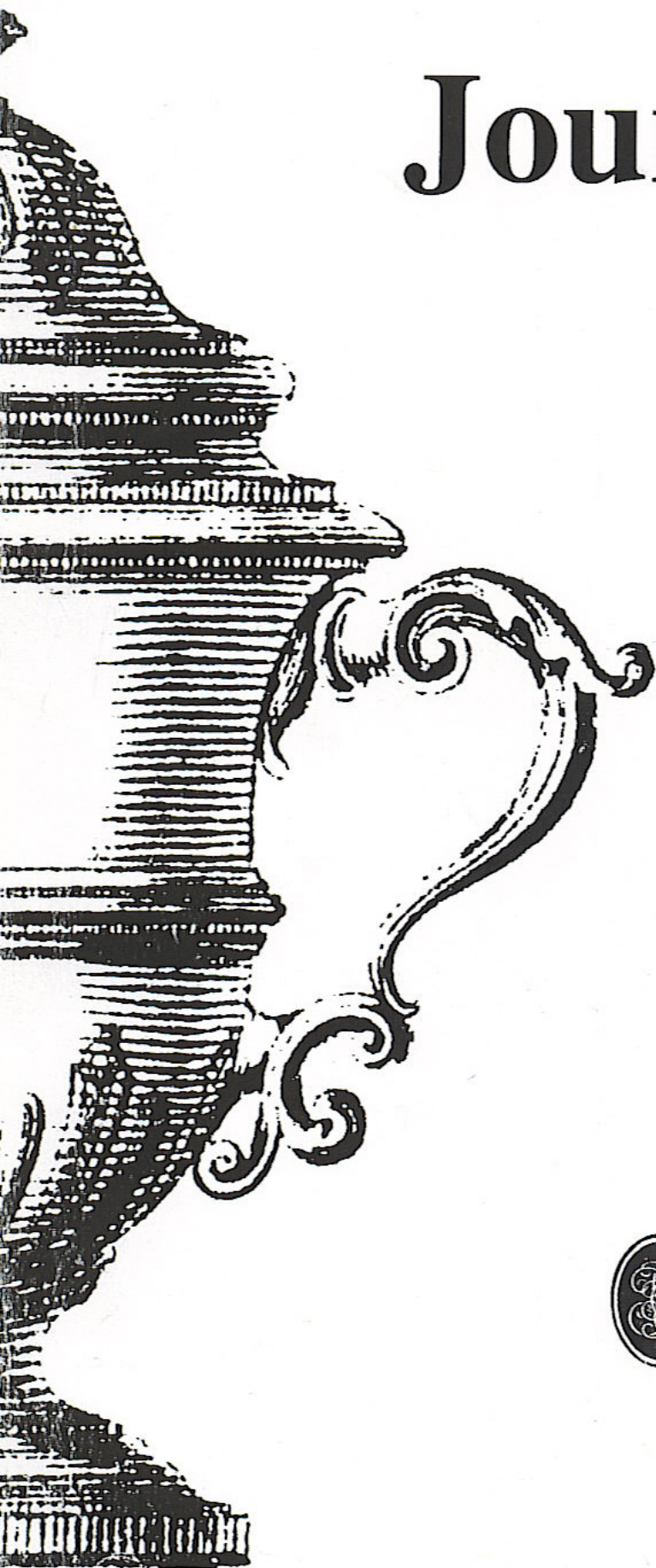


THE
SILVER SOCIETY

Journal



PETER CAMERON

The first 'castle tops'
A short examination of some Birmingham
topographical souvenirs and their makers
1825-38

The first 'castle tops'

a short examination of some Birmingham topographical souvenirs and their makers 1825–38

Peter Cameron

The toymen of Birmingham prospered through their readiness to adapt mechanical methods to manufacturing, through sound business practice and through a steadily expanding market. They produced precious (or apparently precious) articles of high quality with an economy of craft and material.

All this has been stated before of course, but still remarkably little is known of the toymen themselves or the detail of their success – of the inter-relationships between the gold and silver toymen and the myriad other skilled craft businesses which operated in the same vicinity, of the techniques of their manufacturing and the chains of production from principal manufacturers to out-workers and through wholesalers to retailers. This may in part be explained by a simple lack of primary archival source material – for the firms were small, often family, concerns and partnerships were formed and dissolved within short periods of time. It may in part be that the importance of Boulton, both a large worker and a toymen, has led to a justified concentration of interest upon his firm. Perhaps, however, it may also be explained by a residual disdain for the 'Brummagem' qualities that made the small toymen successful.

Whilst two recent works by Jennifer Tann and Sheena Mason have provided some further understanding of the Birmingham gold and silversmiths' trade, there is as yet no biographical dictionary of makers equivalent to the works of Grimwade and Culme in London.¹ The most detailed studies so far of the output of the Birmingham toymen and small workers remain Eric Delieb's pioneering *Silver Boxes*, and the catalogues for the 1973 bicentenary exhibition and for the 1982 loan exhibition.²

The toymen produced a very wide range of merchandise (see the goods advertised for sale by Taylor & Perry below) and this article examines only one small part of it: silver souvenirs incorporating topographical views produced from the mid-1820s onwards in the form not only of boxes – that is to say card cases, snuffboxes and vinaigrettes or 'scent boxes' – but of thimbles, pincushions, tape-measures, baskets, notebooks, caddy spoons, paper-knives, etc.

Nevertheless, these pieces exemplify all the toymakers' products: made with measured skill, always to a price, the finest are little masterpieces which draw the eye in to a tiny three-dimensional scene. Sometimes the views are fashioned in relief, either hand chased, or die-struck, if necessary cropped to size, and perhaps finished with hand chasing or engraving; and sometimes they are entirely engraved, often, after 1840, with an engine-turned background.

The span of years 1825 to 1838 has been chosen largely for simplicity and practicality. Undoubtedly topographical thimbles, for example, were produced before 1825 in Birmingham but they bear no hallmark and cannot be precisely dated; and those articles engraved with a topographical scene which do bear an earlier hallmark cannot be proven to be part of a series but may instead have been 'one off' commissions. After 1838 so many new views were introduced that a study of them would be too large a task for the confines of a journal.

Just as Delieb included short genealogies/biographies of some of the best known silver smallworkers at the back of his *Silver Boxes*, so it has been thought necessary to include, in the second half of this article, summary information about the lives and careers of those silversmiths referred to in the course of it. An attempt has been made to correlate entries in the makers' mark registries with information from other sources, particularly the Birmingham trades directories.

The toymen will have been keenly aware that a thriving trade in topographical souvenirs already existed in a variety of other media. Although the production of enamelled boxes in Bilston and elsewhere had ended by the mid-1820s, Tunbridge-ware manufacturers still found a ready market. Numbers of work-boxes and other articles were made with views of Brighton, Margate, Cheltenham, Bath and other resorts. At first these views were prints pasted on to the wood, but, from the 1820s, they were depicted in wooden mosaic. The Scottish souvenir woodware industry, already well-established in the 1820s, was producing topographical boxes by the mid-1830s. In

1. Jennifer Tann, *The Birmingham Assay Office 1773–1993*, Birmingham 1993; Sheena Mason, *Jewellery Making in Birmingham 1750–1995*, London 1998; Arthur Grimwade, *London Goldsmiths 1697–1837*, London 1976, 3rd edn 1990; John Culme, *The Directory of Gold & Silversmiths, 1838–1914*, Woodbridge 1987.

2. Eric Delieb, *Silver Boxes*, London 1968; *Birmingham Gold and Silver 1773–1973*, exhib cat, City Museum and Art Gallery Birmingham 1973, in particular section B 'The Toymen'; Matthew Boulton and the Toymakers: silver from the Birmingham Assay Office, exhib cat, Goldsmiths' Hall London 1982, in particular pp45–92 covering the toy trade.

3. See Edward H & Eva R. Pinto, *Tunbridge and Scottish Souvenir Woodware*, London 1970; A.W. Coysh and R.K. Henrywood, *The Dictionary of Blue and White Printed pottery 1780-1880*, vols I & II, Woodbridge 1982.

4. Any information has been gathered from pieces actually observed in the market-place or in collections over a period of years. Catalogue descriptions alone have not been used as a source of information, for the Birmingham date letter cycle 1824-48 is often misread: 1837 being mistaken for 1827, for instance.

ceramics, porcelain factories in Derby, Worcester and elsewhere, manufactured articles with high quality coloured scenes. Potters, too, had mastered techniques of transferring prints to the surface of their wares and a host of topographical views appeared.³ Of other media, glass and painted tin, for example, too little is known to provide a clear history of their origins but it seems likely that most – like the glass panelled needle books and glass paperweights with coloured transfer views of a multitude of scenes – began in the late 1840s. Moreover, the Birmingham toymen themselves often used materials other than silver: mother-of-pearl panels were carved or engraved and set into silver or tortoiseshell boxes, and sometimes scenes (depicted in silver) were cut out and inlaid into tortoiseshell.

