

# Thimbles with slogans

## including thimbles with cryptic messages

I have always been fascinated with slogans, mementoes, inscriptions, mottoes or keepsake messages on thimbles, with sayings using the language of love and chivalry or religious mottoes from the Middle Ages. (In a recent article in 2020 by Michel Painsonneau, he uses the term maxim for this type of thimble).

It was only when I acquired my first MIZPAH thimble, that I began to look at these thimbles where there is lettering around the rim. Mizpah is a Hebrew blessing "May the Lord watch between me and thee whilst we are absent one from another" (Genesis 31.v49)

Go back in time, when women were closely chaperoned, to the Victorian era and picture a young man in love. How was he to plead his love? A gift of a thimble with a word or phrase was not too personal and if it was accepted, he knew he could then pay suit. We get a glimpse of this bygone era and its manners with these themed thimbles. Some of these tokens of love were given when parting and there may be several sad stories attached to some of these messages.

By sheer serendipity when paging thru von Hoelle, on p296 I noticed his list of these inscriptions. So that's where this listing began. I then added those from Holmes on p180 and Zalkin p83-5. Di Pelham Burn produced a list of brass messages in the May 1999 issue of *At Your Fingertips*. With your help, I have now tracked over **207** different slogans or mottoes on thimbles.

My perception of slogan thimbles was that they are Victorian and made of brass, with a few being made of silver. I now realise that they are made mainly of silver. The materials range from silver to tombac and brass - I have only seen two gold slogan thimbles. At the other end of the metal spectrum, I have come across a few of aluminium and one plastic slogan thimble; and most recently those of porcelain.

The earlier taller silver and brass or bronze thimbles from the era of James I (Jacobean) from the 1600s, bring messages from that time of chivalry and religious life – with obsolete spelling or lettering in Latin! They are distinctive for their strapwork designs, their messages on the 17th century thimbles have now passed into oblivion.

The slogan thimbles are mostly English and produced mainly in the Victorian era. French has always been associated with the language of love, so there is a small collection of French slogans, followed by those in German and Spanish, with one or two in Italian, Norwegian and Dutch. I have included slogans from all countries and all periods.

The only example I have not included is for 'Souvenir' which tho very prolific, doesn't have the romantic implications of this thematic topic.

The most popular slogan on thimbles is FORGET-ME-NOT: at February 2014 that numbers 55.

Many of the brass thimbles were made in late 19th C and probably made by Birmingham's Charles Iles. As most of the silver thimbles were made pre-1884, it is nearly impossible to know precisely when these thimbles were made or by whom they were made.

I have ignored all capital letters for the slogan - they are filed alphabetically by the first word of the slogan - even when this is the French word "Le ...", which is usually ignored in alphabetical listings.

The lettering is usually in upper case, plain letters, but Old English script was also quite popular.

I have also included the gold REGARD thimble - where six gemstones' first initial around the rim spells out the word REGARD. Recently another of this type emerged with DEAREST, created using seven stones. Neither type need words.

With this topic already being a large one, I have not included many slogan thimbles from the late 20th century (ie the Franklin Mint set) nor those made in reproduction. These replica thimbles of the 20th century are made mainly of pewter, tho there are a few in silver, like those made in 1986 by Charterhouse Mint. Political and advertising slogans are also out of the scope of this topic.

In 1999, in the Museum of Sydney, Bridge Street, Sydney, there was a display of base metal and brass thimbles excavated from The Rocks area. I have noted those found with slogans, below.

On some of the early silver thimbles, from 17th century, the slogan is lettered upside-down. Was this so that the sewer could read the message whilst she stitched?

Three facets of Victorian life were FAITH - HOPE - CHARITY. This little boxed brass set of thimbles by Charles Iles, has a set of these values or slogans. Traditionally these also had symbols: faith by a cross - hope by an anchor - and charity by a heart.



I have come across two examples of slogan thimbles where a rebus image is used: where a pictogram is used instead of words.

See "Stick to me" and "Tho absent I...!"

I have now copied a new section from the Interesting lettering and symbols on thimbles topic about **pictorial** messages on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century thimbles. They will be found at the end of this topic.

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### **a faithfull heart + constant mynde**

Old English



SILVER  
England

Jacobean - 1600s  
with heart shapes

one has to be vigilant as there are reproductions of these early thimbles

### **a frende + to + the end**

Old English

no photo

SILVER  
England

Jacobean - 1600s  
geometric strapwork  
residue of niello

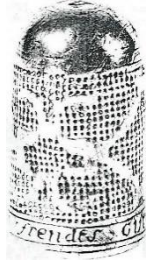
maker's mark inside **RL**  
information: [Brian Read p.57](#)

**a frende loveth at all tymes**



SILVER  
England  
Jane Chantler

**a frendes gift/a frends gift**



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s strapwork



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s strapwork  
apex patterning has worn away with use  
mark on apex **IB**

**a gift**

no photo

BRASS  
Pelham Burn

**a gift of love**



SILVER  
England  
1989  
James Swann & Son/Thimble Collectors Guild

**a keepsake/a keep sake**



SILVER  
England  
1830s?  
With large floral decoration  
milled rim



SILVER  
England  
1840s  
leaf border & ornate  
rim



SILVER  
England  
1850s  
"A Keep Sake"



SILVER  
England  
1860s



SILVER  
England  
1870s  
faceted rim



SILVER  
England  
**James Fenton**  
1895  
faceted rim



SILVER  
England  
"A Keep Sake"  
faceted rim



SILVER  
England  
faceted rim



SILVER  
England



SILVER  
England  
with floral decorations  
patterned rim

no photo

BRASS  
*Pelham Burn*

**a la plus belle**

to the most beautiful (woman) (French)



