

HALLMARKS

ON GOLD, SILVER & PLATINUM

THE ASSAY OFFICES OF GREAT BRITAIN



London



Birmingham



Sheffield



Edinburgh

GUARANTEEING THE QUALITY OF PRECIOUS METALS SINCE 1327

HALLMARKING

AN INTRODUCTION

In the UK, hallmarking has a long history, dating back nearly 700 years, and representing the earliest form of consumer protection. The consumer benefits in many ways.

Hallmarks are small markings stamped on gold, silver and platinum articles. A hallmark means that the article has been independently tested and guarantees that it conforms to all legal standards of purity (fineness). These tests are carried out only by an Assay Office, of which there are four in the UK - London, Birmingham, Sheffield and Edinburgh.

The Hallmarking Act 1973 changed on 1 January 1999 and allows articles of higher and lower standards of fineness to be sold. This brings UK law into line with European law. Consumers may now choose from a much wider range of goods but continue to benefit from the same level of protection.

It is illegal for any trader to sell or describe a precious metal article as gold, silver or platinum unless it is hallmarked. Gold articles weighing less than 1 gram, silver articles weighing less than 7.78 grams and platinum articles weighing less than half a gram are exempt from hallmarking.

CURRENT UK HALLMARKS

Below are some examples of the types of marks which are being stamped on articles of gold, silver and platinum in the UK.



SPONSOR'S OR MAKER'S MARK

The registered mark
of the sponsor or
maker of the piece



METAL AND FINENESS (PURITY) MARK

A millesimal number
which indicates the
precious metal
content. The shape
of the shield
identifies the metal
as gold, silver or
platinum



COMMON CONTROL MARK

A mark applied by
countries which are
signatories to the
International
Convention on
Hallmarking



TRADITIONAL FINENESS (PURITY) MARK

A traditional
symbol denoting
one of the older
precious metal
finenesses



ASSAY OFFICE MARK

The mark of the
Assay Office
where the piece
was tested



DATE MARK

A letter
representing the
year in which the
piece was
hallmarked



COMMEMORATIVE MARK

Struck on the
occasion of a
special event

CURRENT UK HALLMARKS

COMPULSORY MARKS

Modifications to the Hallmarking Act, effective from 1 January 1999, have changed the way articles made of precious metal are hallmarked. The UK Hallmark now comprises a minimum of three **compulsory** symbols.

SPONSOR'S OR MAKER'S MARK




















Indicates the maker or sponsor of the article. In Britain, this mark consists of at least two letters within a shield, and no two marks are the same.

METAL AND FINENESS (PURITY) MARK

Indicates the precious metal content of the article, and that it is not less than the fineness indicated. Since 1999, all finenesses are indicated by a millesimal number (eg 375 is 9ct). This number is contained in a shield depicting the precious metal.

ASSAY OFFICE MARK

Indicates the particular Assay Office at which the article was tested and marked. There are now four British Assay Offices - London, Birmingham, Sheffield and Edinburgh. There were other Assay Offices in former times.

SPONSOR'S OR MAKER'S MARK	METAL AND FINENESS (PURITY) MARK*			ASSAY OFFICE MARK
	Gold	Silver	Platinum	
				 London
				 Birmingham
				 Sheffield
				 Edinburgh
				
				

*The Hallmark guarantees that the purity of the metal is at least that indicated by the Fineness Number.

CURRENT UK HALLMARKS

VOLUNTARY MARKS

TRADITIONAL FINENESS (PURITY) MARK

Prior to 1999, silver and platinum finenesses were indicated by symbols (see pages 10 and 11).



COMMON CONTROL MARK

This is a mark used by countries which are signatories to the International Convention on Hallmarks (see pages 6 and 7).



DATE MARK

Until 1999, a date letter indicating the year of hallmarking was compulsory. This is no longer so, but it can be applied voluntarily in addition to the compulsory marks (see pages 12 to 16).