All these industries were dependent upon printed views, whether bound together in topographical books or published individually, for their source material. A burgeoning print industry supplied a market freshly enthusiastic for the beauties of British scenery and architecture depicted in a natural and informal manner. Although, in the early years covered by this article, Birmingham's toymen produced a comparatively small range of views, those they selected carefully targeted contemporary taste. The immense popularity of Sir Walter Scott, whose works, rooted in eighteenth century notions of the picturesque, did much to enhance historic awareness, thus determined the selection of views of his home (Abbotsford), his burial place (Dryburgh Abbey) and of the scene of one of his most successful novels (Kenilworth Castle). Another chosen view, Newstead Abbey, had been the family home of Scott's friend Byron, perhaps the most heroic and exciting of the romantic poets. Windsor Castle, newly modernised in the gothic manner, and Warwick Castle, were respectively the most romantic seat of the British monarchs and the most complete and evocative seat of medieval barony. A deepening fascination with the qualities of British landscape and with Britain's ancient buildings was allied to an interest in the seats of British power: the homes of the

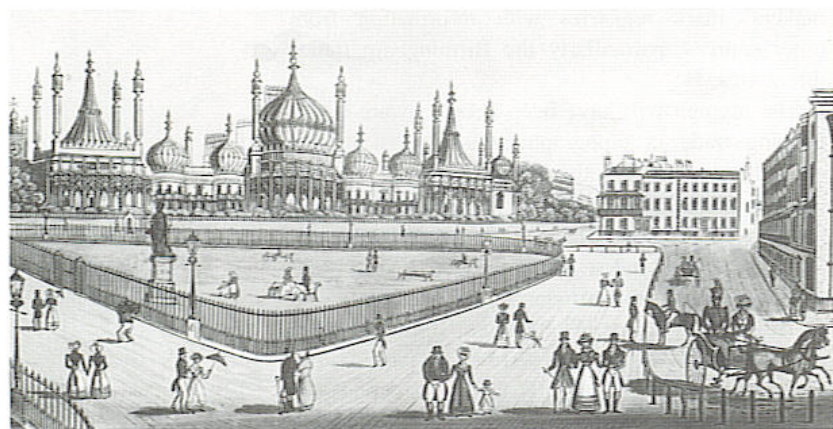
monarch, of government, both central and local, of the greatest aristocrats, and of learning – the great universities and schools. Birmingham's toymen, competing amongst themselves and with manufacturers in other media, sought to illustrate these linked interests in their wares.

The views

These are presented in a rough chronological order according to the dates at which they have been noted as first appearing.⁴ It should be remembered that the Birmingham date letters (before 1975) changed on 1 July each year, so that each date letter was struck for six months of two calendar years. Three maker's marks appear most frequently in the survey: those of Willmore/Willmore Yapp & Co, of Taylor & Perry, and of Nathaniel Mills. Some smaller makers produced their own views – Edwin Jones and Francis Clark, for example. Others may have made occasional use of the dies belonging to another firm – thus we note a vinaigrette of 1839/40 marked by Edward Smith but with a view identical to that currently used by Nathaniel Mills. Given that little is known of the structure of the toymaking trade, it cannot be stated with any certainty that a particular firm made or did not make a particular piece: although it would seem highly probable that a large wholesaler like Ledsam, Vale & Wheeler made use of smaller specialists to manufacture many of the articles which bear their mark. The degree of uniformity resulting from mechanisation and the (presumed) use of specialists has, however, been over-emphasised. Delieb was not quite accurate in stating that

mechanisation would explain the 'sameness' or uniformity of so many box-lid subjects, where the self-same scene appears on every box; thus, a shallow relief of one of the commonest subjects – Abbotsford House...will have the same Gothic turrets, chimneys, flag-tower and gardens as almost every other box enriched with this theme. A few specimens might bear some additional details such as the Gothic-arched wall, looking South-West, or trees to the left, but overall, the subject was faithfully copied by various makers.

Delieb correctly pointed to the practice of one maker copying the scenes of another ('the age-old story of the piracy of one man's work by others') but in fact the toymakers who produced topographical silver



1 Royal Pavilion, Brighton, John Bruce 'Select views', circa 1830. (Courtesy Brighton & Hove Libraries)



2 Vinaigrette, John Lawrence & Co, Birmingham 1829/30, Royal Pavilion, Brighton.



3 *St Peter's Church, Brighton, John Bruce, 'Select views', circa 1830. (Courtesy Brighton & Hove Libraries)*

made use of specific views with specific distinctions. There are no instances of Nathaniel Mills making use of a view identical to that used by Taylor & Perry; the view may be very similar, it may be an imitation of the other firm's view, but it is always distinct in its detail. From a scrutiny of such distinctions, perhaps at times a matter of differential minutiae, it is to be hoped that some insights emerge.

One inescapable conclusion from the detailed examination of views presented below is that the most famous of the 'castle top' making firms, Nathaniel Mills, was usually not the initiator of a particular view but the imitator. Furthermore, whereas the finest views produced after 1840 were invariably marked by Nathaniel Mills, the quality of the views produced by Mills in the period upon which this article focuses was generally inferior to that of Taylor & Perry and Willmore.

Brighton

The Royal Pavilion

John Nash's transformation of the Prince Regent's Brighton home was begun in 1815 and completed in 1822. George IV paid his last visit to Brighton in March 1827. He died in June 1830.

St Peter's Church

The church was built between 1824 and 1828, to a design by Sir Charles Barry.

Statue of George IV

Sir Francis Legatt Chantrey's statue of George IV was erected in 1828 in the Old Steine, near the Pavilion. It was moved near the north gate of the Pavilion in 1922.

Robert Mitchell

Two caddy spoons of shovel form have been recorded with die-struck views of Brighton Pavilion across the bowl of the scoop and again across the back. Both examples are marked for 1825/26. The die appears identical to that used on thimbles. In common with most Brighton souvenirs, the Pavilion is viewed from the east. The smaller domes are characterised by pinnacles of fleur-de-lys form which differentiate the die from that of John Lawrence and Horatio Powell [below].⁶

John Lawrence & Co / Horatio Powell

John Lawrence & Co and Horatio Powell seem to have made use of a single die with three Brighton views: the Pavilion viewed from the east, St Peter's



4 *Pincushion, unmarked, St Peter's Church and statue of George IV.*

Church and the statue of George IV. John Lawrence & Co produced narrow rectangular vinaigrettes (3 x 1.5cm) of simple reeded form with low relief views of either the Pavilion [2] or St Peter's Church. All the vinaigrettes so far noted are hallmarked for 1829/30. A number of unmarked pincushions of basket form have all three views around the sides.[4] A single tape-measure has been noted bearing the maker's mark only of Horatio Powell (entered 1831) which, struck from the same die as the pincushions and vinaigrettes, has views of St Peter's Church and the statue of George IV.

The views of the Pavilion and St Peter's Church are taken from prints first published by John Bruce circa 1824,⁷ at which date it was projected that the church of St. Peter should be completed with a spire.[1&3] The spire was never built and, for later editions (after 1830), Bruce adapted his engraver's plate by removing the spire. Lawrence and Powell's die was therefore taken from an early edition of the work. The image of the statue of George IV is taken from an aquatint by Bruce of circa 1829.⁸

Abbotsford

Scott purchased the farm land on which he was to build Abbotsford in 1811. It lay on the bank of the Tweed near an old ford and had once belonged to the monks of Melrose – hence the name Abbotsford. With William Atkinson as architect, Scott pulled down the old farmhouse in 1822 and began a new home. He was first able to move into part of it in 1824. He died in the dining room at Abbotsford on 21 September 1832. A west wing was added to the house in the 1850s by Hope Scott.

Abbotsford from across the Tweed

Scott was fond of this view of the house from the Galashiels road on the far side of the Tweed and used to show it to his guests. To the right of the house can be seen a smaller building closer to the river which might be assumed to be a boathouse but which was in fact the stables.

Joseph Willmore

Snuffboxes by Joseph Willmore have been noted

5. Eric Delieb, *Silver Boxes*, London 1968, p82.

6. An example is well illustrated in John Norie, *Caddy Spoons: an illustrated supplement*, 1998 (ISBN 0 9534222 0 8). A second example appeared in Bonham's London, 3 September 1999 lot 31.

7. John Bruce, *Select Views of Brighton, Drawn and Engraved by Mr. Bruce*, Published by the Artist, Brighton.

8. John and Jill Ford, *Images of Brighton*, 1981 (ISBN 0906964032). This work contains an illustration of Bruce's early print of St Peter's church (no1205), which shows the projected spire. Unfortunately, it has not proved possible to trace the early edition of Bruce's *Select Views* from which it was taken, though the authors believe the work to be in the possession of Brighton Local Studies Library.



5 *Abbotsford*, engraved by Edward Finden, publ 1829.

9. 'Abbotsford, Residence of Sir Walter Scott, Bart', published by Charles Tilt, 56 Fleet Street, London 1829.

from 1832/33.[6] These boxes (8cm wide) have scenes in relief which are apparently hand-chased and are unusual in having a title 'Abbotsford' engraved in the lower left-hand corner of the scene. Willmore continued to use the scene on (untitled) aide-memoires (8x5cm) until at least 1836, with Dryburgh Abbey in relief on the reverse. Almost certainly the source used by Willmore was a print drawn by Richard Westall, engraved by Edward Finden and published in 1829.⁹ [5]

Taylor & Perry

Vinaigrettes (3.8 to 4cm wide) with this scene in relief, using either the same source print or copied from Willmore boxes, were produced by Taylor & Perry from 1834/35 to 1840/41. An aide-memoire of 1834/35 has the scene on the obverse with an unknown view on the reverse – depicting a monument and water with a swan swimming in the foreground and a house, perhaps ruined, against hills and setting (or rising) sun in the background. No source has been found for this view but it probably alludes to Scott's death.[7]



7 *Aide-memoire*, Taylor & Perry, Birmingham 1834/35, unidentified scene.



6 *Snuffbox*, J. Willmore, Birmingham 1832/33, *Abbotsford*.

Nathaniel Mills

One 1834/35 vinaigrette (4.1cm wide) by Mills has this relief view of Abbotsford. It is based upon the same source but the relief is poorly executed and the house is difficult to identify.

