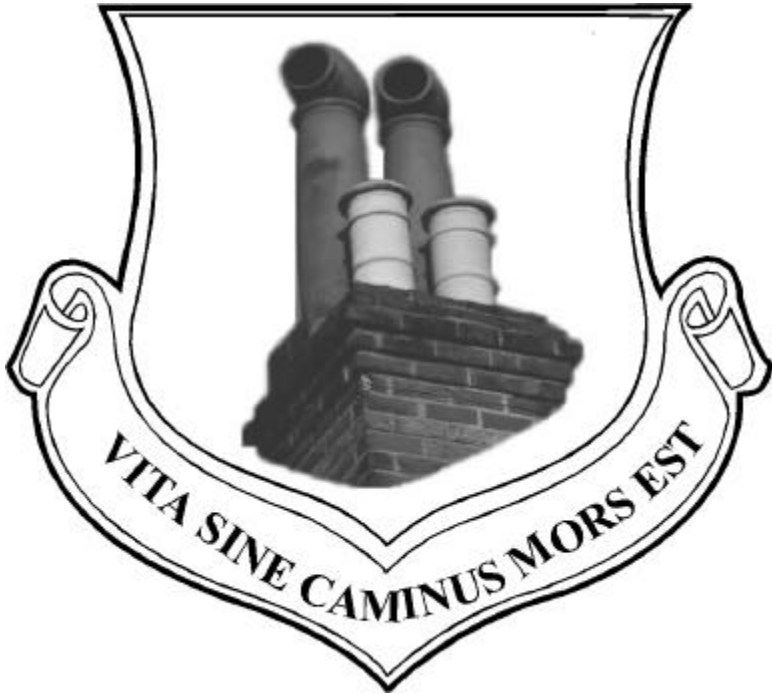


# Chimney Pot Spotting - A Leisure Pursuit



Stephen Young



**The Crest of the Central Pot Spotting Authority  
of Great Britain and Ireland**

## **Foreword**

This book concerns the creation of a mythology. Though perhaps not having quite the same scope as the mythology created for Middle Earth by J.R.R. Tolkien, the text presented here shares the aim of providing a background for a lost people. Now scattered and few in number like the Rangers of the North, the people in question are the chimney pot spotters of the once United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

Like any mythology, what follows cannot be considered to be strictly factual. The historical context within which the story of the pot spotters is placed is largely correct and verifiable, but the interplay between history and chimney pot spotting falls squarely within the realm of the myth.

Since the pot spotters themselves are part of the mythology, the names given to pots by spotters are mythical, as are the explanations of the origins of those names. The manufacturers names for pots (given in brackets) are factual. These have been taken from the list published in Valentine Fletcher's "Chimney Pots and Stacks" (Centaur Press) and the catalogue of the Red Bank Manufacturing Co Ltd.

If you are interested in the true history of chimney pots, then "Chimney Pots and Stacks" is the book for you. "Chimney Pot Spotting - A Leisure Pursuit" is not so much intended to inform as to entertain. If in so doing it causes a few more pairs of eyes to be raised above street level, perhaps the Reverend Fletcher would not altogether disapprove.

## **Mythology.**

It was among Victorians that pot spotting first became popular in the British Isles. The proliferation of terraced housing during Queen Victoria's reign meant that huge numbers of exciting new chimney pots appeared throughout the land. While train spotting became a pastime for the masses, pot spotting developed as an agreeable diversion for the well to do.

The Victorians were great namers of things. Following the example set by Linnaeus in the previous century, they were both disciplined and scientific. While such worthies as Darwin, Wallace and Huxley pondered the origin of species, and naturalists in general returned from all corners of the empire with varieties of bug to fill the new Natural History Museum in South Kensington, other Victorians turned their attention to the identification and classification of chimney pots.

The demand for chimney pots generated by the Victorian house building boom was met by numerous different manufacturers who sprang up all around the country. These manufacturers often had their own names for their products, so that pots of the same design were called different things by different makers, as they still are today. To a surprising extent though, manufacturers used the same names for pots. This was perhaps because they based their names on the geometry of the pots. Pots named in this way had self evident and rather pedestrian names such as "Square Based Octagon" and "Spiked Square."