BRONZE  
France  
19<sup>th</sup> century  
L: child's

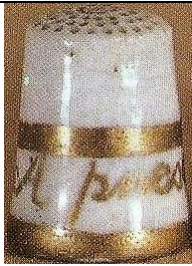


**a moi (pensee)**  
think of me (French)



SILVER  
France  
purple stone apex  
with a large pansy

**a present**



PORCELAIN  
1860s

no photo

BRASS  
Zalkin

**a toi pour l'éternité**  
yours for eternity (French)

no photo

France

**a token of friendship**



SILVER  
England  
wriggle work band above slogan

no photo

BRASS  
Pelham Burn

**a toutes heures bonheur**  
continuous happiness (French)



HARD PASTE  
France

**absent not forgot**



SILVER  
England  
faceted rim

**accept**



SILVER  
England  
1850s  
scalloped patterned rim



SILVER  
England  
1870s  
child's size  
abstract flowers on milled  
ground  
faceted rim



SILVER  
England  
child's size  
faceted rim

**accept a trifle**



SILVER



SILVER  
flowers and leaves on milled ground  
faceted rim



SILVER  
with swags above lettering  
child's

**acuerdate de mi**  
remember me (Spanish)

no photo

BRASS  
Museum of Sydney

**all for her**



1820s  
milled rim

**always faithful**



STERLING SILVER  
England  
with pictogram of a dog



STERLING SILVER  
England  
1989  
**Swann Thimbles**

no photo

BRASS  
*von Hoelle/Zalkin*

**always friends**



BRASS  
England  
**Thos. Johnson**  
cursive lettering on green band by David Bates Woodsetton 1990  
milled rim

**amistad**  
friendship (Spanish)



14CT GOLD  
Germany  
Old English script  
patterned rim



**amitie**  
friendship (French)



SILVER  
France  
**Lévy Alekan Justin**  
Paris 1882-1893

**amizade**  
friendship (Portuguese)



SILVER  
Portugal  
**Topazio**  
with dove symbols

**amor**  
love



SILVER  
Spain  
1930s

**amor eterno**  
eternal love (Spanish)



SILVER  
Spain  
20th century

**amore**

love



COPPER/BRONZE  
17th century

**andenken**

remembrance or souvenir (German)



SILVER  
Germany  
Old English script  
enamelled band  
amethyst apex



.800 SILVER  
Germany  
**Gabler**  
patterned rim  
gilt lettering

no photo

.800 SILVER  
Germany  
**Lotthammer**



SILVER  
Germany  
**Gabler**  
Madonna  
rope-like rim



SILVER METAL  
Austria  
**Settmacher**  
gilt lettering

**are you to ...**



BRASS  
England  
**Thos. Johnson**  
gilt cursive lettering by David Bates Woodsetton 1990

**as god has appointed**



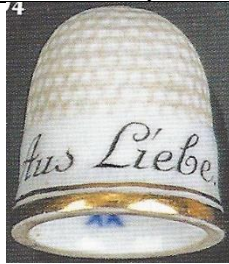
SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s

**aus dankbar keit**  
out of gratitude (German)

no photo

PORCELAIN  
*Aldridge*

**aus liebe**  
out of love (German)



PORCELAIN  
Germany  
**Meissen**  
lower case lettering  
1900s

**be happy**

no photo

BRASS  
*Zalkin*

**be kind**

no photo

BRASS  
*Pelham Burn*

**be merry & wise**



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
patterned rim

**be not idell/bee not idle**



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with strapwork



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
ring-type = tailor's shape  
with strapwork  
maker's mark **R**  
information: [Brian Read p.56](#)  
this example has had top inserted into the tailors  
thimble  
it doesn't belong there

**be true mo hearte till death**

Old English

no photo

SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with strapwork  
maker's mark **I**  
information: [Brian Read p.57](#)



**be trve to god**



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with strapwork

**be trw in love as tvrtl dove**

Old English



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with flowers

**beautiful kindness**



STEEL or IRON  
France  
c.1800  
milled rim

**benevolence**

no photo

BRASS  
*Pelham Burn*

**beware of the thorn**

part of a quotation from St Augustine "Pluck the grapes, beware of the thorn" referring to Matthew 7:16  
"Do people pick grapes from thornbushes"



BRASS  
England?  
unearthed in Loudoun Co, Virginia, US

**blessings attend you/ blessing attend you**



BRASS  
England  
Charles Iles

**charity**



BRASS  
England  
Charles Iles



BRASS  
England  
Charles Iles  
tailor's

**constancy**



BRASS  
England  
Charles Iles

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## contentment

no photo

BRASS  
*Pelham Burn*

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## dearest



SILVER  
France  
20th C

**D**iamond **E**merald **A**methyst **R**uby **E**merald **S**apphire **T**urquoise  
having the initials of the names of the gemstones as the message

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## deo duce

under the conduct of God



SILVER  
England

Jacobean - 1600s  
slogan repeated twice separated by initial **H**  
flanked by crosses  
strapwork design

**dinna forget**



SILVER  
England  
 pre-1884  
 wriggle work completing design  
 child's size  
 faceted rim



SILVER  
England  
**James Swann & Son**  
 1989

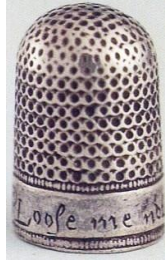


SILVER  
England  
**James Swann & Son**  
 2002

no photo

BRASS  
*Pelham Burn*

**do not loose me**



SILVER  
England  
 1600s  
 lower case lettering

**do unto others as you would have them do unto you**



SILVER or 14CT GOLD  
USA  
 1985  
**Simons** of Philadelphia  
Myrtle Lundquist lettered on apex  
Dec. 26 1985