Abbotsford from the south court front [8]

This is a very common view and is invariably die-struck.

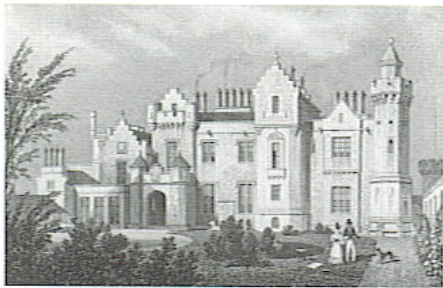
Taylor & Perry

The view is first seen on card cases and vinaigrettes marked for 1835/36. No examples have been recorded later than 1836/37. A single small-sized die was used: the card cases are usually 9.5cm in height but have the same sized view as the vinaigrettes which vary between 4.3 and 4.5 cm in width. Taylor & Perry's die shows a gothic arch between the right-hand wall of the house and the flag-pole tower (which was actually an apple store).[10] To the right of the entrance porch, a bay, which in its lower portion contains a spiral staircase, rises to the full height of the house. A band of moulding on this bay below the ground floor window readily distinguishes the Taylor & Perry die from that used by Nathaniel Mills (and Edward Smith). A Francis Clark vinaigrette of 1836/37 with the 'Taylor & Perry' die-struck view has been noted.

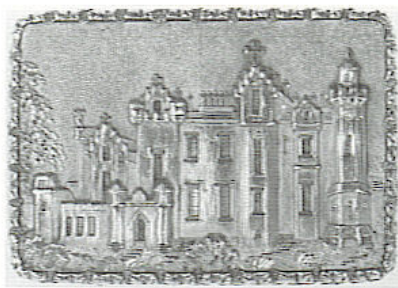
Nathaniel Mills

Mills' output of silver with this view was larger than that of any other maker. Card cases and vinaigrettes appear in great numbers from 1836/37 to 1838/39.[9] A bon-bon basket of 1838/39 has Abbotsford and three other die-struck scenes around its sides, with Windsor in the centre. Mills' view lacks a band of moulding on the spiral staircase bay to the right of the entrance porch and has a brick wall, rather than a gothic arch, between the right of the house and the flag-pole tower. A path running down from the right-hand tower of the house, clearly visible on Taylor & Perry boxes, is less well defined in this Mills relief.

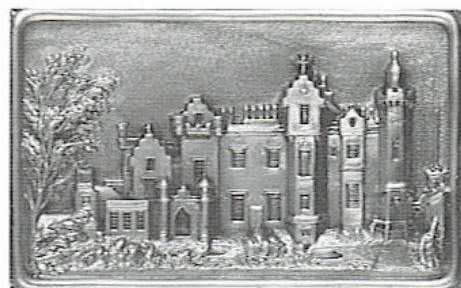
A second-state die appears from 1839/40 to 1845/46 which has a wider wall to the right of the house with a peach(?) tree trained on it and a crisper path running down from the right hand tower of the house. Edward Smith snuffboxes and vinaigrettes of



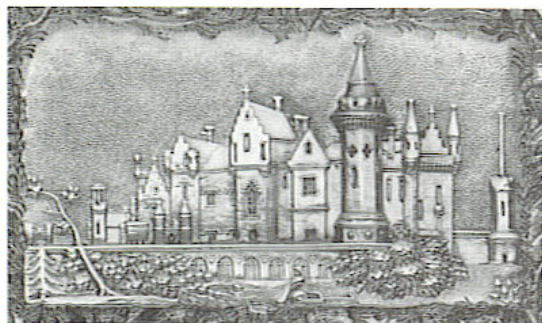
8 *Abbotsford*, engraved by T.Barber, publ circa 1835.



9 *Vinaigrette*, Nathaniel Mills, Birmingham 1838/39, *Abbotsford*.



10 *Card case*, Taylor & Perry, Birmingham 1835/36, *Abbotsford*.



11 *Card case*, unmarked electrotype, *Abbotsford*.

1839/40 and 1840/41 have the second-state 'Nathaniel Mills' view which has also been recorded on a single Willmore, Yapp & Co vinaigrette of 1844/45.

The front of Abbotsford viewed from the east court

The south front of the house is seen from the east court showing the curtain wall, pierced with gothic windows, between south and east courts.

Joseph Willmore / Gervase Wheeler

An 1836/37 snuff box with Joseph Willmore's mark struck over that of another has a crudely depicted prospect in relief of the house as seen from the east court. The curtain wall windows appear narrow and ill-formed. There is a conifer tree on the right between the house and the flag-pole tower and another deciduous tree to the left of the view. An almost identical view has been noted on a snuffbox marked by Gervase Wheeler in the same year.

By 1838 a sharper, die-struck, view with pointed gothic arches on the curtain wall was introduced. The earliest examples (card cases, snuffboxes and vinaigrettes), in the years 1838/39 to 1840/41 are usually marked by Gervase Wheeler, sometimes overstriking another maker. Some vinaigrettes of 1838/39 are by Thomas Shaw. On snuffboxes and card cases the die can be seen to incorporate trees to the left and right of the house and small shrubbery in the centre foreground. A basket of 1843/44 by John Tongue, in the Birmingham assay office collection, includes this die-struck view with four others, the central view being Scott's memorial.

Thereafter, a third version of the view appears die-struck on card cases and vinaigrettes marked by Willmore (until at least 1844/45) and on a number of (unmarked) electroplated card cases.[11] This ver-

sion copies 'Abbotsford: the Seat of Sir Walter Scott Bart.', (an engraving by W.H. Lizars first published by Lizars in Edinburgh in 1832), and has more rounded arches to the curtain wall and only small trees and shrubs visible in the east court foreground with a peacock perched on a garden roller in the centre.¹⁰ The card cases, both silver and electroplate, have another view on the reverse – either Windsor Castle or St Paul's Cathedral.

Nathaniel Mills

One rare vinaigrette¹¹ by Nathaniel Mills marked for 1836/37 has a view of Abbotsford from the east court in the manner of Joseph Willmore/ Gervase Wheeler in that year but the view is distinct in a number of small details: for example, the right-hand conifer tree almost completely obscures the flag tower.

Dryburgh Abbey

A ruined abbey beside the river Tweed between Melrose and Kelso, it is smaller than the nearby abbeys at Jedburgh, Kelso and Melrose. The abbey was established by the Premonstratensian Order in 1150. Scott was buried here on 26 September 1832 beside some of his ancestors and with his wife, who had pre-deceased him in 1826.

The abbey ruins viewed from the west

Joseph Willmore

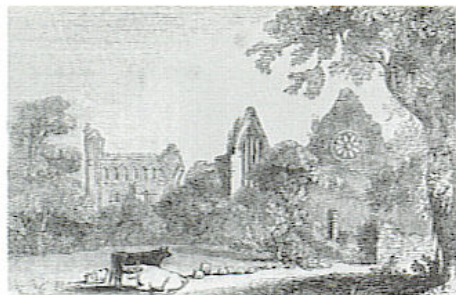
Between 1833/34 and 1835/36, Willmore manufactured snuffboxes with a chased relief view of Dryburgh Abbey which, in series with the snuffboxes he produced with views of Abbotsford, are engraved with the title 'Dryburgh Abbey' in the lower left-hand



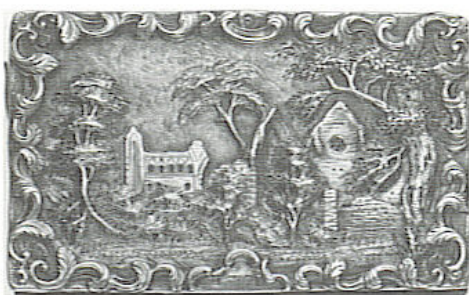
12 *Vinaigrette*, Gervase Wheeler, Birmingham 1837/38, possibly *Dryburgh Abbey*.

10. Print in the possession of Elizabeth Strong of McNaughtons' Bookshop, Edinburgh. For Lizars see: Elizabeth Strong, exhib cat, March 1989.

11. Phillips London, 19 November 2000 lot 132.



13 Dryburgh Abbey, wood engraving, J. Jackson.



14 Aide memoire, J. Willmore, Yapp & Co, Birmingham 1836/37, Dryburgh Abbey.



15 Vinaigrette, Nathaniel Mills, Birmingham 1834/35, Dryburgh Abbey.

12. A version is included in *Old England: A Pictorial Museum of Regal, Ecclesiastical, Municipal, Baronial and Popular Antiquities*, vol 2, 1854, p189.

13. Howard Ricketts, *Objects of Vertu*, London 1971, p85 illustrates a gold snuffbox, Nathaniel Mills 1835/36, 8.2cm (3 1/8 in) wide. This has not been seen by the author and is earlier than any seen by him.

14. W&JO Clerk, 202, High Holborn: 'Windsor Castle from East Terrace', published in 1835 by Pewtress and Ackerman, lithographers. See Lord Fairhaven collection, Anglesey Abbey, Bunt catalogue. Photographic neg ref: AA/PR/44.7.

corner. They are slightly smaller than the Abbotsford snuffboxes, being 7cm wide. A vinaigrette of 1834/35 and aide-memoires of 1834/35 and 1836/37 have the same relief but are untitled.[14] The aide-memoires usually have a view of Abbotsford from across the Tweed on the obverse. The original source for this view has not been traced with any certainty but was probably a wood engraving by J. Jackson.¹² [13]

Nathaniel Mills

A vinaigrette of 1834/35 has been noted with a clumsily executed relief of the above view, obviously based upon the same source print.[15]

A view which is perhaps of Dryburgh Abbey Gervase Wheeler

A vinaigrette of 1837/38 marked by Gervase Wheeler has been recorded with a relief view that may be intended to represent Dryburgh Abbey but which cannot yet be identified with any certainty.[12]

Windsor Castle

Windsor Castle was the most popular of all the views depicted.