By contrast, pot spotters were inclined to make up their own names for pots. These names were usually more imaginative, but any number of spotters might call the same pot any number of things. To start with it didn't much matter that one man's Manly Bovington was another man's Long Wraysbury or yet another man's Tilehurst Tallboy (women didn't get much of a look-in in those days, but that was all about to change). It was when pot spotting started to become competitive that the need for a systematised approach to the naming and grading of pots became pressing.

Being enthusiastic inventors and players of games, it wasn't long after the Victorians first took an interest in chimney pots that they started to devise scoring systems so that they could strive to out-do each other in their pot spotting exploits. Spotting societies were formed and groups of top hatted gentlemen with canes would venture forth on a Sunday after church to see who could find the best bedecked stack. Points were awarded according to the types of pot present, their size and colour, their rarity, what sort of attachments they had, and whether or not they were decorated in any way.

To begin with there were only a few pot spotting societies and each society devised its own system for awarding points to pots. As more societies were established, competitions between societies were arranged and decisions had to be made over whose scoring system should be adopted for a particular competition. The results of pot spotting competitions were soon being published in national newspapers and this stimulated further interest and led to the formation of more and more societies.

Not surprisingly, disputes between societies over the virtues of different pots became commonplace and occasionally bitter. People became so fanatical about spotting that they were sometimes referred to as being "completely potty." Things came to a head with the infamous "Brierley Hill incident" in 1880. The recently formed Broughton Park pot spotting society published a notice in the Manchester Guardian claiming to have found the most distinguished six pot stack in the country. The pots on this stack were listed as: one Tadcaster Stroat, one Dwarf Tuscan, one Cuthbertson's Tweedler, one Squat Bovington, one Proud Bovington with Jerkin-Head insert, and one Sub-Woolchester.

Prior to the announcement by the Broughton Park spotters it was generally accepted that the best six pot stack in the land was in Stanley Crescent, Notting Hill and had been identified by the Metropolitan pot spotting society. Sadly there is no record of the pots on this stack and it is thought to have been destroyed during the blitz in 1940.

The Metropolitan pot spotting society were not pleased at having their claim to fame eclipsed by a stack in Manchester. They had to concede that the Manchester stack did indeed boast an exceptional collection of fine pots. However, they pointed out that the stack was new and argued that the pots had been put in place with the deliberate intention of creating a high scoring stack. This they considered to be unethical and they demanded that the claim of the Broughton Park spotters should be disqualified. The Broughton Park spotters did not attempt to deny that the choice of pots on their stack was premeditated with pot spotting scores in mind, but they said that there was no rule against this and dismissed the objections of the Metropolitan society as sour grapes.

The disagreement between the two societies rumbled on for some time in the form of letters to the press. Alarmed at the intemperate tone of some of these letters and concerned at the example being set to the growing band of younger pot spotters, the Reverend James McPhail of Kingston upon Thames sought to bring an end to the dispute. He suggested that the societies should meet to resolve their differences. This they agreed to do, but the London society refused to travel to Manchester and the Manchester society refused to travel to London. McPhail therefore arranged a meeting at the club house of the Brierley Hill spotters in Birmingham. This venue had the advantage of being neutral territory between London and Manchester to which both societies could travel by train.

At 3.00 p.m. on the afternoon of September the third 1880, the Reverend James McPhail acting as chairman, convened the meeting between the Metropolitan pot spotting society and the Broughton Park pot spotting society. The proceedings got off to an inauspicious start when the president of the Metropolitan society, Stanley Brown, said that the top hat of his counterpart from the Broughton Park spotters looked like a Tadcaster Stoa. Mortimer Duckworth, the Broughton Park president, replied that the stature of his opposite number was akin to that of a Squat Bovington, and from then on things went from bad to worse. Witnesses from the Brierley Hill spotters who had come along to watch attested that by 3.05 p.m. the meeting had degenerated into fisticuffs.

Worse was to follow. After the meeting was abandoned and the Reverend McPhail had set off to return to Kingston in disgust, Brown felt that his honour had been so besmirched that he challenged Duckworth to a duel at dawn the next morning. Duckworth complained that Brown had started the unpleasantness, but Brown insisted that he had only insulted Duckworth's hat whereas Duckworth had insulted his person. Since the formation of an association against it in 1843, duelling had become less socially acceptable in Britain, but Duckworth wasn't about to be outaced by someone he viewed as a nancy-boy Southerner, so he agreed.