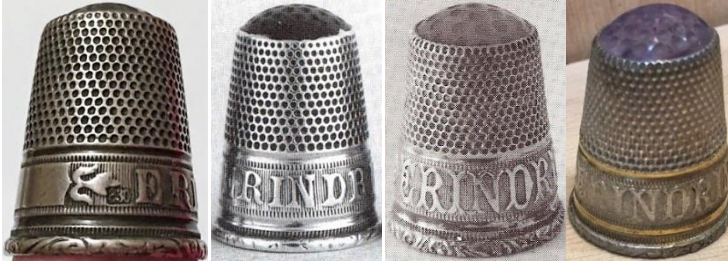
**erindring**  
memory (German)



SILVER  
Germany  
carnelian stone apex



830 SILVER  
Norway  
H C Østrem oxo maker's mark  
stone apex



830 SILVER  
Germany  
Old English script  
C: carnelian stone apex  
patterned rim



830 SILVER  
Norway  
H C Østrem oxo maker's mark  
moonstone apex  
leaf patterning

**esteem**



BRASS  
England  
Charles Iles  
patterned rim



BRASS  
England  
Charles Iles  
with floral patterning

**ever dear**



SILVER  
England

no photo

BRASS  
Pelham Burn

**ever true**



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with strapwork

**ewig dein**

ever yours (German)



TOMBAC  
Austria  
**Settmacher**  
1920s  
milled rim



ALPACCA  
Germany  
**Lotthammer**  
patterned rim



ALPACCA  
Germany  
**Lotthammer**  
patterned rim

**excelsior**



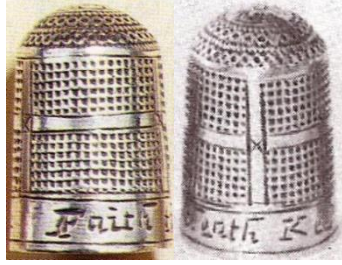
BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
with sprigs before and after lettering

**faith**



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
1870s

## faith till death keepe



SILVER  
England

**I D**

Jacobean - 1600s  
with strapwork in shape of a cross on one side  
lower case lettering

## fare well/farewell



SILVER  
England  
1840s

Old English script  
with band of flowers  
milled rim



SILVER  
England  
milled rim



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
with ivy leaves  
rope-like rim



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**

"farewell"  
milled rim  
with floral patterning

## fare ye well



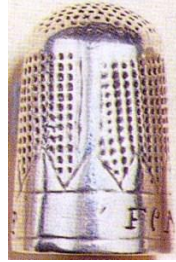
GOLD-PLATED BRASS  
England  
cursive lettering  
1990s



**fear god/feare god**



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s



SILVER  
England  
**SR**  
Jacobean - 1600s



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1650s  
**R** in a square punched inside rim



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
patterned rim with acorns on band

**feare god and honour the king**



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
strapwork



SILVER  
England  
**Charterhouse Mint**  
1987  
reproduction from 17<sup>th</sup> century  
*Thimbles through the Ages - A Connoisseur's  
Collection*  
from a set of 12



**feare god only**



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
top missing

**fidelity**



GOLD  
England  
1850s  
Old English script

**for a friend**



BRASS  
England  
1850s  
Old English script  
ornate rim



GOLD-PLATED  
England  
Old English script  
patterned rim



COPPER GILT-PLATED  
England  
Old English script  
slightly different  
patterned rim

**for auld lang syne**



SILVER  
England  
with leafy band

**for ou this giver is thine**



SILVER  
England

**НА ПАМЯТ**

for memory (Russian)



SILVER  
stone apex

**forever yours**



BRASS  
England

**Thos. Johnson**

cursive lettering on turquoise band by David Bates Woodsetton 1990

**forget me not/for get me not**  
each thimble has a slightly different band



**GOLD**  
**England**  
Old English script  
1840s



**SILVER**  
**England**  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with strapwork



**SILVER**  
**England**  
1830s



**SILVER**  
**England**  
1830s  
with dots



**SILVER**  
**England**  
1830s  
with small bouquet



**SILVER**  
**England**  
1840s-1850s  
gently scalloped rim



**SILVER**  
**England**  
1840s-1870s



**SILVER**  
**England**  
1850s



**SILVER**  
**England**  
1850s  
with garlands above slogan  
faceted rim



**SILVER**  
**England**  
1850s  
with forget-me-nots around the rim & on the  
band



**SILVER**  
**England**  
ornate  
wrigglework band  
above slogan  
patterned band



**SILVER**  
**England**  
with two rows of lacy wrigglework  
faceted rim



**SILVER**  
**England**  
1860s



**SILVER**  
**England**  
patterned rim



**SILVER**  
**England**  
patterned rim



**SILVER**  
**England**  
patterned rim



<p>wriggle work above slogan faceted rim</p>			
 <p>SILVER <u>England</u></p>	 <p>SILVER <u>England</u> faceted rim</p>	 <p>SILVER <u>England</u> 1870s</p>	 <p>SILVER <u>England</u> feathery pattern</p>
 <p>SILVER <u>England</u> with leaves faceted rim</p>	 <p>SILVER <u>England</u> heavily scalloped rim</p>	 <p>SILVER <u>England</u> heavily striated scalloped rim</p>	 <p>SILVER <u>England</u> lettering within striated lozenge faceted rim</p>
 <p>SILVER <u>England</u> maid's size faceted rim</p>	 <p>SILVER <u>England</u> with pretty scalloped wrigglework</p>	 <p>SILVER <u>England</u> utilitarian</p>	 <p>SILVER <u>England</u> ornate rim</p>
 <p>SILVER <u>England</u> wrigglework faceted rim</p>		 <p>SILVER <u>England</u> Wrigglework faceted rim</p>	
 <p>SILVER <u>England</u> utilitarian child's</p>		 <p>SILVER <u>England</u> <b>James Swann &amp; Son</b> 1989</p>	

faceted rim

cursive lettering  
available with various coloured bands



SILVER  
England

**Swann Thimbles/Thimble Collectors Guild**  
1991

milled rim with three blue painted bands



SILVER  
England  
1830s  
Old English script



SILVER  
England  
1840s  
Old English script



SILVER  
England  
1840s-1880s  
Old English script



SILVER  
England  
1850s  
Old English script  
with richly patterned leaf band



SILVER  
England  
1860s  
Old English script  
patterned rim



SILVER  
England  
1870s  
Old English script



SILVER  
England  
1870s  
Old English script  
scalloped galleried rim  
with sprig of flowers





