

A request from Mike Cowham for sightings of small Ivory Diptych Dials

Dear Dialling Friends,

I have spent some time trying to find the origin of some small Ivory Diptych Dials that are to be found in Museums and private collections. I have so far traced at least 15 of these. They have always been assumed to have been made in Nuremberg but I now doubt this very much.

The dials are small, about 3 × 4 cm. They have on their lids the picture of a flower, a deer or a dog. On the underside of the lid is usually a pretty flower. The dial itself has several features common to most,



but not all. These are the I numerals usually have a dot over them, a bit like iZ. The pairs of numerals, 10, 11, 12 often have a fine line between them a bit like 1-Z. Note also the use of the old Germanic Z for 2, but the modern 2 is sometimes found on them. The magnetic declination, about 12½° west, is about right for 1720.

The dial calibrations suggest a latitude of 46.5°. Two of the dials have the initials HG on them. (It has been suggested that this is Hans Gruber, but he was 150 years earlier, from Nuremberg, - unless there was another with that name.)

The latitude suggests that they were made perhaps in Austria, or a similar latitude possibly in Hungary or Switzerland.

What I would like from the Mailing List is any further sightings of these dials, in museums or private collections and any ideas as to the maker and his location. There are several in Austrian museums.

If you send me photographs, please reply off the Mailing List.

Thanks in advance for your kind help.

Mike Cowham.

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