Unfortunately for Brown and Duckworth, they were unable to procure any traditional duelling pistols at such short notice. Instead they unwisely accepted the loan of a pair of Pinched Frame Colt 45 Peacemaker revolvers which had recently been brought back from the United States by a member of the Brierley Hill spotters. On the morning of September the fourth the two protagonists retired to a distance of a mere twenty paces from each other, turned, raised their arms, and at a signal from a third party, opened fire. They literally blew each other's heads off. As a bystander observed, "it was a very nasty business."

The Brierley Hill incident shocked the nation and led to an important change in the practice of chimney pot spotting, namely the participation of women. Since 1875 Miss Lucinda Small of Manchester had been petitioning the Broughton Park pot spotting society to be admitted as a member. Her initial application was turned down on the grounds that she was a minor. While many children were starting to take an active interest in pot spotting, they were not allowed to join the spotting societies. When she turned 21 in 1879 she applied again and was informed that the society "does not accept women as members."

In October 1880, Lucinda's case was taken up by the ever crusading Reverend McPhail who had kept in touch with the Broughton society following the Brierley Hill incident. He argued vigorously that women would exert a calming influence on the pot spotting societies and curb the sort of behaviour that had led to the recent tragedy. Suitably chastened by the demise of their president, the members of the Broughton society could do little else but agree. So it was that later in the same month, Lucinda became the first ever female member of a chimney pot spotting society. This achievement would probably have gained the approval of another Mancunain of the same age, namely Mrs Emmeline Pankhurst.

Women soon began to join the pot spotting societies in large numbers and, as the Reverend McPhail had predicted, the worst excesses of aggressive behaviour among male spotters were curbed. What the good Reverend did not foresee however was that pot spotting expeditions would become a popular excuse for illicit liaisons between supposedly respectable men and women. The back of a horse drawn carriage (and, towards the end of Victoria's reign, the back of a motor car) became a favourite venue for breaches of the seventh commandment. It was alleged by some who were trying to discredit the Women's Franchise movement that Mrs Pankhurst had been involved in such nefarious activities. They said that she wore a folded handkerchief in her breast pocket when she was in the mood to entertain advances from gentlemen other than her husband, and that this was the origin of the term "hanky-panky." These scurrilous allegations were entirely without foundation.

Although pot spotting was becoming ever more popular, the problem of devising a scoring system to which all the societies could subscribe, remained. The Reverend McPhail, perhaps feeling somewhat responsible for the Brierley Hill incident, was determined that disputes over the relative merits of chimney pots should never have such dire consequences again. To this end he proposed the establishment of a central pot spotting authority to which disputes could be referred for adjudication. He suggested furthermore, that judgement on these matters should be determined in relation to a standard scoring system, distilled from the various systems already being used by individual societies. This ground breaking proposal could well have made Lytton Strachey regard the Reverend as a strong candidate for inclusion in his book "Eminent Victorians", but he plumped for Gordon of Khartoum instead.

James McPhail was a busy man, and the demands of his parishioners at Kingston upon Thames meant that the time he had available to devote to secular activities such as the regulation of chimney pot spotting was limited. He therefore delegated the difficult task of inventing a simple, practical and equitable scoring system to a young friend of his, one Stephen Richards. Richards lived in Reading where he was employed at the Huntley and Palmers biscuit factory. He was a keen pot spotter and a member of the Whiteknights spotting society, and he set about his task with considerable gusto.

Most of the early scoring systems that societies had made up were based on size. The simplest type of chimney pot is a plain cylinder. Common names for this type include the “Tadcaster Stoot” and the “GFE Pot” (GFE being short for Grissom’s Flue Extension). A cylinder can differ in length (or in the case of chimney pots, height) and diameter. The height of a pot was often referred to as its “exuberance” presumably in reference to the additional flamboyance that it added to the appearance of a stack. When a pot spotter talked about the size of a pot, he would mean its diameter. Thus “a size six Stoot of four inch exuberance” would be a plain cylinder six inches in diameter and four inches tall. Some societies quibbled about “nominal exuberance” and “actual exuberance” the former being the true length of the pot and the latter being the length it actually stuck up above the level of the mortar which held it to the stack, but most societies didn’t concern themselves with that degree of detail.

Clearly points could be awarded for size and exuberance, for example ten points for every inch of size and ten for every inch of exuberance. On this basis a size five GFE of eight inch exuberance would be worth 130 points. In practice however it was not always easy for a spotter on the ground to make an accurate estimate of the size and exuberance of a pot high up on a stack.