Windsor Castle from its north-western aspect viewed across the River Thames

Joseph Willmore / Edwin Jones

A single vinaigrette of 1835/36 marked by Willmore and a number of vinaigrettes of 1836/37 and 1837/38 marked by Edwin Jones have been noted with a view of Windsor Castle from the west across the Thames. The die-struck relief is curiously stylised, bearing more resemblance to early eighteenth century prints of the castle than contemporary ones. No source print has yet been found.[16]

Taylor & Perry

In 1836/37 Taylor & Perry introduced their own die-struck view of the castle from the west. The scene was used principally as the obverse side of card cases and aide-memoires with either Warwick or Kenilworth Castle on the reverse and appears occasionally on vinaigrettes, but has not been recorded on snuffboxes. In the right-hand foreground of the scene a man sits, perhaps on a barrel, under a deciduous tree.[17] The round tower, upon which a flag flies, dominates the central background with the west end

of the King's Chapel in front. The prospect is apparently from an indeterminate spot to the west of the Curfew Tower but the representation, although unmistakably that of Windsor Castle, is far from accurate. The source print has not been identified. Taylor & Perry continued to use the die until at least 1841/42.

The East Terrace

A view of the Castle from the east towards the new gardens created for George IV and the new terrace built by Jeffry Wyattville as part of the re-built and re-sited Royal Apartments, largely completed by 1828.

Nathaniel Mills

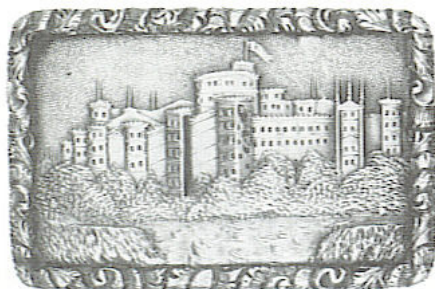
Mills used a die-struck relief view of the east terrace from 1836/37 until about 1843/44.¹³ It appears on snuffboxes, card cases, cheroot cases, baskets and vinaigrettes with Mills's mark and on a group of electroplate snuffboxes with pseudo hallmarks and maker's mark 'WP'. It has also been seen on a vinaigrette of 1837/38 marked by Thomas Lawrence. The full die, used on card and cheroot cases, baskets and snuffboxes, includes part of the garden wall pierced with gothic windows on the right-hand side and is embellished with trees to either side of the castle – an invention of the silversmith which serves both to widen the view to fit these larger boxes and to make it more picturesque.[19] The interpretation is rather crude but the scene derives from a lithograph by W & J.O. Clerk, published in 1835.¹⁴ [20]

Mills & Sons introduced a much more faithful copy of the source print in the late 1840s which shows in the foreground two garden urns and a fountain playing in the garden's pool.[21]

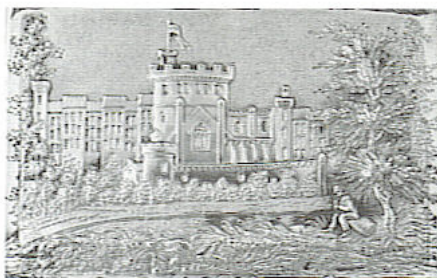
Gervase Wheeler

The die-struck reliefs on card cases and vinaigrettes marked by Gervase Wheeler for 1838/39 to 1840/41 are virtually indistinguishable from those of Mills. Only small details betray that a different die has been used. For example, the Chester Tower, a narrow tower to the immediate right of the central oriel window on the east front, has only two of its corner turrets shown on Wheeler's relief but three are visible on Mill's version.

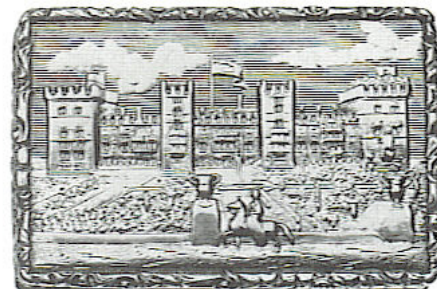
John Tongue in the mid-1840s and Wheeler and Cronin in the early 1850s created narrow die-struck views of the east front for the tops of purse-form vinaigrettes.



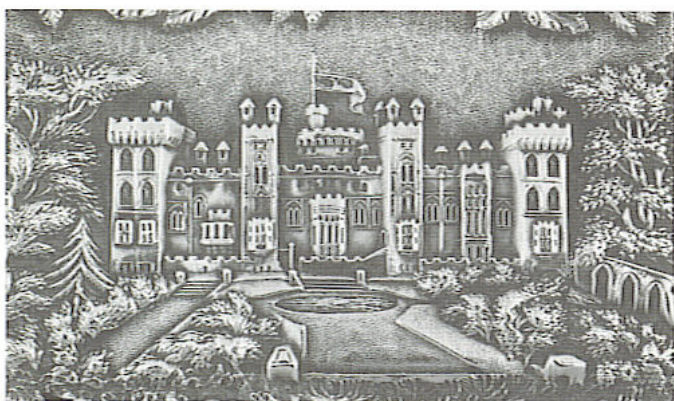
16 Vinaigrette, Edwin Jones, Birmingham 1836/37, Windsor Castle



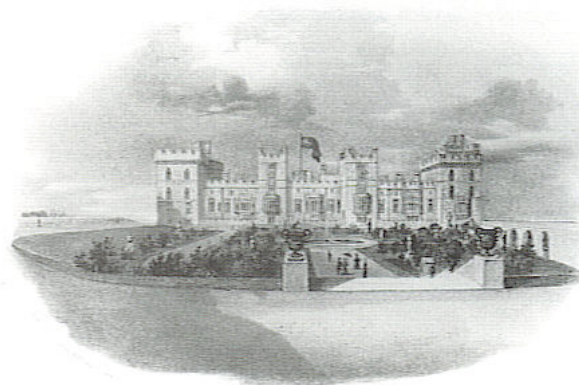
17 Card case, Taylor & Perry, Birmingham 1839/40, Windsor Castle.



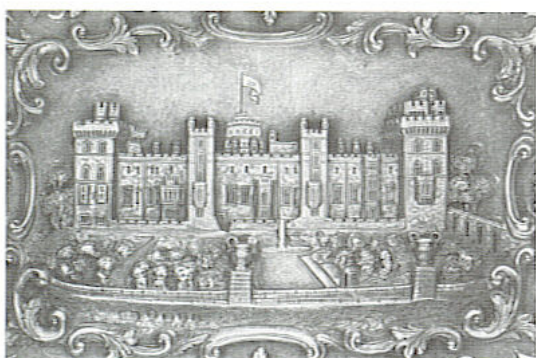
18 Vinaigrette, Francis Clark, Birmingham 1841/42, Windsor Castle with Queen Victoria on horseback in the foreground.



19 Card case, Nathaniel Mills, Birmingham 1839/40, Windsor Castle.



20 Windsor Castle, lithograph, W&J.O. Clark, publ 1835. (Courtesy the National Trust, from the collection of Lord Fairhaven, Anglesey Abbey)



21 Cheroot case, Nathaniel Mills & Sons, Birmingham 1848/49, Windsor Castle.

Francis Clark

A group of vinaigrettes by Francis Clark from the years 1838/39 to 1841/42 have a very low relief die-struck view of the east terrace with fountain playing in the garden and urns to the foreground and a disproportionately small lady on horse-back in front, intended to represent Queen Victoria.[18] Other makers produced views in the 1840s of Holyrood Palace and Balmoral with a similar figure of the queen on horseback. No source print has been found for this precise view and it is likely that the figure was the toy-maker's invention – an amalgamation perhaps of the Pewtress and Ackermann print and a lithograph by an unknown engraver after J. Bouvier.¹⁵

The die-struck clouds are distinctive in Clark's relief and may be compared with the very similar cloud effects in his relief of Kenilworth Castle. [see below]

Newstead Abbey

Newstead was never actually an abbey but a priory of Austin canons. After the dissolution of the monasteries it was bought by the Byron family from Henry VIII. The poet, 6th Lord Byron, inherited it in 1798, when aged ten, but sold it in 1817 to his friend Colonel Wildman, who restored it from a ruinous state. The house was sold by Wildman's widow in 1859.

The west front of Newstead Taylor & Perry

Taylor & Perry introduced a die-struck view of the west front of Newstead in 1835/36, utilising it on their whole range of topographical souvenirs including card cases, snuffboxes, vinaigrettes and aide-memoires until at least 1839/40. They used as their source a lithograph by Day & Haghe.¹⁶ [22] The die closely copies the lithograph both in the detail of the house and of the lake in the foreground. [23] Different sizes of die were evidently available – for some vinaigrettes have a cropped view which shows little or none of the foreground whilst others of the same size reveal much more.

Nathaniel Mills

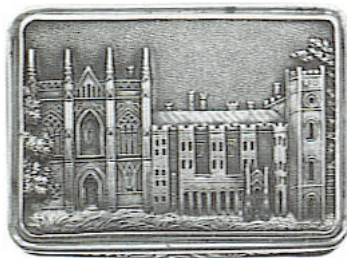
Mills' version of this view, which appears from 1836/37 and was still in use in 1845/46 was a looser interpretation of the same source. [24] The abbey, as illustrated in both the lithograph and the 'Taylor & Perry' die, has, on the three bays of the central section of the house, windows with six lights, whereas

15. 'Her Most Gracious Majesty Victoria 1st of Great Britain and Ireland as she appeared on her favourite Arabian charger in the Royal Park of Windsor on the 28th Sept. 1837.'

