hat pins and half dolls.



Bonhams - Knole

The sewing sale (13 December 2006)

Sewing boxes, thimbles, sewing tools and buttons including: two collections of Mauchline, Tunbridge, Fern and Tartan ware.

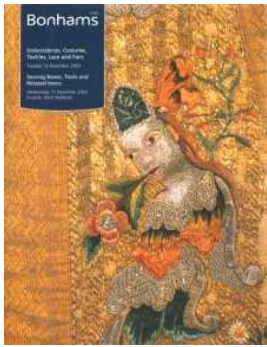
Most from two private collections - Barry Kottler and Betty Trull (1920-2003)



Bonhams: auctioneers and valuers

The sewing sale (15 December 2004)

Two collections included in this sale are from Miss D.M.C Bramwell and Eleanor Adams.

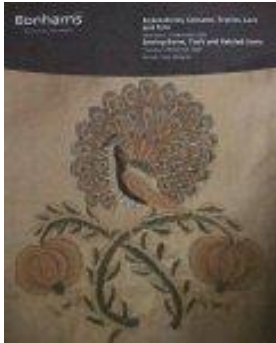


Bonhams: auctioneers and valuers

Embroideries, costume, textiles, lace and fans (16 December 2003)

Sewing boxes, books and related items (17 December 2003)

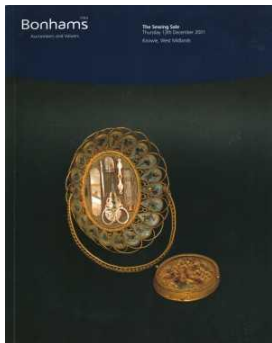
Features part of the collection of Mrs Sylvia Barr.



Bonhams: auctioneers and valuers

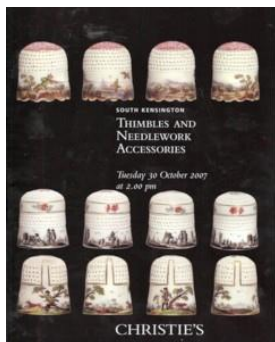
Embroideries, costume, textiles, lace and fans (11 December 2002)

Sewing boxes, tools related items (12 December 2002)



Bonhams: auctioneers and valuers

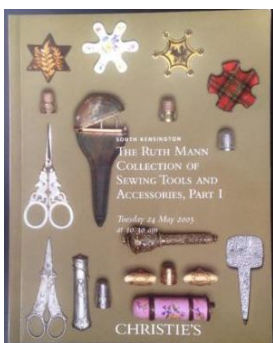
The sewing sale (13 December 2001)



Christie's South Kensington

Thimbles and needlework accessories (30 October 2007)

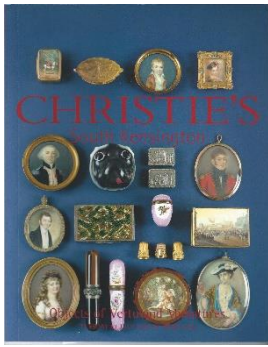
Collection of the Jungmans.



Christie's

The Ruth Mann Collection of sewing tools and accessories

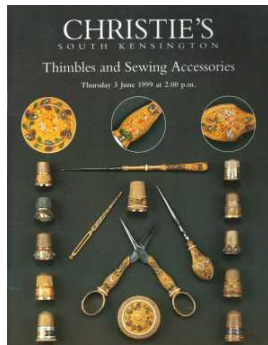
(May 2005)



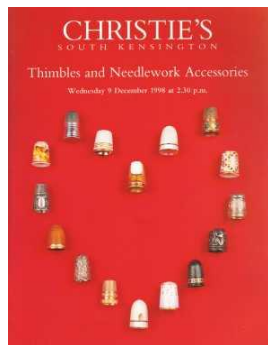
Christie's South Kensington
Thimbles and sewing accessories (10 July 2001)
Objects of vertu and miniatures



