

Deciphering English Diamond Registry

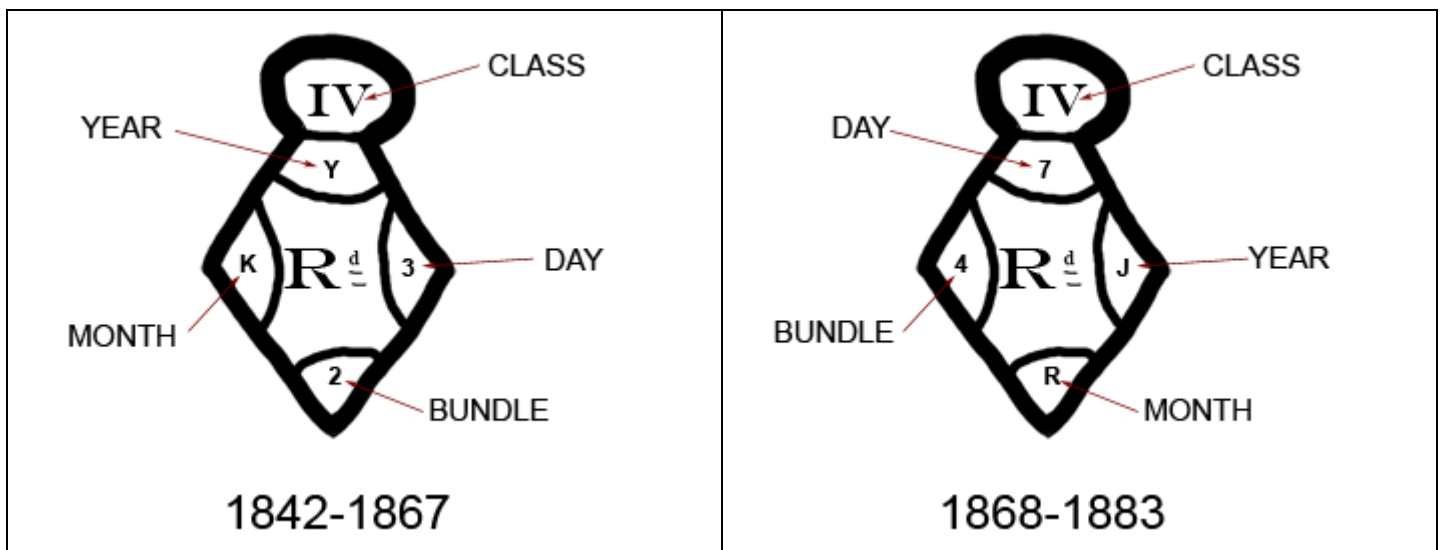
marks on White Ironstone

During the period 1842 to 1883 the British Patent Office issued a diamond mark along with the registration number when a design was registered (see the research guide [Registered Designs and Trade Marks](#) for details of registration). The mark identifies the type or class of material; the number of items included (referred to as bundles or packages); and the year, month, and day of registration. The center of the diamond is filled by the abbreviation "Rd" which signifies that the item is a formally patented or **R**egistered **D**esign.

When you begin your research on a piece of ironstone with an English Diamond Registry, the class of material will be shown in the circle on the top of the diamond. The Roman numeral "IV" will appear in the circle, as it is the Earthenware designation.

The location of the four pieces of information (year, month, day, and number of items in the bundle) contained within the diamond changed in 1868. Take a close look at the illustrations below to observe the changed locations. The year code also changed at this time. In determining the registration date for a particular item, the day will be stamped as an Arabic number, the month code can be found in Table below and the year codes can be found in Table.

Keep in mind that the date of design registration provides only a clue to the year the item was actually produced. Given that a design could not be registered if it was produced prior to application submission, the date information tells us only that the vessel bearing the mark was manufactured sometime after the date. If there was a strong enough market, the production runs could be ten to twenty years. However the market was so competitive, dynamic, and creative, and corporate structures and properties so fluid, that products displaying the registration back stamp likely endured for no more than a handful of years. Indeed, the Copyright of Design Act 1842 only extended initial copyright protection for a period of three years.



Month Codes			
January – C	April - H	July - I	October - B
February - G	May - E	August - R	November – K
March - W	June - M	September - D	December - A

Year Codes, 1842 -1883							
YEAR	CODE	YEAR	CODE	YEAR	CODE	YEAR	CODE
1842	X	1853	Y	1864	N	1875	S
1843	H	1854	J	1865	W	1876	V
1844	C	1855	E	1866	Q	1877	P
1845	A	1856	L	1867	T	1878	D
1846	I	1857	K	1868	X	1879	Y
1847	F	1858	B	1869	H	1880	J
1848	U	1859	M	1870	C	1881	E
1849	S	1860	Z	1871	A	1882	L
1850	V	1861	R	1872	I	1883	K
1851	P	1862	O	1873	F		
1852	D	1863	G	1874	U		

Exceptions: The letter R was used from 1 to 19 September 1857.
The letter W was used from 1 to 6 March 1878.