1999	Z	2002	C	2005	F	2008	I
2000	A	2003	D	2006	G	2009	J
2001	B	2004	E	2007	H	2010	K

COMMEMORATIVE MARK

One example is the Millennium Mark which will be applied to precious metals by the four UK Assay Offices during 1999 and 2000 (see page 17).



CURRENT INTERNATIONAL HALLMARKS

CONVENTION MARKS

The United Kingdom has been a signatory to the International Convention on Hallmarks since 1972. This means that UK Assay Offices can strike the Convention Hallmark which will then be recognised by all member countries in the International Convention. Conversely, Convention Hallmarks from other member countries are legally recognised in the UK. Articles bearing the Convention Hallmark do not have to be re-hallmarked in the UK.

An example of a Convention Hallmark:



SPONSOR'S OR
MAKER'S MARK



COMMON
CONTROL MARK

925

FINENESS
(PURITY) MARK

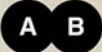













ASSAY OFFICE
MARK

The Assay Office marks of member countries of the Convention are illustrated opposite. The shield design around the Assay Office mark sometimes varies according to whether the article is gold, silver or platinum. The key mark to look for is the Common Control Mark. The three other marks must also be present.

CURRENT INTERNATIONAL HALLMARKS

CONVENTION MARKS

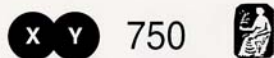
SPONSOR'S OR MAKER'S MARK	COMMON CONTROL MARK			FINENESS (PURITY) MARK*			ASSAY OFFICE MARK				
	Gold	Silver	Platinum	Gold	Silver	Platinum					
				375	800	950					
				585	925		Austria	Czech Republic	Denmark		
				750							
							Finland	Ireland	Netherlands	Norway	
											
							Portugal	Sweden	Switzerland		
											
							London	Birmingham	Sheffield	Edinburgh	
							United Kingdom				

*The Hallmark guarantees that the purity of the metal is at least that indicated by the Fineness Number.

CURRENT INTERNATIONAL HALLMARKS

MARKING IN OTHER COUNTRIES

Since 1st January 1999 following a ruling of the European Court of Justice, the **UK** is required to accept (and not re-hallmark) other European national hallmarks which provide an equivalent guarantee to consumers. It is the opinion of the British Hallmarking Council that such hallmarks must contain a Sponsor's or Maker's Mark, a Fineness (Purity) Mark and an Assay Office Mark. For example:



The complete hallmark must guarantee that the purity of the metal is at least that indicated by the Fineness Number.

Some European national hallmarks incorporate the Fineness (Purity) Mark in the Assay Office Mark. For example:



Using these criteria, the national hallmarks of **Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Portugal and Switzerland**, without the Common Control Mark, are acceptable in the **UK**.

Some European hallmarking countries are not members of the International Convention.

Spain has a dual system of Assay Office hallmarking and licensed manufacturers' marking. The only Spanish hallmarks which conform to the British Hallmarking Council criteria are:



In the opinion of the British Hallmarking Council, the national laws of **Belgium** and **France** do not presently provide an equivalent guarantee. Some European hallmarking countries are in the process of amending national laws in the light of the European Court of Justice ruling or are in the process of joining the International Convention (ie **France**). Consequently, the list of acceptable Assay Office marks is likely to be extended according to these developments.

Italy, Germany, Greece and **Luxembourg** do not have independent systems of guarantee. Articles from these countries must be hallmarked in the **UK** or Convention hallmarked in one of the Convention countries.

National hallmarks of countries outside the European Economic Area are not legal in the **UK**. Articles from these countries must be hallmarked in the **UK** or Convention hallmarked in one of the Convention countries.

HISTORIC UK HALLMARKS

In 1238, Henry III commanded the Mayor of London to appoint six faithful and discreet goldsmiths who would be responsible for ensuring standards for gold and silver articles. Later, Edward I passed a statute requiring not only that all silver articles were to be of sterling standard, the same as coinage, but also that they were to be assayed by the Wardens of the Goldsmiths' Guild and marked with a leopard's head.