16. Entitled 'Newstead Abbey, The Seat of the late Lord Byron, now the property and residence of Lieut. Col. Thomas Wildman....', drawn by M. Webster, and published by Alfred Barber of Nottingham in June 1834.



22 *Newstead Abbey*, lithograph, publ Alfred Barber 1834.



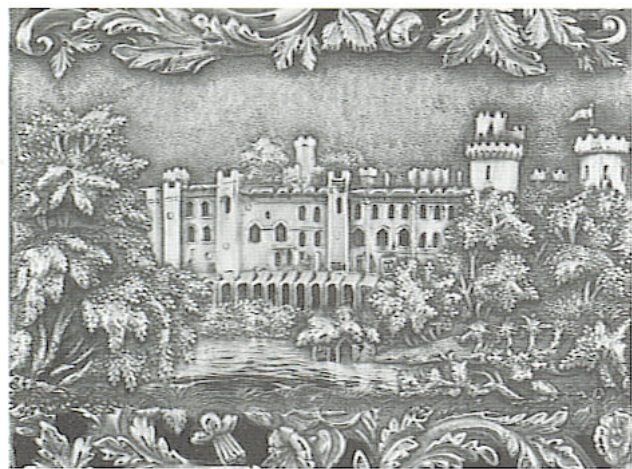
24 *Vinaigrette*, Nathaniel Mills, Birmingham 1836/37, *Newstead Abbey*.

in the Mills view the windows have only four lights. The 'clock-face' on the right-hand tower, in the lithograph and in the Taylor & Perry version, can be seen to have a lozenge-shaped surround, which Mills omitted. The lake's edge nearest the abbey is, in Mills' view, rather more curved than Taylor & Perry's and the swans on the lake are in different positions.

Mills used the view on card cases, vinaigrettes, snuffboxes and baskets. Mills card cases, in common with those marked by Taylor & Perry, have a die-struck view of Abbotsford on the other side. A single vinaigrette of 1836/37, marked by Willmore, Yapp & Co, has been recorded with a 'Mills' view of the abbey.

Warwick Castle

This picturesque stronghold, re-built and developed by successive and pugnacious Beauchamp Earls of Warwick in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, is



26 *Card case*, Nathaniel Mills, Birmingham 1839/40, *Warwick Castle*.



23 *Card case*, Taylor & Perry, Birmingham 1835/36, *Newstead Abbey*.

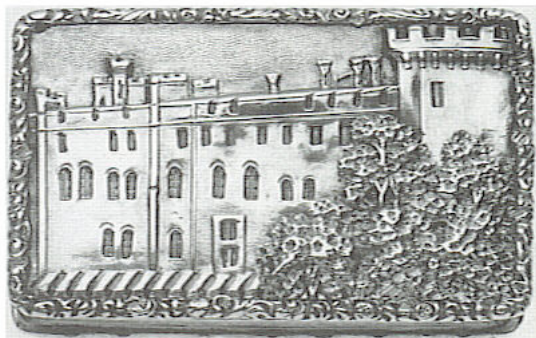
dominated by two enormous towers of continental inspiration in its outer walls – Guy's Tower [128 feet high] and Caesar's Tower [147 feet].

Warwick Castle viewed from across the River Avon

A view of the castle apartments from a spot near the new bridge with Guy's and Caesars Towers visible on the right. This most popular choice of view amongst nineteenth century artists was illustrated in a great many prints.

Taylor & Perry

Taylor & Perry introduced a die-struck view of the castle as viewed across the river in 1836/37. It has been seen on vinaigrettes and card cases (which have either



25 *Vinaigrette*, Taylor & Perry, Birmingham 1838/39, *Warwick Castle*.



27 *Warwick Castle*, engraved by W. Radclyffe, publ 1823.

Kenilworth or Windsor on the other side), and on a single mug of 1839/40 but not, as yet, on snuffboxes.[25] No example has been recorded later than 1839/40. The full die shows the top of Caesar's tower above trees on the right of the apartments and a glimpse of Guy's tower beyond. At the foot of the castle in the centre of the view is a small arch, the remnant of an ancient bridge, and in the nearer foreground are two men in a small boat, the man on the right rowing, the other, facing the oarsman, and leaning forwards holding a fishing net. Of a number of prints which feature similar views, the probable source is a drawing by P. Dewint, engraved by W. Radclyffe, and first published by W. & T. Radclyffe in March 1823.[27]

Nathaniel Mills

Mills appears to have used his die-struck version of the scene from 1838/39 and to have continued it until 1843/44. He struck it on his whole range of souvenirs articles: including card and cheroot cases, snuff boxes, vinaigrettes and baskets. The aspect is slightly different from Taylor & Perry's, being from a more eastern angle. A little more of Guy's Tower is visible and it is topped by a flag, fluttering in a westerly direction. No boats can be seen on the river. The towers along the castle wall appear to stand out more strongly than in Taylor & Perry's version and the horizontal lines of lintels and buttressing more clearly. Cropped in size to fit vinaigrettes, the view retains its perspective better than that of Taylor & Perry. No source print has been identified.[26]

Kenilworth Castle

The remnants of one of England's strongest castles which proved impregnable in a siege of 1266. Famously, it was the home of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester from 1563, a gift from Queen Elizabeth.

The Great Hall or John o'Gaunt's Hall

John o' Gaunt, for whom Kenilworth was a favourite home, built a banqueting hall which compared in grandeur to Westminster Hall.

Edwin Jones

Jones manufactured a small group of vinaigrettes with a low relief die-struck view of Gaunt's Hall. They are invariably marked for 1836/37.[30] The view may be from a drawing by John Coney.¹⁷

The Norman Keep

Francis Clark

From 1836/37 to 1841/42, Francis Clark made vinaigrettes die-struck with a view of the Norman Keep of the castle.[28] In the background can be seen die-struck clouds against a sky formed from horizontal lines [see his view of Windsor Castle, 18]. No certain source has been found for this view of the keep, sometimes called Caesar's Tower in contemporary prints.

A romanticised view of the Elizabethan Kenilworth

A view of Kenilworth Castle, as it might have looked, at the time of Robert Dudley, Earl of

Leicester's, ownership, when the castle was extensively modernised, and when Queen Elizabeth was lavishly entertained there. Scott's novel was set in this period, and tells of the tragic death of Dudley's wife, Amy Robsart. A seventeenth century fresco painting in the castle, now lost, which illustrated it intact after Dudley's improvements, was copied by numerous artists and engravers. Some nineteenth century artists, inspired by Scott and tales of the revels at the castle, then elaborated upon the view to show the castle and grounds in full splendour peopled with pseudo-Elizabethan characters. One such painting (by J. Rawson Walker, issued as a lithograph by John Brandard) [32] was adapted by Taylor & Perry and Mills to form their souvenir view of Kenilworth.¹⁸

There has been much confusion between this romanticised view of Kenilworth Castle and views of Warwick because of the heraldic bears in the foreground of the Kenilworth view. In fact, they are meant to signify the ownership of Robert Dudley. Members of the Dudley family came, briefly, to own both Warwick and Kenilworth Castles. Through their descent from Margaret Beauchamp they inherited the famous Beauchamp bear crest of the Earls of Warwick.

Nathaniel Mills

Mills was apparently the first to introduce a relief based on Brandard's lithograph, omitting a tree in the centre foreground which obstructs the view of the castle. The die shows the central courtyard wall as having six windows on its first storey with four arched windows visible at the back of the courtyard. The die was struck from 1836/37 until at least 1843/44 on snuffboxes, card and cheroot cases, vinaigrettes and baskets. The full view has a right-facing heraldic bear on a plinth in the left-hand foreground.[34] One vinaigrette of 1837/38, marked by Francis Clark, has the 'Mills' view of Kenilworth. Mills card cases with this view have either Windsor or Abbotsford on the other side.

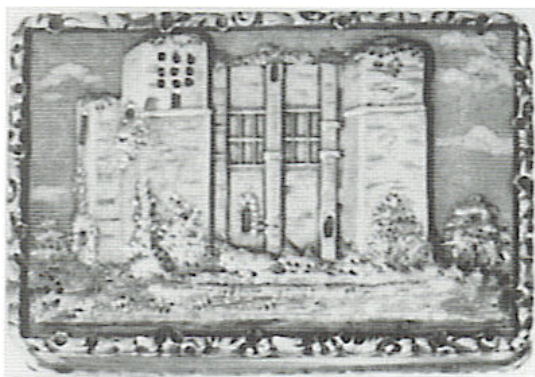
A basket of 1843/44, marked by John Tongue, incorporates the 'Mills' view of Kenilworth.

Taylor & Perry

Taylor & Perry copied Brandard's lithograph more closely than Nathaniel Mills. Die-struck reliefs appear from 1838/39 on card cases, baskets and occa-

17. Engraved by William Tombleton, first published by Longman & Co, London, May 1823.

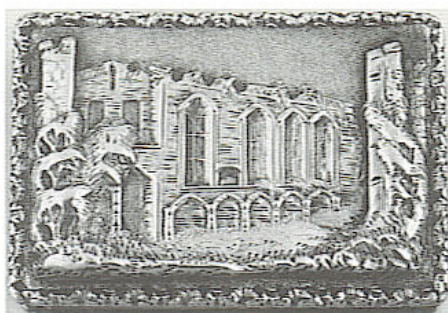
18. The lithograph of J. Rawson Walker's painting is inscribed: 'Kenilworth Castle in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, is with permission most respectfully dedicated to the Right Honourable the Earl of Clarendon, the Proprietor of Kenilworth Castle. The Picture is in the possession of Henry Jephson of Leamington Esq. MD. The Scene Represents the Time when Queen Elizabeth Visited the Earl of Leicester at the Celebrated Entertainments in 1575. Vide Sir Walter Scott, Kenilworth, Volume 3, Chapter 9.' This lithograph was published by C. Elson, 12 Lower Union Parade, Leamington.