Exuberance was sometimes measured by reference to courses of brick work. You can assume that a house brick is about three inches thick and that the mortar between courses is about half an inch thick. If you frame the pot that you are trying to measure between your thumb and forefinger, then keeping these fixed in position move your hand down so that you can see the bricks of the house through your digital frame of reference, you can count the number of courses between thumb and forefinger and calculate the height of the pot. This method was notoriously inaccurate since house bricks vary in size and it is easy to move your hand nearer or further away from you during the downshifting stage with a consequent magnifying or diminishing effect. Nevertheless the method provided a useful approximation and became known as the rule of thumb.

Sensing a potentially lucrative market, a number of enterprising manufacturers of optical instruments attempted to produce measuring devices for pot spotters. Regrettably none of these, including the impressively named “Fotherington’s Patent Chimney Pot Measuring Engine” and the “Smith & Blenkinsop Optical Potometer”, worked.

Size based scoring systems were not universally adopted because not everyone agreed that bigger is necessarily better. Many spotters argued that other factors such as design and decoration were far more worthy of points than mere scale was. In societies where this argument held sway, scoring was based on pot type. A simple cylindrical pot such as a Stoa might be worth ten points irrespective of its size and exuberance, while a more ornamental pot could be worth say forty points.

Unfortunately type based scoring systems were even more fraught with difficulties than size based ones. A large number of types were identified and there were arguments over what constituted a different type and what was merely a variant of a type. Arriving at a consensus over the criteria to be used for placing types in order of merit was difficult enough within individual societies, but to get agreement between societies when each one favoured the peculiarities of its local pot manufacturer was obviously going to be impossible.

And then there was the question of inserts and additions. Many pots were fitted with inserts or capped with ridge tiles to prevent down draughts. Some said that such modifications should be considered as enhancements and awarded more points. Others said that pots which incorporated anti down draught measures as an integral part of their design should be worth high scores but that pieces added on to simple pots as afterthoughts should be regarded as encumbrances which detracted from the clean lines of the original and should attract penalty points.

Richards soon realised that if he were to have any hope of establishing a scoring system that was universally acceptable, he would have to come up with something different to the existing size and type dependent schemes. His breakthrough came when, taking his lead from the American declaration of Independence, he held it self evident that all pots are created equal and that irrespective of size and shape all pots should be worth the same number of points. On the face of it this doesn't sound like much of a system but he went on to say that since variety is the spice of life, a stack which is peppered with different pots should be worth more than one which is garnished with pots which are the same. This seemed to be in accordance with natural justice since such combinations are rarer than clusters of identical pots. Favouritism for a local type is overcome and those who consider size to be important are put on an equal footing with those who believe that type is significant.

Having arrived at these two defining principles - the equality of pots and the importance of variety, the way was clear for Richards to set down his new scoring system which he did as follows.

“Any pot is worth 10 points.

Ten points are awarded for each Different Variety (DV) of pot.

Any metal attachment (be it major such as a cowl or minor such as chicken wire) is a Vile Addition (VA) and counts ten minus points.

The value of a stack can be calculated in three simple steps:

1. Count the total number of pots and multiply by ten.
2. Count the total number of different varieties and multiply by ten. Add the two totals together to arrive at the Unadulterated Value (UV) of the stack.

Note that if there is only one variety present, the number of different varieties is 0, not 1. If two varieties are present, the number of different varieties is 2. If a pot looks different it is different.

3. Count the total number of Vile Additions, multiply by ten and subtract the total from the Unadulterated Value to give the final Stack Value (SV).”

Note that at step 2, Richards refers to varieties rather than types. Squat, Mid and Manly Bovingtons are therefore regarded as different varieties by virtue of being different sizes, even though they are of the same type. The inclusion of the clause “if it looks different, it is different” at Step 2, meant that a pot with an insert counts as a different variety when compared with a pot of the same type without an insert. Inserts are therefore worth bonus points when they serve to make a pot different to its otherwise identical neighbour. Two identical pots with identical inserts do not attract a bonus.

Having formulated his scoring system, Richards was keen to test it. He tried it out on several stacks himself and found it to be satisfactory so he then went on to conduct more extensive field trials with the help of the Whiteknights pot spotting society.