In 1327 the Goldsmiths' Guild received its first Royal Charter from Edward III which confirmed its responsibility for assaying and marking. The Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths, as the guild was later called, is still responsible for the London Assay Office.

Under another statute in 1363, makers were ordered to stamp their own distinguishing marks alongside the leopard's head. Originally, the maker's mark took the form of a device, such as a cross or a fish; later, it became the practice to use the initials of the worker or firm.

In December 1478, the company appointed a salaried Assayer and compelled makers to bring their completed silverwares to Goldsmiths' Hall to be assayed and marked before they were offered for sale. This practice has continued to the present day and is the origin of the word 'hallmark'.

In the same year, an additional mark - the date letter - was introduced by the Company. This consisted of a letter of the alphabet which was changed annually. When one alphabet cycle was completed, the style of the letter or its surrounding shield was altered.

Hallmarking continued during succeeding centuries at Goldsmiths' Hall and at the Assay Offices which later opened in other towns, such as Newcastle, Exeter and York, where there were working goldsmiths and silversmiths. In Scotland, there were goldsmiths working at a date as early as in England. The earliest records pertain to the goldsmiths of Edinburgh. An Act of Parliament was passed in 1773 establishing Assay Offices in Birmingham and Sheffield.

Several of the provincial offices have now closed - Newcastle, Exeter and York in the 19th century, Chester in 1962 and Glasgow in 1964. The Dublin Assay Office, whose origins date from the early 17th century, continues to operate in Ireland.









HISTORIC UK HALLMARKS

FROM 1975 - 1998 (31.12.98)

ASSAY OFFICE MARK

	UK	IMPORTED		
		GOLD	SILVER	PLATINUM
LONDON	 GOLD, SILVER & PLATINUM			
BIRMINGHAM	 GOLD, SILVER & PLATINUM			
SHEFFIELD	 GOLD, SILVER & PLATINUM			
EDINBURGH	 GOLD, SILVER & PLATINUM			
















FINENESS (PURITY) MARK

	UK	IMPORTED
GOLD	9 CARAT  375	375
	14 CARAT  585	585
	18 CARAT  750	750
	22 CARAT  916	916
	STERLING SILVER	MARKED IN ENGLAND 
STERLING SILVER	MARKED IN SCOTLAND 	925
BRITANNIA SILVER	MARKED IN SCOTLAND 	958
PLATINUM		950


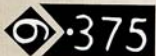






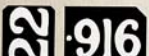






HISTORIC UK HALLMARKS

PRIOR TO 1975

ASSAY OFFICE MARK

	UK		IMPORTED	
			GOLD	SILVER
LONDON	 GOLD & STERLING SILVER	 BRITANNIA SILVER		
BIRMINGHAM	 GOLD	 SILVER		
SHEFFIELD	 GOLD	 SILVER		
EDINBURGH	 GOLD & SILVER			

FINENESS (PURITY) MARK

	UK		IMPORTED
GOLD	9 CARAT		
	14 CARAT		
	18 CARAT ENGLAND		
	18 CARAT SCOTLAND		
	22 CARAT ENGLAND		
	22 CARAT SCOTLAND		
SILVER	STERLING MARKED IN ENGLAND		
	MARKED IN SCOTLAND		
BRITANNIA			