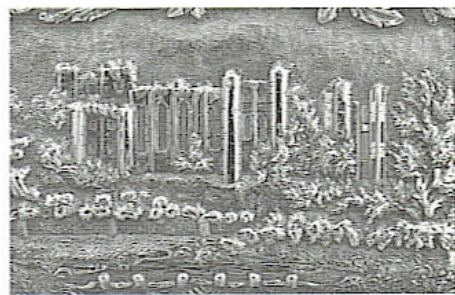
28 Vinaigrette, Francis Clark, Birmingham 1841/42, Kenilworth Castle



29 Great hall, Kenilworth Castle, engraved by W. Tombelson, publ 1823. (Courtesy Warwickshire County Record Office)



30 Vinaigrette, Edwin Jones, Birmingham 1836/37, Kenilworth Castle.



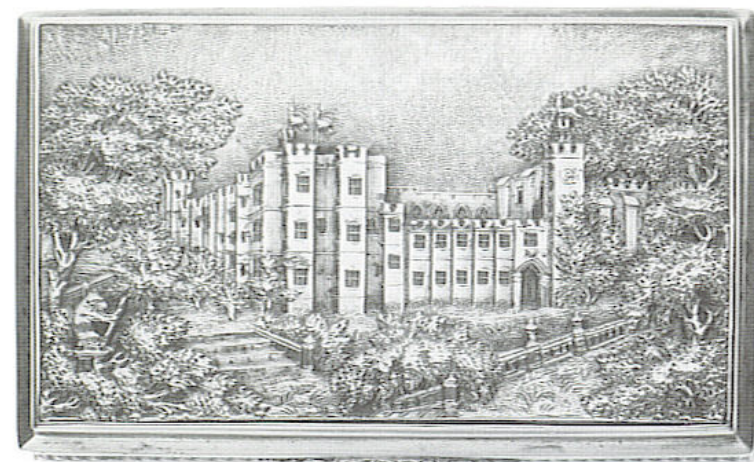
31 Card case, Nathaniel Mills, Birmingham, 1836/37, Kenilworth Castle.



32 Kenilworth Castle, lithograph, publ C.Elson, circa 1836. (Courtesy Warwickshire County Record Office)



33 Sweetmeat basket, Taylor & Perry, Birmingham 1845/46, Kenilworth Castle.



34 Snuffbox, Nathaniel Mills, Birmingham 1836/37, Kenilworth Castle.

sionally on vinaigrettes (no snuffboxes have been seen) until 1845/46. Card cases have Warwick Castle on the reverse. The die, omitting the foreground tree of the lithograph, shows three windows on the first floor of the central courtyard wall with six arched windows visible at the back of the courtyard. Both left and right-facing bear statues are visible in the full version of Taylor & Perry's die.[33]

A western prospect of the ruined castle Nathaniel Mills

From 1838/39 Mills produced a die-struck relief of the western side of the ruined castle on card cases (with Warwick Castle on the obverse), and on vinaigrettes.[31] Trees and shrubbery envelop the decaying buildings with the remains of an outer wall just visible in the centre ground. No source has been found for the scene, which is a variant of one commonly depicted in prints of the period. No example has been found later than 1839/40.

Willmore / Yapp

A crudely executed die-struck relief of the same scene is found on card cases and baskets of 1845/6 marked by Yapp & Woodward. The card cases have a view of the gateway of Windsor Castle on the obverse.

Tintern Abbey

A large Cistercian monastery founded in a valley beside the River Wye in 1131 and substantially rebuilt at the end of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth centuries. The richest of all the Welsh monasteries, its ruins inspired Wordsworth; but William Gilpin, in his *An essay upon prints: containing remarks upon the principles of picturesque beauty*, first published in 1768, declared that on the contrary



35 *Tintern Abbey from the new road, publ by T.Bedford circa 1825.*

'a number of gable-ends hurt the eye with their regularity; and disgust by the vulgarity of their shape'. Until a road was built in the early nineteenth century the ruins were accessible only by water.[35]

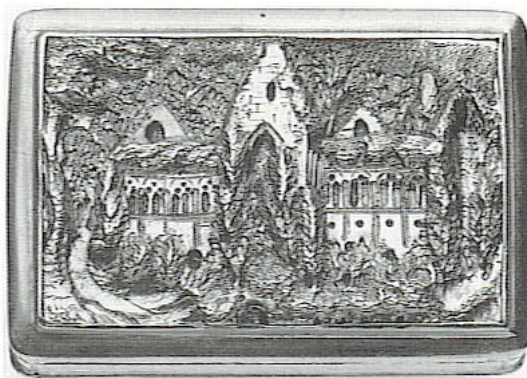
Edwin Jones

Vinaigrettes by Jones, all marked for 1836/37, have a poorly executed relief view of Tintern Abbey seen from the New Road. No other maker appears to have attempted this view until Nathaniel Mills in the mid-1840s (a vinaigrette with a very fine high relief view of the abbey hallmarked for 1845/46). The abbey formed a very popular subject for print-makers – the National Museum of Wales' catalogue lists seventy-nine published between 1730 and 1850 – and no certain source has been found for Jones's vinaigrettes.[36]

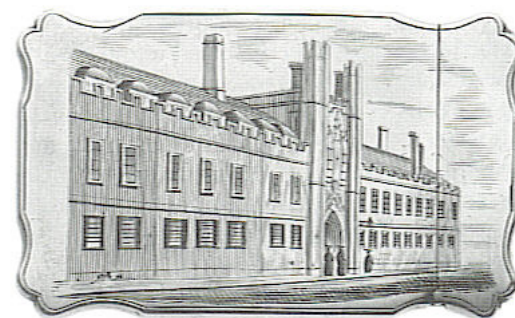
Cambridge University

Taylor & Perry

A card case of 1836/37 and an aide-memoire of 1838/39 of identical size (8.2x5cm) with identical finely engraved views of St John's College gateway on one side [37] and 'Tree Court' (Second Court), Christ's College on the other would suggest that Taylor & Perry produced a series of Cambridge University souvenir views. The aide-memoire's views are titled. Each scene is a close copy of engraved views in J. & H.S. Storer's *Illustrations of the University of*



36 *Vinaigrette, Edwin Jones, Birmingham 1836/37, Tintern Abbey*



37 *Card case, Taylor & Perry, Birmingham 1836/37, St John's College, Cambridge.*

Cambridge published in 1829. No other examples have been noted in this period, however.

Oxford University

Whilst there is a strong probability that souvenir views of Oxford were produced prior to 1838, the only example found so far is a snuffbox in the collection of the Birmingham assay office with an engraved view of University College, marked by William Postans & George Tye in 1823/24. This piece may perhaps have been a special commission.

The makers

In order to provide a more complete picture of the toymaking firms cited above, their histories are explored over a longer period than strictly necessary to this article. The following is a summary of information about the firms cited in the text. It remedies some inaccuracies published elsewhere but is by no means complete.

Abbreviations

Culme: John Culme, *The Directory of Gold and Silversmiths 1838–1914*, Woodbridge 1987.
Grimwade: Arthur Grimwade, *London Goldsmiths 1697–1837*, London 1978, 1990.
Aris: *Aris's Gazette*
Holden: *Holden's Triennial Directory*
Pigot: *Pigot's Directory of Birmingham*
Post Office: *Birmingham Post Office Directory*
Pye: *Pye's Birmingham Directory*
White: *White's Warwickshire Directory* and *White's Birmingham Directory*
Wrightson: *Wrightson's Birmingham Directory*

Francis Clark (1799–1853) *Grimwade* no673.

Second son of Thomas Clark of Birmingham (1767–1847).¹ FC married Caroline, daughter of Thomas Wright Hill and sister of Sir Rowland Hill (of penny postage fame). He was active in local politics, a member of the committee elected in 1838 to lobby for the incorporation of Birmingham and a member, with his brother, Thomas Jr, of the Birmingham Mechanics Institute.²
1811: Mark registered in Birmingham (William Lea & Co, Newhall Street).³

1818 (30.9): New Ledsam & Vale mark entered in Birmingham. Address: Newhall St.

1819 (11.5): Gervase Wheeler registered a gold worker's mark at the London assay office.¹³

1820–1840: Partnership re-named Ledsam, Vale & Wheeler.

1825 (7.12): Two new Birmingham marks for Ledsam, Vale & Wheeler. Another mark entered 17.2.1830.

1829/30: 'Ledsam, Vale and Wheeler, Manufacturers of Jewellery, Gold, Silver, gilt and black fancy articles etc' at 59 Newhall Street (*Wrightson*).

1831: After June 1831 the company no longer assayed regular quantities of silver preferring, presumably, to buy in other makers' work.

1832 (circa): Death of John Vale. Vale was an assay office guardian from 1823 and in 1824 a delegate to London to lobby for the right to assay gold in Birmingham.

1831 (6.7): Gervase Wheeler mark registered in Birmingham with additional marks entered 4.3.1835 and 9.11.1835.

1835: 'Gervase Wheeler, 30 St. Paul's Square, Jeweller and Silversmith' (*Pigor*).

1840 (9.11): GW registered a design for a propelling pencil in the form of a rifle.