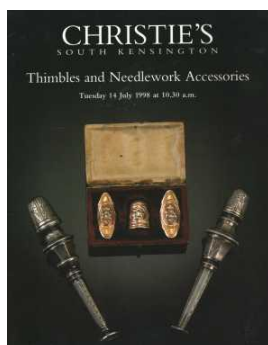
Christie's South Kensington
Thimbles and sewing accessories (2000)



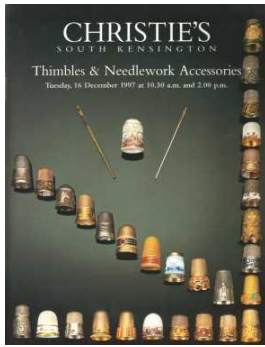
Christie's South Kensington
Thimbles and sewing accessories (3 June 1999)



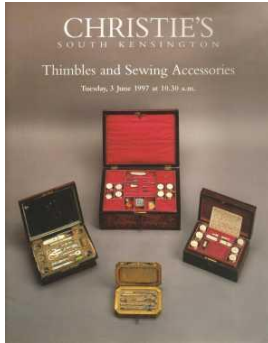
Christie's South Kensington
Thimbles and needlework accessories (9 December 1998)



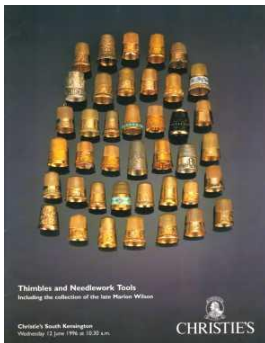
Christie's South Kensington
Thimbles and needlework accessories (14 July 1998)



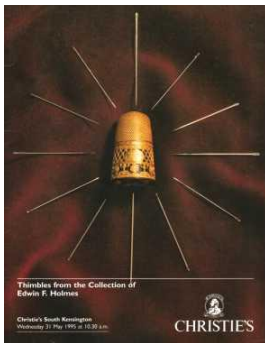
Christie's South Kensington
Thimbles & needlework accessories from the collection of Mrs Doris. E Ramstead (16 December 1997)



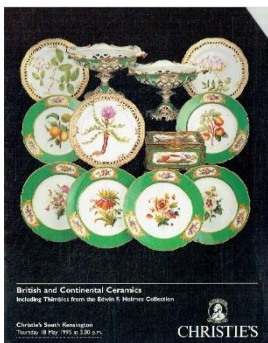
Christie's South Kensington
Thimbles and sewing accessories (3 June 1997)
Including selected pieces from the collection of Mrs Estelle Zalkin.



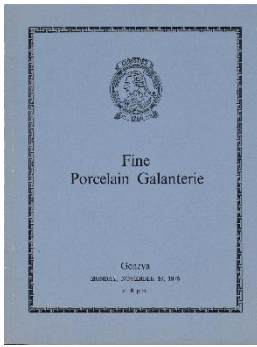
Christie's South Kensington
Thimbles and needlework tools including the collection of the late Marian Wilson (12 June 1998)



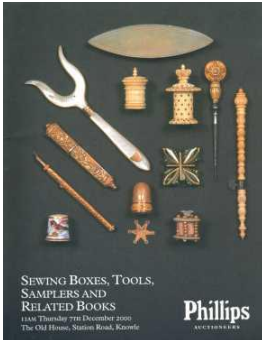
Christie's South Kensington
Thimbles from the collection of Edwin F. Holmes (31 May 1999)



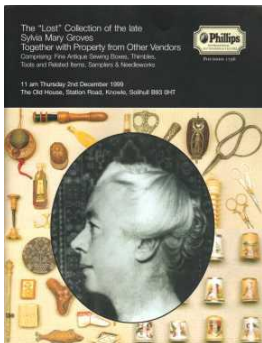
Christie's South Kensington
British and Continental ceramics including thimbles from the Edwin. F Holmes Collection (18 May 1995)



Christie's Geneva
Fine porcelain galanterie (10 November 1975)



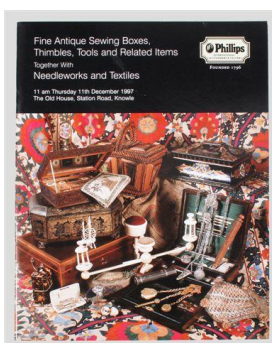
Phillips: international auctioneers & valuers – Knole
Sewing boxes, tools, samplers and related books (7 December 2000)