HISTORIC HALLMARKS

LONDON FROM 1678-1974

1678 a	1698 t	1720 e	1739 d	1761 f	1784 i	1805 k	1827 m	1848 p	1871 q	1893 s	1915 u	1936 a	1958 c
1679 b	1699 s	1721 f	1740 e	1762 g	1785 k	1806 l	1828 n	1849 o	1872 t	1894 t	1916 a	1937 b	1959 d
1680 c	1700 d	1722 g	1741 f	1763 h	1786 l	1807 m	1829 o	1850 p	1873 s	1895 u	1917 h	1938 c	1960 e
1681 d	1701 e	1723 h	1742 g	1764 i	1787 m	1808 n	1830 p	1851 o	1874 t	1896 a	1918 e	1939 d	1961 f
1682 e	1702 f	1724 i	1743 h	1765 j	1788 n	1809 o	1831 q	1852 r	1875 u	1897 b	1919 d	1940 e	1962 g
1683 f	1703 g	1725 k	1744 i	1766 k	1789 o	1810 p	1832 r	1853 s	1876 a	1898 c	1920 t	1941 f	1963 h
1684 g	1704 h	1726 u	1745 k	1767 m	1790 p	1811 q	1833 s	1854 t	1877 b	1899 d	1921 f	1942 e	1964 i
1685 h	1705 i	1727 m	1746 l	1768 n	1791 q	1812 r	1834 t	1855 u	1878 c	1900 e	1922 g	1943 h	1965 l
1686 i	1706 j	1728 n	1747 m	1769 o	1792 r	1813 s	1835 u	1856 v	1879 d	1901 f	1923 h	1944 i	1966 k
1687 j	1707 k	1729 o	1748 n	1770 p	1793 s	1814 t	1836 v	1857 w	1880 e	1902 g	1924 i	1945 k	1967 n
1688 k	1708 l	1730 p	1749 o	1771 q	1794 t	1815 u	1837 w	1858 x	1881 f	1903 h	1925 j	1946 l	1968 m
1689 l	1709 m	1731 q	1750 p	1772 r	1795 u	1816 a	1838 x	1859 y	1882 g	1904 i	1926 k	1947 m	1970 p
1690 m	1710 n	1732 r	1751 q	1773 s	1796 a	1817 b	1839 y	1860 z	1883 h	1905 k	1927 l	1948 n	1971 q
1691 n	1711 o	1733 s	1752 r	1774 t	1797 b	1818 c	1840 z	1861 a	1884 i	1906 l	1928 m	1949 o	1972 r
1692 o	1712 p	1734 t	1753 s	1775 u	1798 c	1819 d	1841 a	1862 b	1885 j	1907 m	1929 n	1950 p	1973 s
1693 p	1713 q	1735 v	1754 t	1776 a	1799 d	1820 e	1842 b	1863 c	1886 k	1908 n	1929 o	1951 q	1974 t
1694 q	1714 r	1736 w	1755 u	1777 b	1800 e	1821 f	1843 c	1864 d	1887 l	1909 o	1930 p	1952 r	1974 t
1695 r	1715 s	1737 x	1756 v	1778 c	1801 f	1822 g	1844 d	1865 e	1888 m	1910 p	1931 q	1953 s	1974 t
1696 s	1716 t	1738 y	1757 w	1779 d	1802 g	1823 h	1845 e	1866 f	1889 n	1911 q	1932 r	1954 t	1974 t
1697 t	1717 u	1739 z	1758 x	1780 e	1803 h	1824 i	1846 f	1867 g	1890 p	1912 r	1933 s	1955 u	1974 t
1697 u	1718 v	1740 a	1759 y	1781 f	1804 i	1825 k	1847 g	1868 h	1891 q	1913 s	1934 t	1956 v	1974 t
1697 v	1719 w	1741 b	1760 z	1782 g	1804 j	1826 l	1847 h	1869 i	1892 r	1914 t	1935 u	1957 w	1974 t


























































































































































































