1840 (3.12): Death of GW.¹⁴ Address: Bartlett's Buildings, London and Elm Villa, Finchley.

1842 (7.9): Wheeler & Cronin partnership mark entered Birmingham.

1842 (2.11): Mary Wheeler 'late Gervase Wheeler' and James Bartholomew Cronin mark entered. Address: 30 St Paul's Square.

1845: 'Mary Wheeler and Bartholomew Cronin, Jewellers and Gilt toy manufacturers, 30 St. Paul's Square, Birmingham and 28 Bartlett's Buildings, London' (*Post Office*).

1846: James Bartholomew Cronin, Sarah Wheeler and George Wheeler mark entered Birmingham.

1851 (1.3 and 14.12): George and Mary Wheeler entered marks at Goldsmiths' Hall, London as gold workers.¹⁵ They exhibited at the Great Exhibition: 'Jewellery and trinkets of gold, silver, agate, precious stones, and pearls, consisting of brooches, bracelets, chains, earrings, lockets, watch protectors, thimbles, pencils, keys and seals, charms, paper knives, cigar cases, snuffboxes. Specimens showing the progress of a gold bracelet from the pure metal to the complete article'.¹⁶

1852 (11.3): Gervase Wheeler (son of Gervase Sr) entered a Birmingham mark. Address: Bartlett's Buildings, London.

1856–63: George Wheeler & Co.

'Wholesale Manufacturing Goldsmiths and Jewellers, also Small Silver Wares, best real jet jewellery, and gilt and steel trinkets. 28 Bartlett's Buildings' (*Post Office*).

1856 (3.1): George Wheeler and Mary Wheeler entered Birmingham marks.

Address: Bartlett's Buildings.

1856 (21.4): George Wheeler 'of Bartlett's Buildings', entered a Birmingham mark on his own.

1856 (8.5): George Wheeler entered a group of London marks.¹⁷

1863: 'Geo. Wheeler and Co. (now Butler & Hutchinson) 26, 27, 28 Bartlett's Buildings' (*Post Office*). Soon after this date much of Bartlett's Buildings was pulled down to allow the building of the new Holborn Viaduct.

11. Westminster Record Office Acc.69/95. Bartlett's Buildings, built in the late seventeenth century, was just off Holborn Circus and adjacent to Thavies Inn. Both were popular locations for wholesalers of jewellery, silver smallwork, instruments etc. See also GLRO 0/203/14, a lease to Mary Wheeler and James Bartholomew Cronin of 28 Bartlett's Buildings for twenty-one years at £44 half-yearly, dated 24 June 1856. For an earlier lease to a London silversmith of 29 Bartlett's Buildings see GLRO.BRO/685/1/8, a lease by Robert Hinde Esq to Mr Aaron Lestourgeon, factor, of Leigh Street, Red Lion Square, dated 4 October 1788. A good genealogical account of Aaron Lestourgeon is in the Cotton MSS, Society of Genealogists, London.

12. Five surviving daughters at his death. One son, Gervase, christened 26 April 1827, Old Church, Saint Pancras, London. Two brothers George and Edward.

13. Grimwade p362.

14. PCC Wills. Prob 11 Middx. Feb 155, 1841.

15. 1 March (Culme nos6717 and 6718) and 14 December (Culme nos6693 and 6694).

16. Culme quoting the *Official Catalogue*, class 23, no91.

17. Culme nos6719 and 6722.

Robert Mitchell (1781–1838) *Grimwade* no3453

Apprenticed to Samuel Pemberton.

1812 (May): Robert Mitchell & Co mark entered Birmingham. Address: Snow Hill.

1812: Further marks in partnership with Thomas Pemberton (1775–1830) –

'Samuel Pemberton, son and Mitchell.'

1813 (21.7): London mark entered by Thomas Pemberton and Robert Mitchell as smallworkers, by power of attorney signed by Pemberton for both. Address: Snow Hill, Birmingham.¹⁸

1815–1838: Assay office guardian.

1816 (18.12): Another partnership mark ('for watch cases etc') with Thomas Pemberton, Birmingham.

1818: 'Pemberton, Samuel, Son and

Mitchell, jewellers silversmiths & watch and time-piece makers, Snow Hill' and 'Pemberton, Mitchell & Allport, Merchants, Snowhill' (*Wrightson*).

1821 (28.2): S.Pemberton & Son entered independent marks.

1821 (23.5): RM entered his own independent marks 'late Pemberton, son and Mitchell.' Address: St Paul's Square, Birmingham.

1822 (27.3): 'Removed to Bishopsgate Street'.

1824: One of the delegates to London to lobby for the right to assay gold in Birmingham.

1833: 'Robert Mitchell, Jeweller and Silversmith, 56, Howard Street' (*Wrightson*).

1835: 'Robert Mitchell and Co, Silversmiths, 24, Frederick Street' (*Wrightson*).

1838 (12.5): Died at 22 Regent Place. His son Edward of 217 New John Street West, Birmingham, present at the death.

18. Grimwade no1859.

Nathaniel Mills

The history of this firm requires re-writing. Nathaniel Mills, the silversmith, son of Nathaniel Mills Sr, a jeweller, was born in 1784 and died in 1843.¹⁹ He should not be confused with Nathaniel Mills, the highly successful merchant who also lived in Birmingham and was born in 1811 and died in 1873, leaving an estate of approximately £30,000. It is possible that Nathaniel Mills, the silversmith, was related to Nathaniel Mills, the merchant, but there is no reason to associate the latter with the silversmithing trade.

A history of the firm should therefore be as follows:

Nathaniel Mills Sr, a jeweller, dubbed Nathaniel Mills (i) by Delieb, founded the firm in the late eighteenth century.

1803: Marks entered by Nathaniel Mills and Langston in the assay office register, giving Northwood Street as their address. This was probably Nathaniel Mills (ii) and partner. Nathaniel Mills (i) had previously been recorded as a jeweller at 2 Northwood Street (*Pye* 1797).

1825 (11.5) and 1827 (2.5): fresh marks entered at the assay office. Address: 49 Caroline Street, then from 11.7.1825 9 Howard Street, the firm's workshop address.

1829: 'N. Mills, Silver Snuffbox and Scent Box makers, 74 Caroline Street' (*Pigot*). 1830 (31.3) and 1836 (24.2): New marks entered at the assay office.

1836 (13.4): Firm moved from 49 to 42 Caroline Street.

1840 (11.1): Nathaniel Mills Sr died aged 94.²⁰

1841 onwards: The firm appears in trade directories as 'N. Mills & Son, Caroline Street'. The 1841 census records Nathaniel Mills of Caroline Street, silversmith, aged 58.²¹

1845: The firm appears in trade directories as 'N. Mills & Sons.'

1843 (2.8): Nathaniel Mills(ii) died. The family continued to live at and operate from 42 Caroline Street; Nathaniel's sons ran the business and retained the 'NM' maker's mark.

1850: Thomas had probably moved out of the family home by this time. 'Thomas Mills, silversmith, h.32, Albion Street' (*White*). The 1851 census notes as living at 42 Caroline Street: Maria Mills, widow, now aged 67; her son William, town councillor and silversmith, aged 47; daughters Elizabeth and Maria, aged 44 and 36 respectively; and the grandson Nathaniel, 16.

1854 (30.1): The firm, now listed in directories as 'Mills and Owen', entered fresh marks at the assay office. Address: 72 Northwood Street. A 'Mrs Maria Mills' is at 104 Vyse Street.

1855 (16.8): Marks re-entered. Address: 11½ Howard Street. The firm is listed in directories as 'William Mills, silversmith and jeweller, 11½ Howard Street, h.58, Buckingham Street'.

19. Nathaniel Mills was christened on 19 March 1784 at St Phillip's, Birmingham, son of Nathaniel and Elizabeth Mills. His sister, Catherine, still a spinster at the time of their father's death in 1840, was christened at the same time.

20. His will was probated at Lichfield on 6 May 1840.
21. With his wife Maria, 58. The marriage probably took place at Edgbaston on 23 January 1804, where a Nathaniel Mills married Maria Allen. Their children were christened at St Phillip's, Birmingham: William 16.4.1804, Elizabeth 21.4.1806, James Gordon 13.6.1808, Nathaniel 23.3.1810, Ann 31.3.1812, Maria 2.1.1815, Thomas 23.1.1817. The 1841 census records: Thomas, a silversmith, aged 25; John 17 an apprentice engraver; Elizabeth 35; Maria 27; Catherine 23; Sarah Mills (perhaps not a daughter but a kinswoman) aged 21; and a grandson Nathaniel 7. An eldest son, William, then lived at 18 Albion Street.

Postans & Tye

1819 (15.9): Mark entered for William Postans and George Tye. Address: Fleet Street, Birmingham.

1826 (13.12): Mark entered for George

Tye and James Kilner, 'late Postans and Tye', Snow Hill.

1830 (24.2): Mark entered by George Tye on his own. Address: Caroline Street.

Horatio Powell

One mark entered Birmingham Assay Office 12/1/1831. Address: 83, Smallbrook Street. Assay Office Registers record Horatio Powell as having assayed only two very small quantities of silver amounting to a total of 24ozs.13dwt. in January 1831.

Thomas Shaw (late John Shaw)

John Shaw: marks entered Birmingham before 1801. Further marks 1803-7 (and October 1820).

1812: 'John Shaw, Silver snuff and scent box and nutmeg grater maker, Caroline Street' (*Wrightson*).

1817 (20.3): Death of John Shaw, 'Silversmith of Caroline Street.'

1818: 'Thomas Shaw, silversmith', Caroline St (*Wrightson*).