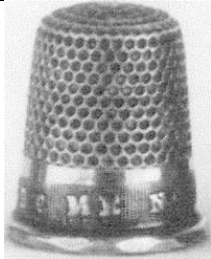
SILVER  
England  
 1870s  
 Old English script  
 with leaf pattern



SILVER  
England  
 1870s  
 Old English script  
 feathery pattern  
 patterned rim



SILVER  
England  
**JWAC**  
 1870s  
 Old English script  
 feathery pattern



SILVER  
England  
 child's size  
 faceted rim



SILVER  
England  
 child's size  
 with forget me nots around the rim & on band



SILVER (750/100)  
Germany  
**Gabler**  
 Old English script  
 red stone apex  
 patterned rim



SILVER (750/100)  
Germany  
**Gabler**  
 Old English script  
 purple backed stone apex  
 patterned rim



SILVER with STEEL  
 apex  
England  
 Old English script  
 patterned rim



SILVER and  
 ENAMELLING  
England  
**Constantine & Floyd**  
 1880s



COPPER NICKEL  
England  
 1840s  
 Old English script  
 patterned rim



PINCHBECK  
England  
 Old English script  
 milled rim



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
1870s  
patterned rim



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
1880s  
beaded rim



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
1890s



BRASS  
England  
1890s  
patterned rim



BRASS  
England  
1900s  
milled rim



BRASS (GOLD-PLATED?)  
England  
Old English script  
patterned rim



TOMBAC  
Austria  
**Settmacher**  
1930s  
with glass apex



GILT  
England  
1870s  
Old English script  
patterned rim



GILT  
patterned rim



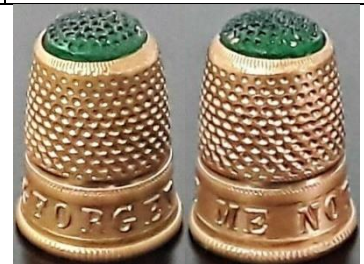
ALUMINIUM  
England  
milled rim



ALUMINIUM  
England  
milled rim



METAL  
England



GILT METAL  
with glass top



PORCELAIN  
England  
1870s  
cursive lettering



PLASTIC (ivorine)  
England  
**Charles Iles**





this sewing compendium embodies all that is associated with keepsake gifts

**friends**

no photo

BRASS  
Museum of Sydney

**friendship**



SILVER  
England  
faceted rim



SILVER  
England  
faceted rim



SILVER  
England  
leaf pattering  
faceted rim



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
with floral pattering



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**

**from a friend**



SILVER  
England  
1830s



SILVER  
England  
1840s



SILVER  
England  
1840s



SILVER  
England



SILVER  
England  
faceted rim



SILVER  
England  
patterned rim



SILVER  
England  
child's size



SILVER  
England  
Old English script  
with leaf patterning  
patterned rim



GOLD-PLATED BRASS  
England  
cursive lettering  
1990s



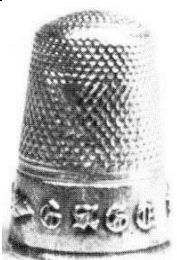
BRASS  
England  
with floral patterning  
patterned rim



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
with floral patterning

**gage d'amitie**

bond or token of friendship (French)



GOLD  
France  
Old English script



20ct GOLD and ENAMELLING  
France  
blue band



SILVER  
France  
Old English script  
patterned rim





SILVER  
France  
 gold lettering  
 scalloped rim

**gage de mon amitie**  
 token of my friendship (French)



PORCELAIN  
England  
**Chelsea Porcelain**  
 1758-1770

**gedenke mein**  
 think of me or remember me (German)



ALPACCA  
Germany  
**Soergel & Stollmeyer**  
 1920s  
 patterned rim



TOMBAC/NICKEL SILVER  
Austria  
**Settmacher**  
 1920s  
 forms a tiered thimble  
 gedenke mein / ich liebe dich  
 lower case lettering on green bands



**generosity**



BRASS  
England  
Charles Iles

**gift of friendship**



**god be with you**



GOLD-PLATED BRASS  
England  
cursive lettering  
1990s

**god guide me**



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1591 lettered  
random Roman numerals on apex in clock shape  
with geometric strapwork

**god help us**



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
patterned rim

**god is love**



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**



BRASS  
England  
**Thos. Johnson**  
cursive lettering on red band by  
David Bates Woodsetton 1990  
ornate rim

**god will provie (provide)**



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
clock of Roman numerals on apex  
with geometric strapwork

**good luck**



SILVER  
England  
**James Fenton**  
1892/1893/1894/1898/1910  
with horseshoe  
patterned rim



SILVER  
USA  
**Stern Bros**  
1890s  
with horseshoe on stippled ground



SILVER  
England  
**Malcolm Knight**  
1989  
with horseshoe



SILVER  
USA  
**Jan Larson**  
21<sup>st</sup> century  
cursive lettering



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
1920s  
with horseshoes



SILVER-PLATED BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
cursive lettering



METAL  
Germany?  
milled rim



GOLD-PLATED BRASS  
England  
cursive lettering  
1990s

### good regard

god be with you (Old English)



BRONZE  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with geometric strapwork  
lettering upside down - to face the sewer whilst stitching

### goodwill

no photo

BRASS  
Pelham Burn

**gott mit dir**

god be with you (German)



NICKEL SILVER  
Austria  
**Settmacher**  
1920s  
patterned rim

**gott schütze dich**

god protect you (German)



SILVER  
deep red stone apex  
patterned rim

**happiness**



BRASS  
patterned rim

**happiness & home**

no photo

*von Hoelle*

**health and happiness**

no photo

BRASS



## honour the brave

this slogan may fall out of this topic as it doesn't seem a personal message. Is he off to war?