HISTORIC HALLMARKS

BIRMINGHAM: FROM 1773-1974

		1793		1816					1859		1881		1902				1947		1969	
1773	A	1794	W	1817	t	1838			1860	L	1882	h	1903	d	1925	A	1948	Y	1970	V
1774	B	1795	X	1818	U	1839			1861	M	1883	f	1904	e	1926	B	1949	Z	1971	W
1775	C	1796	Y	1819	V	1840			1862	N	1884	R	1905	f	1927	C			1972	X
1776	D	1797	Z	1820	W	1841			1863	O	1885	i	1906	g	1928	D	1950	A		
1777	E	1798	a	1821	x	1842			1864	P	1886	m	1907	h	1929	E	1951	B	1973	Y
1778	F	1799	b	1822	y	1843			1865	Q	1887	n	1908	i	1930	F	1952	C		
1779	G	1800	C	1823	Z	1844			1866	R	1888	O	1909	k	1931	G	1953	D	1974	Z
1780	H	1801	d	1824	a	1845			1867	S	1889	p	1910	l	1932	H	1954	E		
1781	I	1802	e	1825	B	1846			1868	T	1890	q	1911	m	1933	I	1955	F		
1782	K	1803	f	1826	C	1847			1869	U			1912	n	1934	K	1956	G		
1783	L	1804	g	1827	D	1848	Z		1870	V	1891	t	1913	O	1935	L	1957	H		
			1805	h	1828						1871	w	1892	S	1914	P	1936	M	1958	I
1784	M	1806	i	1829	F	1849	A	1872	X	1893	t	1915	q	1937	N	1937	N	1959	J	
1785	N	1807	j	1830	G	1850	B	1873	Y	1894	u	1916	r	1938	O	1960	A			
			1808	k	1831		1851	C	1874	Z	1895	v	1917	S	1939	P	1961	M		
1786	O	1809	I	1832	J	1852	D				1896	w	1918	t	1940	Q	1962	N		
1787	P	1810	m	1833	K	1853	E	1875	a	1897	x	1919	u	1941	R	1963	O			
1788	Q	1811	n				1854	F	1876	b	1898	v	1920	V	1942	S	1964	P		
1789	R	1812	O	1834	L	1855	G	1877	C	1899	z	1921	w	1943	T	1965	Q			
1790	S	1813	P	1835	M	1856	H	1878	d			1922	X	1944	U	1966	R			
1791	T	1814	Q	1836	N	1857	I	1879	e	1900	a	1923	y	1945	V	1967	S			
1792	U	1815	r	1837	D	1858	J	1880	f	1901	b	1924	Z	1946	W	1968	T			

















HISTORIC HALLMARKS

SHEFFIELD FROM 1773-1774

	1773		1816		1838		1860		1882		1904		1925		1948		1971		
	1773		1817		1839		1861		1883		1905		1926		1949		1972		
	1774		1818			1840		1862		1884		1906		1927		1950		1973	
	1775		1819		1840		1863		1885		1907		1928		1951		1974		
	1776		1820		1841		1864		1886		1908		1929		1952				
	1777		1821		1842		1865		1887		1909		1930		1953				
	1778		1822		1843		1866		1888		1910		1931		1954				
	1779		1823		1844		1867		1889		1911		1932		1955				
	1780		1824		1845			1868			1913		1934		1956				
	1781		1825		1846		1868			1913		1934		1957					
	1782		1826		1847		1869		1891			1914		1935		1958			
	1783		1827		1848		1870		1892		1914		1936		1959				
	1805		1828		1849		1871		1893		1915		1937		1960				
	1784		1829		1850		1872		1894		1916		1938		1961				
	1785		1830		1851		1873		1895		1917		1939		1962				
	1808		1831		1852		1874		1896			1918		1940		1963			
	1786		1832		1853		1875		1897		1918		1941		1964				
	1787		1833		1854		1876		1898		1919		1942		1965				
	1788			1835		1855		1877		1899		1920		1943		1966			
	1789		1834		1856		1878		1900		1921		1944		1967				
	1790		1835		1857		1879		1901		1922		1945		1968				
	1791		1836		1858		1880		1902		1923		1946		1969				
	1792		1837		1859		1881		1903		1924		1947		1970				