1822 (3.6): Thomas Shaw marks entered, 'late John Shaw', when at Caroline Street. Another mark entered 5 July 1824.

1826 (15.3): Marks re-entered.

1829/30: 'Thomas Shaw manufacturers of silver scent and snuff boxes etc' at 75, Caroline Street (*Wrightson*).

1835: 'Thomas Shaw, Snuffbox and scent box makers, 74 Caroline Street' (*Pigot*).

1839: Thomas Shaw at 74 Caroline Street (*Wrightson*).

1845 (19.11): Death of Thomas Shaw, aged 63 (*Arts*).

Edward Smith

1825 (Jan): Mark entered Birmingham: John Edward Clark and Edward Smith.

1826 (31.5): John Edward Clark and Edward Smith entered independent marks 'late Clarke and Smith'. Address: 25 Cox Street.

1827 (March): Moved to Howard Street.

1840 (9.9): Marks re-entered.

1842: 'Edward Smith, silversmith and snuffbox manufacturer' at 51 Howard Street (*Pigot*).

1851 census: Edward Smith, aged 57, living at 51 Howard Street with his wife, Esthel 54, a niece Eliza Blackhurst 13, and a servant Catherine Delany 33.

1858: 'Ed. Smith, 51 Howard St' (*Birmingham*).

1864: 'Edward Smith Silver snuffbox manufacturer, 50g Howard Street, Constitution Hill' (*Post Office*). The directories have no further references to the firm after this date.

Taylor & Perry

Joseph Taylor (1767-1827), entered two marks in Birmingham prior to 1800.

1813: assay office guardian (until his death). Two further marks entered.

1818 (circa): Joseph Taylor's sister Dorothy married John Perry Jr.

1818-1827. The firm became a partnership: 'Taylors & Perry' (Joseph Taylor, John Taylor, John Perry). The 'IT' maker's mark was retained.

1818: 'Taylors and Perry, gold and silversmiths, jewellers, tortoiseshell and ivory box-makers, & cut glass manufacturer, Newhall St' (*Wrightson*). [see Appendix] 1827 (July): Death of Joseph Taylor. John Perry and his brother, Charles, are appointed, with Joseph's brother John, executors of his will.

1829 (July): Partnership mark of Taylor & Perry entered in Birmingham assay office register.

1831: 'Taylor and Perry, Gilt toy manufacturers, 8 Newhall Street' (*Wrightson*).

1832 (11.4): Further mark entered. The new firm retained Joseph Taylor's London showroom in Bouverie Street and moved its premises in Birmingham to 71 Newhall Street.

1838: John Perry elected assay office guardian. Continued until death circa 1864.

1842: Death of John Taylor.²² He had been elected an assay office guardian in 1832.

1849: Last listing, 'Taylor and Perry, Silversmiths and manufacturers of all kinds of fancy goods, 71, Newhall Street' (*White*).

22. PCC wills. Prob 11. 1842 Warwick. July 508, reel 1966.

John Tongue

1831 (4.7): Mark entered at Birmingham. Address: 24 Summer Row.

1835: 'John Tongue Snuff box and Scent box makers, 24 Summer Row.' (*Pigot*)

1838 (24.1): Moved to 78 Parade.

1844 (July) July 1846 (July): Marks re-entered.

1854 (20.4): Moved to 5 Howard Street.

1860 (circa): The firm, now 'John Tongue and Sons', moved to 189 Warstone Lane.

1863 (March): Marks re-entered.

1865: Last record of the firm (*Post Office*).

Joseph Willmore, Yapp & Co. Grimwade

no1859, *Culme* nos10324, 10325, 10581.

The business was founded by JW's grandfather, Thomas Willmore (died 1816) in partnership with James Alston, Colemore

Row. By 1802 Thomas Willmore had a wholesale outlet at 18 Thavies Inn, London.
 1804 (circa): JW's first Birmingham mark entered. Address: Bread Street.
 1805 (21.2): JW entered two small-worker's marks at Goldsmiths' Hall, London.²³
 1808: Appointed an assay office guardian. London addresses: 'Thomas Willmore, Wholesale Birmingham warehouse, 18 Thavies Inn'; 'Willmore & sons, silversmiths and jappanners, 14, Bouverie Street'; 'Willmores and Wilkes, patent-snuffer makers, 14, Bouverie Street' (*Holden*).
 1823: JW moved to 11 Thavies Inn, Holborn.
 1827: 'Joseph Willmore, Birmingham and Sheffield warehouse' at the above address (*Pigot*).

1832 (4.7): Another mark entered in Birmingham.
 1834 (5.11) and 1835 (16.8): Nine 'JW' marks entered in partnership with John Yapp and John Woodward.
 1840: The Willmore/Yapp & Co partnership entered two further London marks, also 'JW'.²⁴
 1841 census: John Yapp, aged 45, silversmith, in Camden Street, Birmingham, with a wife, Mary An[n], aged 35.
 1844 (31.12): Retirement of JW from the partnership. The date of JW's death remains uncertain.²⁵
 1845 (24.5): Yapp & Woodward registered their first independent mark using the 13 Bread Street address. A plateworker's mark was entered in London on 17.6.1846.²⁶
 1845: John Yapp elected an assay office

guardian and remained so until his death.
 1847 (24.1): Death of John Woodward, aged 47. John Yapp continued the business in partnership with John Richard Chinn as John Yapp & Co.²⁷
 1854 (25.12): The partnership between Yapp and Chinn was dissolved. John Yapp continued in business on his own.²⁸ Yapp & Co is last recorded in directories for London and Birmingham in 1855. 'John Yapp & Co, silversmiths, fancy goods, pencil case and snuff box mfrs, 13 Bread St, h.173 Camden St' (*Post Office*).

23. Grimwade no1859.

24. Culme nos10324, 10325.

25. Information about the retirement taken from Culme: his source *London Gazette* 1845, p1027. Delieb confuses Joseph Willmore, silversmith, with Joseph Wilmore, of Summer Lane, glass button manufacturer.

26. Culme no10581.

27. Culme.

28. Culme: *London Gazette* 1855, p1435.

Conclusion: a grandiose project

The material presented here has been accumulated in pursuit of a more grandiose project namely, to provide a comprehensive survey of views on silver souvenir wares – 'castle tops' – and their makers in the period 1825–1880. 'The subject appears to be inexhaustible', so wrote Coys and Henrywood of their survey of patterns on blue-and-white pottery. Although this survey is concerned only with topographical scenes, the Birmingham toymen were no less indefatigable than the potters of Stoke-on-Trent, with the result that the variety of views to be logged and identified seems endless. Furthermore, to be comprehensive, such a work would need to include the products of other parts of the country, especially the high quality engraved boxes made in Edinburgh and a small number of boxes from London. To that ambitious end, this article is intended not simply to be an indication of work in progress but also to act as a 'toe in the water' to test the warmth of enthusiasm for such a project.

Acknowledgements

I should like to thank all those who have assisted with this project including David Beasley, Birmingham Central Library, John Bourdon-Smith, Brighton and Hove Libraries, Kenneth Bull, Peter Gaunt, Mark Hamilton, Michael Prevezer, Rupert Slingsby, Elizabeth Strong, The National Trust and the household staff at Anglesey Abbey, Peter Waldron, and Warwickshire County Record Office. In particular I should thank Mrs. Phyllis Benedikz and the Birmingham Assay Office for allowing me access to the Maker's Mark Registers and Brian Beet for enthusiastic support and generosity in supplying photographs of items of stock. Although I disagree with some of the conclusions and some of the factual detail of Eric Delieb's 'Silver Boxes', this work has long been a guide and an inspiration in my work on the Birmingham boxmakers.

Appendix

TAYLORS AND PERRY 1818 MADE AT THIS MANUFACTORY	Locketts and Ear Rings Rings and Bracelets Necklaces and Beads Buckles and Clasps IVORY, TORTOISE-SHELL, AND AMBER Snuff Boxes Tooth-pick Cases Instrument Cases Tongue Scrapers Segar Cases Spectacles SILVER Snuff Boxes Scent Boxes Patch Boxes Pencil Cases Tooth-picks and Cases Thimbles Ditto, with Cushions Ditto, with Bottles Ditto, with Yard Measure and Bottle	Butter Knives Cbeese Knives and Scoops Desert Knives and Forks Fruit Knives Oyster Knives Fish Knives Sugar Scoops Caddee Scoops and Shells Salt Spoons Mustard Spoons Buckles Buttons and Studs Shirt Buckles Scissors and Sheaths Bell Corals and Garnishers Boatswains Calls Watch Chains, Seals and Keys Watch Pendants and Buttons Tobacco Stoppers Segar and Pipe Tubes Toddy Ladles Punch Ladles Cream Ladles	Funnells Nutmeg Graters Decanter Lables and Corks Instrument Cases Bottle Cases Corkscrews Smelling Bottles Muffineers Spectacles and Eye-glasses Tooth Brushes Tongue Scrapers Tooth Instrument Cases Bodkins Etwees Inkstands and Pens Combs Buckles, Clasps, and Brooches Fillagree Ornaments Caps for Sticks, Whips, &c. Purses, Springs, and Runners, and Articles in Morocco, mounted GLASS	Trinket Bottles Smelling Bottles Muffineers Ink and Sand Glasses Dram Bottles GILT Watch Chains Ditto Keys Seals Locketts Brooches and Pins Rings Bracelets Neck Chains Buckles and Clasps Buttons and Studs Watch Pendants Combs Purses, Springs, and Runners Beads Fillagree Ornaments Mounted Silk and Hair Chains Steel Purses and Springs
---	---	--	---	--