BRASS  
England  
excavated  
double rim – one patterned



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
patterned rim

## hope



SILVER  
USA  
**Stern Bros**  
1890s  
with two anchors on stippled  
ground



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
1870s



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
tailor's

## hope well



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with geometric strapwork

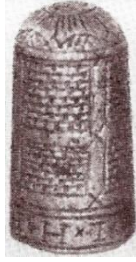
## humility



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
with a Greek Key patterned band



**i hope well**



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with geometric strapwork

**I ioy in thee**



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s

**i live in hope**



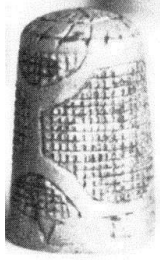
SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with geometric strapwork  
with engraved acorn at apex

**i live to die**

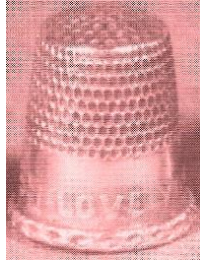


SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with geometric strapwork

**i love you**



**SILVER**  
England  
 Jacobean - 1600s  
 with geometric strapwork



**BRASS**  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
 1870s



**BRASS**  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
 1890s  
 tailor's  
 with floral patterning



**STERLING SILVER**  
England  
**Swann Thimbles**  
 1992



**TOMBAC/SILVER-PLATED BRASS**  
Austria  
**Settmacher**  
 1920s



**TOMBAC/NICKEL SILVER**  
Austria  
**Settmacher**  
 1920s  
forget me not  
 forms a tiered thimble  
Darling on upper thimble  
 in cursive lettering



**TOMBAC**  
Austria  
**Settmacher**  
 1920s  
forget me not

**i protect**



**BRASS**  
England  
**Charles Iles**

**i shall return**

no photo

BRASS  
*Pelham Burn*

**i welcome thee**

no photo

BRASS  
*Pelham Burn*

**i wis it better**

Old English

no photo

*von Hoelle*

**ich liebe dich/vergiss mein nicht**

I love you/forget me not (German)



TOMBAC/NICKEL SILVER  
Austria  
**Settmacher**  
1920s  
forms a tiered thimble  
lower case lettering on red band

**i'll marry you**



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
R: patterned rim  
with floral patterning

**i'll protect thee**



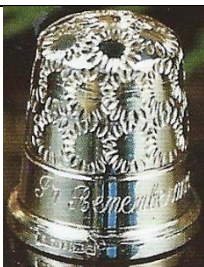
BRASS  
England

**in memory of**



SILVER  
England  
1830s-1840s

**in remembrance**



SILVER  
England  
**Swann Thimbles**  
1990s



GOLD-PLATED BRASS  
England  
cursive lettering  
1990s

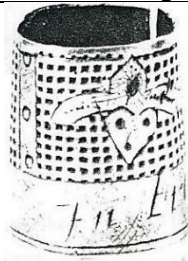


**in te domine speravi**  
in you God I place my hope (Latin)



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with hand punched dots

**in trust be just**



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1660s  
open top thimble  
lower case lettering

**industry**



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
with leaf pattering



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
tailor's  
with leaf pattering

**je nen ai qu'une**  
you're the only one (French)



BRASS  
France  
19<sup>th</sup> century  
with a coat-of-arms

**je pense à vous**  
I think of you (French)

no photo

PORCELAIN  
*Aldridge*

**je y pense**

I think about you (French)



PORCELAIN  
Germany  
**Meissen**  
1740  
with a sewing scene



LACQUERED BRASS  
England  
**Woodsetton**  
1991  
set of three  
patterned rim  
limited to 650 sets

**keep me bright**



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
mistletoe completes slogan

**keep sake**



BRASS  
England  
**Thos. Johnson**  
lettering on blue band by David Bates Woodsetton 1990  
ornate rim

## keepe promise

no photo

SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with strapwork  
owner's initials ET  
information: Brian Read p.56

## kur deu res pub trad for God and Commonwealth (Latin)



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with strapwork  
with crosses

## la fidélité faithfulness (French)



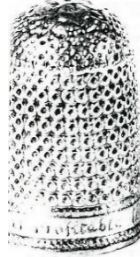
BRASS  
France  
19<sup>th</sup> century

## la puissance d'amour/desire n'a mon repose the power of love/my desire has no rest (French)



SILVER  
Netherlands  
1600s  
slogans are around the apex and then the band

**labour is profitable**



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s

**le temps passe souvenir**  
time passes memories remain (French)



18ct gold with white enamelling  
France  
approx. 1914

**lebewohl**  
farewell (German)



SILVER  
Germany  
1900s  
with leaf pattering  
rope-like rim



BRASS  
milled rim

**lende me not if you love me**



BRASS  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with geometric strapwork



**let friendship indvre**



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
**A.N** lettered on apex  
with geometric strapwork

**let love last**



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s

**like mee**



SILVER  
England  
**G**  
Jacobean - 1600s  
S F monogram

**live and let live**



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
with leaf patterning  
patterned rim

**live in love**



SILVER  
England  
1650s

**live to die**



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
maker's mark on apex?