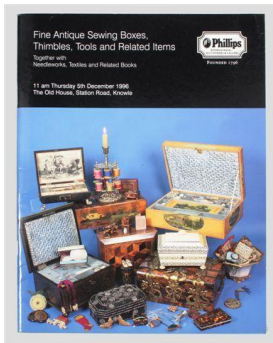
Phillips: international auctioneers & valuers – Knole
The "lost" collection of the late Sylvia Mary Groves together with property from other vendors ... (2 December 1999)



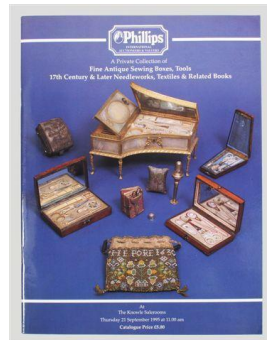
Phillips: international auctioneers & valuers – Knole
Fine antique sewing boxes, thimbles, tools and related items including the thimble collection of Richard Bates ... (3 December 1998)



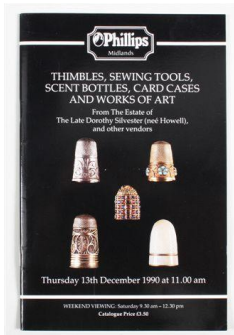
Phillips: international auctioneers & valuers – Knole
Fine antique sewing boxes, thimbles, tools and related items together with needleworks, textiles and related books (11 December 1997)



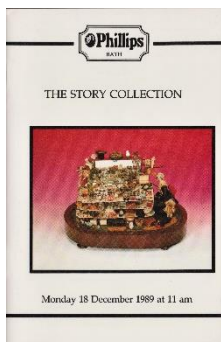
Phillips: international auctioneers & valuers – Knole
Fine antique sewing boxes, thimbles, tools and related items together with needleworks textiles and related books (5 December 1996)



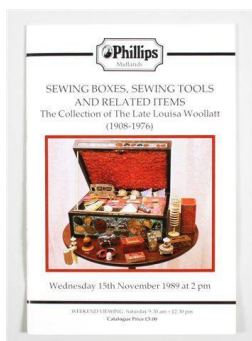
Phillips: international auctioneers & valuers – Knole
A private collection of fine antique sewing boxes, tools, 17th century and later needleworks, textiles & related books (21 September 1995)



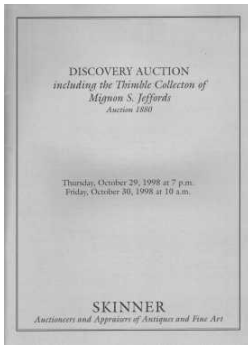
Phillips – Midlands
Thimbles, sewing tools, scent bottles, card cases and works of art from the estate of the late Dorothy Silvester (nee Howell) and other vendors (13 December 1990)



Phillips: international auctioneers & valuers
The story collection (18th December 1989)



Phillips – Midlands
Sewing boxes, sewing tools and related items The collection of the late Louisa Woollatt (1908-1976) (15 November 1989)



Skinner: auctioneers and appraisers of antiques and fine art
Discovery auction including the thimble collection of Mignon S. Jeffords (29-30 October 1998)

Contributors

Joanna Blackie-Sew Many Bits | Robert Bleasdale-Bleasdales Ltd | Sue Christensen | Deb Daniels | Charlotte Goldberg
Lynda Herrod | William Isbister | Nicola Kissane | Monique Libois | Wynneth Mullins | Terry Meinke | Ray Nimmo
Elaine Rogers | Mabel Rogers | Wolf-Dieter Scholz | Irene Schwall | Susan Webster

This listing of Thimble & needlework tools books does not purport to be complete or accurate in all aspects.
Rather it invites comment and contribution to add to our knowledge. My thanks to the contributors.

EMAIL thimbleselect@bigpond.com TO SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

© **Sue Gowan**
January 2003