HISTORIC HALLMARKS

EDINBURGH FROM 1705-1974

	1727	X	1750	U	1772	S	1793	N	1816	K	1838	Ⓞ	1860	D	1883	b	1905		1928	X	1951	7			
1705	A	1728	Y	1751	W	1773	Ⓜ	1794	O	1817	l	1839	Ⓞ	1861	E	1884	C	1906	A	1929	Y	1952	W		
1706	B	1729	Z	1752	Ⓞ	1774	U	1795	P	1818	m	1840	Ⓜ	1862	F	1885	Ⓞ	1907	B	1930	Z	1953	Ⓞ		
1707	C	1730	A	1753	Y	1775	Ⓜ	1796	Q	1819	n	  	1841	Ⓜ	1863	C	1886	e	1908	C	1931	Ⓜ	1954	Ⓜ	
1708	D	1731	B	1754	Z	1776	Ⓜ	1797	R	1820	o	1842	Ⓜ	1864	H	1887	f	1909	D	1932	Ⓞ	1955	Z		
1709	E	1732	C	1755	A	1777	Ⓜ	1798	S	1821	p	1843	Ⓜ	1865	I	1888	Ⓞ	1910	E	1933	Ⓞ	1956	A		
1710	F	1733	D	1756	B	1778	Z	1799	T	1822	q	1844	Ⓜ	1866	K	1889	h	1911	F	1934	Ⓞ	1957	B		
1711	G	1734	E	1757	C	1779	Ⓜ	1800	U	1823	r	1845	Ⓜ	1867	L	1890	i	1912	G	1935	Ⓞ	1958	Ⓞ		
1712	H	1735	F	1758	D	1780	A	1801	V	1824	s	1846	Ⓜ	1868	M	 	1891	R	1913	H	1936	Ⓞ	1959	Ⓞ	
1713	I	1736	G	 	1781	B	1802	W	1825	t	1847	Ⓞ	1870	O	1892	l	1914	I	1937	Ⓞ	1960	Ⓞ			
1714	K	1737	H	1759	C	1782	C	1803	X	1826	u	1848	Ⓜ	1871	P	1893	Ⓜ	1915	K	1938	Ⓞ	1961	Ⓞ		
1715	L	1738	J	1760	F	1783	D	1804	Y	1827	v	1849	Ⓞ	1872	Q	1894	Ⓜ	1916	L	1939	Ⓞ	1962	Ⓞ		
1716	M	1739	K	1761	G	  	1805	Z	1828	w	1850	Ⓞ	1873	R	1895	o	1917	M	1940	Ⓞ	1963	Ⓞ			
1717	N	1740	L	1762	H	1784	E	1806	a	1829	x	1851	Ⓞ	1874	S	1896	p	1918	N	1941	Ⓞ	1964	A		
1718	O	1741	M	1763	I	1785	F	1807	b	1830	y	1852	Ⓞ	1875	T	1897	q	1919	O	1942	Ⓞ	1965	K		
1719	P	1742	N	1764	J	  	1808	c	1831	z	1853	Ⓞ	1876	U	1898	t	1920	P	1943	N	1966	Ⓞ			
1720	Q	1743	O	1765	K	1786	G	1809	d	1832	A	1854	Ⓞ	1877	V	1899	Ⓞ	1921	R	1944	Ⓞ	1967	Ⓞ		
1721	R	1744	P	1766	Ⓞ	1787	G	1810	e	1833	B	1855	Ⓞ	1878	W	1900	f	1922	U	1945	Ⓞ	1968	Ⓞ		
1722	S	1745	Q	1767	Ⓞ	1788	H	1811	f	1834	Ⓞ	1856	Ⓞ	1879	Y	1901	u	1923	S	1946	Ⓞ	1969	Ⓞ		
1723	T	1746	R	1768	Ⓞ	1789	U	1812	g	1835	Ⓞ	1857	Ⓞ	1880	X	1902	Ⓞ	1924	T	1947	Ⓞ	1970	Ⓞ		
1724	U	1747	S	1769	Ⓞ	1790	K	1813	h	1836	Ⓞ	1858	Ⓞ	1881	Z	1903	Ⓞ	1925	U	1948	Ⓞ	1971	Ⓞ		
1725	V	1748	T	1770	Ⓞ	1791	L	1814	i	1837	Ⓞ	1859	Ⓞ	1882	a	1904	Ⓞ	1926	V	1949	Ⓞ	1972	R		
1726	W	1749	U	1771	Ⓞ	1792	M	1815	j									1927	W	1950	Ⓞ	1973-4	S		

OTHER HISTORIC HALLMARKS

FORMER ASSAY OFFICE MARKS

Several of the larger provincial cities had Assay Offices which are now closed. Each had its distinctive mark, some of the more important of which are shown below.