**loose no tyme/time**



SILVER  
England  
SB?  
Jacobean - 1600s

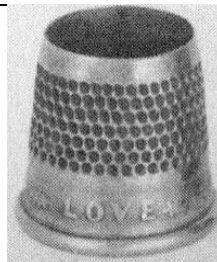


SILVER  
England  
with geometric strapwork  
Jacobean - 1600s

**love**



BRASS  
England  
Charles Iles



BRASS  
England  
Charles Iles  
tailor's



BRASS  
England  
20th century?

**love and live pray and prosper**



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with geometric strapwork

**love forever**



STERLING SILVER  
England  
**Swann Thimbles**  
1991

**love god**



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**



BRASS  
patterned rim

**love is all**

no photo

**love one another**



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
with ornately patterned rim

**love the giver**



BONE PINCUSHION  
cursive lettering

**love united us**



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**

**love vertue**



BRASS  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with geometric strapwork  
lettering upside down - to face the sewer whilst  
stitching

no photo

SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
ring type = tailor's shape  
engraved thistles  
maker's mark **R**  
information: [Brian Read p.57](#)



**lyke stil and love ever**



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s

**m'aimerez vous**  
will you love me (French)



BRONZE  
France  
1820s

**may happiness attend you**



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
with sprigs of leaves

**may you be happy**

no photo

**me guide l'amitie**  
guide me to friendship (French)

no photo

PORCELAIN  
*Aldridge*

**mein gedenke**  
my thoughts (German)



ALUMINIUM

**mi amor cegaira hasta la tunba**  
my love will continue to the grave (Spanish)



GOLD  
ornate rim

**mizpah/mizpeh**

this is Laban's prayer/blessing on parting "May the Lord watch between me and thee whilst we are absent, one from the other"



SILVER  
England  
with stone top



SILVER  
England  
**James Fenton**  
1914  
with two swans



SILVER  
USA  
**Waite-Thresher**



SILVER  
USA  
modern  
lettered within heart  
shape



SILVER/GOLD BAND  
USA  
L.A.P & Co  
"Mizpeh"



SILVER  
England  
Ray Nimmo  
2012

BRASS  
England  
Charles Iles

photos R: - excavated at a private home in US - patterned rim

### mon couer est à vous

my heart is yours (French)

no photo

PORCELAIN  
Aldridge

### mon feu durera toujours

my fire will last forever (French)

no photo

PORCELAIN  
Aldridge

### my hart is yours

no photo

SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s



PEWTER  
England

lettering upside down- to face the sewer whilst stitching  
replica/reproduction

**на память (НА ПАМЯТЬ)**  
in memory of (Cyrillic)



SILVER (875/1000)  
Russia  
right facing woman's head mark = 1908-1926

**ne m'oubliez pas**  
forget me not (French)



SILVER  
Germany  
beaded rim



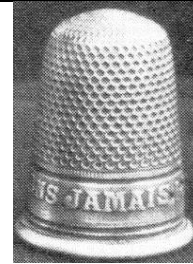
BRASS  
France

**n'oublions jamais 1914**  
never let us forget (French)



.800 SILVER  
France  
1914

notice the rim - this is the original



.800 SILVER  
France  
**Lenain**  
1970s (restrrike)

**ora et labore**  
pray and work (Latin)



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1660s  
with geometric strapwork



**pense a moi**  
think of me (French)



SILVER  
England  
cursive lettering  
1840s



SILVER  
France  
Old English script  
patterned rim



PORCELAIN  
France  
lower case lettering

**pensez à moi/pensez a moy**  
think of me



SILVER  
1800s  
ornate floral border  
stone apex



PORCELAIN  
Germany  
Meissen

**perseverance**



SILVER  
England  
CB



SILVER  
England  
Swann Thimbles/Thimble Collectors Guild  
1991

## persevere

no photo

BRASS  
*Pelham Burn*

## profitez du tems/temps

make the most of time (French)



GOLD and ENAMELLING  
France



GOLD and ENAMELLING  
France  
beaded rim



GOLD and ENAMELLING  
France  
early 20th C  
red, white & blue  
enamelled band



STERLING SILVER  
France

## prosperity

no photo

BRASS  
*Pelham Burn*

## protect



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
1880s  
with floral scroll

---

**providence**

no photo

BRASS  
*Zalkin*

**qui m'aime me suive**

he who loves me let him follow me (French)



France

**qui me néglige, me perd**

whoever neglects me will lose me (French)



BRONZE  
France

with a swallow in flight  
1820s

**recuerdo**  
memory (Spanish)



SILVER  
patterned rim



SILVER  
patterned rim



.900 SILVER  
Argentina



SILVER  
Germany  
**Gabler**  
lettering on stippled ground



regard



**GOLD**  
England  
1840s  
Old English script in  
black  
with belt and buckle  
design



**GOLD**  
England  
**Ruby Emerald Garnet**  
**Amethyst Ruby Diamond**  
spelling of the initials of  
names of the gemstones



9ct **GOLD**  
England  
**DHJ** 1978  
**Ruby Emerald Garnet Amethyst Ruby**  
**Diamond**  
spelling of the initials of names of the  
gemstones



**SILVER**  
England  
1850s  
Old English script



**SILVER**  
England  
1860s  
Old English script  
band of flowers/leaves  
patterned rim



**SILVER**  
England  
Old English script  
patterned rim



**SILVER**  
England  
Old English script  
patterned rim



**SILVER**  
patterned rim



**BRASS**  
England  
Old English script  
patterned rim



**BRASS**  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
1870s



**BRASS**  
England  
**Charles Iles**



**BRASS**  
England  
**Charles Iles**



**SILVER-PLATED BRASS**  
England  
**Charles Iles**

regards

no photo

remember me/mee



SILVER GILT  
England  
1840s  
patterned rim



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with geometric strapwork  
... mee  
see: Brian Read no 230



SILVER  
England  
1870s



SILVER  
England  
1870s



SILVER  
England  
1870s  
patterned rim



SILVER  
England  
patterned rim



SILVER  
England  
1880s  
patterned rim  
child's



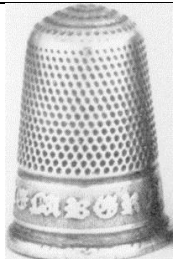
SILVER  
lettering is dotted  
patterned rim



SILVER  
England  
Old English script



SILVER  
England  
Old English script  
patterned rim  
no indentations



BRASS  
England



BRASS  
England  
Charles Iles



BRASS  
England  
heavily scalloped rim



1860s Old English script	lettering over striations	
<div data-bbox="603 152 991 416" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="683 421 911 544" data-label="Caption"> <p>BRASS  <u>England</u>  <b>David Bates</b>  blue-purple band</p> </div>		
<div data-bbox="292 544 485 801" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="300 804 467 902" data-label="Caption"> <p>ALUMINIUM  <u>England</u>  milled rim</p> </div>	<div data-bbox="807 544 1385 801" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="882 804 1310 967" data-label="Caption"> <p>ALUMINIUM  <u>England</u>  <b>Charles Iles</b>  lettering over vertical striations  milled rim</p> </div>	

**remember the gever**

<div data-bbox="703 1070 890 1373" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="683 1375 911 1505" data-label="Caption"> <p>SILVER  <u>England</u>  Elizabethan  with a rose apex</p> </div>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**remembrance**

<div data-bbox="735 1675 858 1713" data-label="Text"> <p>no photo</p> </div> <div data-bbox="746 1827 847 1888" data-label="Caption"> <p>BRASS  <i>Zalkin</i></p> </div>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**reward**

no photo

BRASS  
*Pelham Burn*

**reward for merit**



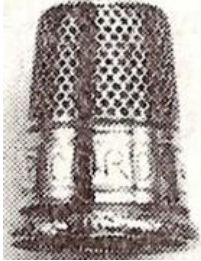
BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
1880s  
with floral patterning



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
different floral band decoration

**ricordo**

memory (Italian)



SILVER  
patterned rim

no photo

BRASS  
*Pelham Burn*

**sans vous je ne puis rien**

without you I can do nothing (French)



BRASS  
France  
19<sup>th</sup> century



**semper fideles**  
always faithful (Latin)



SILVER  
gilt Old English script  
1896

**siempre lo mismo**  
always the same (Spanish)



SILVER

**sincerity**



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
1880s  
with floral patterning

**soe not sleping**  
Old English



SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with geometric strapwork

**soi-moi fidèle**

be faithful (true) to me (French)



BRASS  
France  
19<sup>th</sup> century

**sola fide**

faith alone



BRASS  
England  
**Ray Nimmo (RN)**  
2020

**sola fides**

by faith alone



BRONZE

made in the lifetime of Martin Luther (1483-1546) and the Reformation, this was the great 'battle cry' of the Reformation  
this is the earliest known thimble by about a century - with the slogan still in extant

**soyez heureux**

be happy (French)



GOLD  
France  
1860s  
Old English script

**soyons fidele a l'amour**  
let us be faithful to love (French)



STEEL  
France  
patterned rim

**spo in dio**  
in trust in God



BRONZE  
northern Spain/southern France  
16<sup>th</sup> century

**stich dich nicht**  
does not sting you (German)

no photo

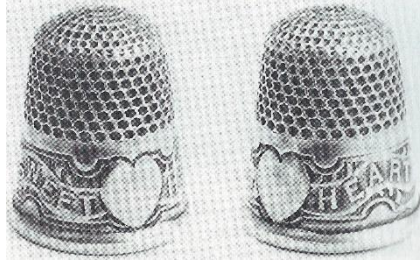
PORCELAIN  
*Aldridge*

**stick to me**



SILVER  
England  
**James Fenton**  
R: 1886  
R<sup>D</sup> No 272815  
with a pictogram of a walking stick (rebus)

## sweet heart



SILVER  
USA  
**Untermeyer Robbins**  
1900s  
with a heart

## te amo



SILVER  
England  
**Ray Nimmo**  
2020  
with a heart

## tend yovr nedill



Solid brass thimble based  
on an original dated  
c1580-1650 found at  
Acton Court,  
Gloucestershire, UK



SILVER  
England  
**The Tudor Needle**  
2024  
available in either silver or brass



**ter gedachtenis**  
in remembrance (Dutch)



SILVER  
Netherlands  
1840s  
milled rim

**thi + frinde + I'd + bee**  
Old English

no photo

SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with strapwork  
information: [Brian Read p.57](#)

**the gift of a frend**



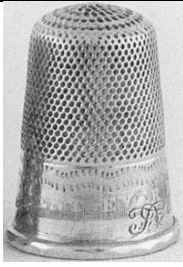
SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s

**think of thee**



BRASS  
England  
with floral pattering  
beaded rim

**tho / tho' absent ever dear**



SILVER  
England  
1870s



SILVER  
England



SILVER  
England



SILVER  
England  
patterned rim



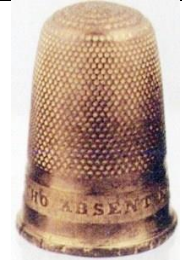
SILVER  
England  
wide patterned band above lettering, with  
blank cartouche – small flowers after slogan  
patterned rim



SILVER  
England  
patterned rim



GILT  
England  
1870s  
patterned rim



BRASS  
England  
patterned rim



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
double rim



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**



BRASS  
England

**tho absent I forget thee not**



SILVER/GOLD  
England  
1860s  
with gold forget-me-not

**tho gift bee small good will is all**



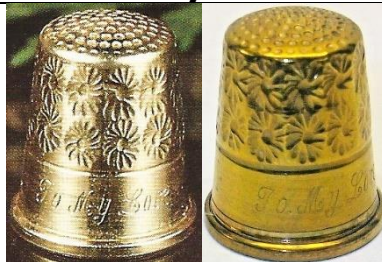
SILVER  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s