CHESTER - CLOSED 1962



EXETER - CLOSED 1883



GLASGOW - CLOSED 1964



NEWCASTLE - CLOSED 1884

There is also an Assay Office in Dublin and marks struck there before 1st April 1923 are recognised as approved British hallmarks. The Dublin mark is a figure of Hibernia.



DUBLIN

ASSAY OFFICE MARK

From 1975 all United Kingdom Assay Offices used a common Date Letter as shown below.

1975	A	1978	D	1981	G	1984	K	1987	N	1990	Q	1993	T	1996	W
1976	B	1979	E	1982	H	1985	L	1988	O	1991	R	1994	U	1997	X
1977	C	1980	F	1983	J	1986	M	1989	P	1992	S	1995	V	1998	Y

OTHER HISTORIC HALLMARKS

DUTY MARKS

Between 1784 and 1890 an excise duty on gold and silver articles was collected by the Assay Offices and a mark depicting the Sovereign's head was struck to show that it had been paid. These are two examples.



GEORGE 111



VICTORIA

COMMEMORATIVE MARKS

There are 4 other marks to commemorate special events: the Silver Jubilee of King George V and Queen Mary in 1935, the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953, her Silver Jubilee in 1977, and the new Millennium.



CORONATION
1953



SILVER JUBILEE
1935



SILVER JUBILEE
1977



MILLENNIUM
MARK

CHECKLIST

When checking Hallmarks remember that the Hallmark should indicate:

WHO?

is there a
Sponsor's or Maker's Mark?

WHAT?

is the metal
and fineness indicated?

WHERE?

is there an
Assay Office Mark?

If the answer is 'yes' to these three questions, three further questions arise:

1. Is it a UK Hallmark (see pages 4 and 5)?
2. If not, is it a Convention Hallmark - look for the Common Control Mark (CCM) (see pages 6 and 7)?
3. If not, check if the Assay Office Mark is one which the British Hallmarking Council recommends as equivalent (see pages 7 and 8).

Note: The question as to whether European national hallmarks provide an equivalent guarantee to UK hallmarks or Convention hallmarks can only be decided by the individual national courts. This booklet has been produced based on information available at July 1996.

Further Reading

A study of hallmarks can become fascinating and rewarding. For anyone who wishes to learn more about hallmarks the publications listed below are recommended. Your local library should be able to provide books on the subject.

Bradbury's Book of Hallmarks

Published by J.W. Northend Ltd., Sheffield

(A handy pocket reference book)

Jackson's Silver & Gold Marks of England Scotland & Ireland

Edited by Ian Pickford. Published by Antique Collectors' Club

(Also Jackson's Hallmarks, pocket edition)

The Directory of Gold & Silversmiths, 1838-1914

From the London Assay Office Registers, by John Culme

Published by Antique Collectors' Club

This booklet is published by The Assay Offices of Great Britain, who would be pleased to respond to any enquiry.

LONDON
The Assay Office
Goldsmiths' Hall
Gutter Lane
London
EC2V 8AQ

BIRMINGHAM
The Assay Office
Newall Street
Birmingham
B3 1SB

SHEFFIELD
The Assay Office
137 Portobello Street
Sheffield
S1 4DR

EDINBURGH
The Assay Office
Goldsmiths' Hall
24 Broughton Street
Edinburgh
EH1 3RH

Further information may be obtained from

The British Hallmarking Council
PO Box 18133
London
EC2V 8JY

The Convention's Secretariat
9-11 rue de Varembe
211 Geneva
Switzerland