**thouft my love in hert**



SILVER  
England  
1600s  
lower case lettering

**to my love**



GOLD-PLATED BRASS  
England  
cursive lettering  
1990s

**token of friendship**



BRASS  
with floral patterning



**toujours dévoué à vous**  
always devoted to you (French)

no photo

PORCELAIN  
*Aldridge*

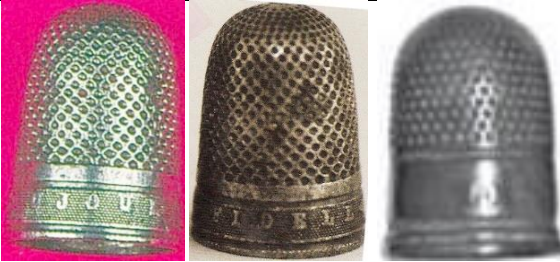
**toujours fidel**  
(old French form)



D = 18mm / H = 24mm

IRON  
France  
1800s  
with running dog

**toujours fideles/fidéle**  
ever faithful/always faithful (French)



STEEL  
France  
1800s

no photo

PORCELAIN

**traue nicht es schticht**  
just don't trust it (German)



ENAMELLING  
Germany  
handpainted 19<sup>th</sup> century  
lower case lettering



**trifles show respect**



ENAMELLED TAPE MEASURE  
Staffordshire

**truth**



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
with floral patterning

**unis pour toujours**

united forever (French)



BRASS  
France  
1820s  
with two or three hearts & a shield cartouche at R

**vaartwel vergeet mij niet**

farewell forget me not (Dutch)



SILVER  
Netherlands  
19th C  
with bands of stars

**vergeet mij/my niet**  
forget me not (Dutch)



SILVER  
Germany  
1920-1930  
made for the Dutch market  
patterned rim

**vergiss mein nicht/vergissmeinnicht**  
forget me not (German)



TOMBAC  
Austria  
**Settmacher**  
1920s  
milled rim

no photo

Germany  
**Lotthammer**

**vinger in den hoed wie meedoet**  
put your finger in the hat (thimble) and play with us (Dutch)



SILVER  
Germany  
**Gabler**  
1930s

**vous en avez la clef**  
you have the key to it (French)



BRASS  
France  
19<sup>th</sup> century  
with a padlock

---

**wandelt op rozen**  
walk on roses (Dutch)



SILVER  
Germany?  
1920-1930  
patterned rim

---

**welcome**



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
with floral pattering

---

**will you be mine**

no photo

---

**will you try me**

no photo

BRASS  
Museum of Sydney

**with esteem**



SILVER  
England

**Swann Thimbles/Thimble Collectors Guild**  
1991  
with three red bands  
ornate rim

**with love**



SILVER  
England

**James Swann & Son**  
2000  
enamelled band  
lower case lettering



BRASS  
England

**Thos. Johnson**  
lettered red band by David Bates Woodsetton 1990  
milled rim

**with my love**



SILVER-PLATED BRASS  
England

**Charles Iles**  
with floral patterning



**with regard**



SILVER  
plain band above slogan  
raised abstract symbols on verso



BRASS  
England  
**Charles Iles**  
patterned rim

**with warm regards**



BRASS  
USA  
**John von Hoelle**  
1980s  
made at the Iles & Gomms works in Birmingham  
lower case lettering

**worcke is profitable**



SILVER  
England  
with hearts  
Jacobean - 1600s  
ring type = tailor's shape  
[see: Brian Read no 228](#)

**worke a pase**



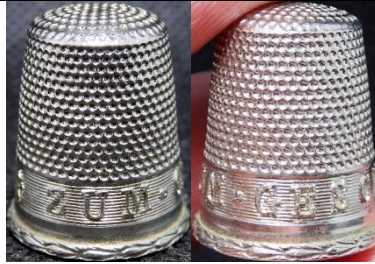
BRASS (COPPER ALLOY)  
England  
Jacobean - 1600s  
with geometric strapwork  
[see: Brian Read no 231](#)

**yours truly**

no photo

ALUMINIUM

**zum geschenk**  
gift for you (German)



SILVER-PLATED  
Germany  
**Soergel & Stollmeyer**

**zur erinnerung**  
for remembrance

no photo

## Pictorial messages on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century thimbles

In 2022 I added this section: thimbles from 18<sup>th</sup> century that have pictorial messages punched or engraved around the band in the form of pictures of everyday domestic objects.

One day the meaning of these messages will become apparent: so they are recorded here so that they aren't lost

I don't know a term for this group of thimbles so for now they are known as pictorial thimbles: not cryptic the word I was first using

These thimbles first came to our attention as thimble collectors in Brian Read's book which has hundreds of drawings of thimbles found in archaeological digs

Two of these interesting thimbles are illustrated (drawings 289-290)

They are all made of base metals, including bronze or a copper-alloy – a few additional examples have emerged



trellis – scissors – thimble – key – bottle

Read: #289 sketch



Read: #290 sketches



bird - key - scissors - flower - trellis - cartouche - wishbone or stirrup







scissors - thimble - trellis - pincushion - woman - beaded cross  
found buried in Staffordshire



initial 'A' - trellis - two cups - two rackets or clubs (may even be spoons) - jug-like 'gin' bottle



this thimble almost doesn't fit as a pictorial - only the linking word ASH gives it a place



several linked elongated rondels - flower in eash - ASH



initial A - club - rose - cartouche - beehive - dog - fish



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This listing of Thimbles with slogans 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.

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