The results of the field trials were very encouraging. Most members of the Whiteknights society liked the scoring system, found it easy to use and discovered that it gave rise to relatively few disputes when compared with previously used systems. Nevertheless one or two areas where fine tuning was necessary were identified.

Some spotters applied the “difference clause” as it soon became known, somewhat over zealously in their quest for bonus points. They argued that if the rule is strictly applied, pots which are damaged, discoloured or perhaps just set half an inch higher in the mortar than adjacent pots, should count as different. Most agreed that this interpretation was not within the spirit of the rule, but Richards amended it to say “if it looks different it is different unless it was intended to be the same.” Under this amendment a pot that is made from a different coloured material from an otherwise identical pot does count as different, as does a pot which is genuinely a couple of inches longer than its otherwise similar neighbours (Tadcaster Stoats of slightly different lengths are often seen in clusters for example). Weathered, stained or broken pots however do not count as different, and neither do pots which have simply been painted a different colour.

The treatment of Vile Additions proved to be another bone of contention. Since a Vile Addition modifies the appearance of a pot in the same way that an insert does, a Vile Addition could be worth bonus points. These bonus points were of course negated by the minus value of the Vile Addition itself, but most spotters felt that a Vile Addition should always be penalised rather than being allowed to have no net effect. Richards sympathised with the sentiment but was initially reluctant to complicate the rules to deal with the anomaly.

The Vile Additions problem was eventually resolved democratically by the Whiteknights Chimney Pot Spotting Society committee. Richards expressed his own misgivings about changing the rules, stressing the need for simplicity and pointing out that exceptions and special cases had been the undoing of many earlier scoring systems. While other committee members agreed that this was so, they maintained that for a scoring system to be generally acceptable it must be founded on right principles, and that awarding bonus points for Vile Additions simply wasn't right. The chairman put forward the proposition that a pot with a Vile Addition is essentially a damaged pot, and should be treated in the same way as a damaged pot as far as bonuses are concerned. This point clinched the argument, Richards himself was persuaded, and the committee was unanimous in its decision to resolve the problem by making a second amendment to the difference clause. Richards altered it to read "if it looks different it is different unless it was intended to be the same or is only made different by a Vile Addition."

Having completed his scoring system, Richards submitted it to the Reverend McPhail who had been asked by the spotting societies to set up the Central Pot Spotting Authority which he had envisaged. McPhail was delighted with the new system and asked Richards if he could now proceed to codify a definitive nomenclature for pots which could be adopted by the CPSA. Richards at first demurred on the grounds that his scoring system made standard names unnecessary and because he felt that regional variations in naming added colour to the art of spotting. McPhail said that his intention was not to replace the regional names but to have an approved set of names recognised by the CPSA so that in dialogue between spotters and the authority, everyone would know what they were talking about.

Colour, and the confusion over it, said McPhail, was one thing that illustrated the need for a definitive nomenclature. Quite a lot of varieties of pot had by then been named after spotters. This was apt to lead to misunderstandings if the surname of the spotter happened to be a colour, as in the cases of John Green, Nathaniel Brown, Lucinda Grey, Patrick White, Joanna Black, Rupert Lavender and Mary Pinkey. After these were named the Green Tadcaster, which is brown; the Brown Tadcaster, which is grey; the Grey Bovington, which is white; the White Bishop, which is black; the Black Tweedler, which is orange, and the Lavender-Pinkey Woolchester, which is yellow.

The supreme example of a misnomer arising from surnames is perhaps the label given to a variety of large diameter pot which was once commonly seen in the Black Country belching forth black smoke. For this reason the type was quite properly known as a Stinker, but a Stinker with two rings at the top as identified by Arthur Bright, David Green, George Smelley and Peter Old was dubbed the Bright Green Smelley Old Stinker. The pot was in fact red. Gareth Jones who had been with the others when the pot was spotted subsequently complained to the CPSA that his name should have been included. His complaint was not upheld.

Richards eventually agreed to work on a CPSA approved nomenclature. He made some progress, generally adopting what he considered to be the most interesting spotter's names, but he was destined never to complete the task. Meanwhile his scoring system had been tremendously well received by the societies and inter-society competitions flourished as never before. Competitions were arranged to identify not only the highest scoring stack but also the highest scoring detached house, the highest scoring terrace, and the highest scoring street.

A further development (literally) occurred in 1889 when George Eastman in America invented a roll of film which made photography possible for the interested amateur. Spotters began to take pictures (or pot shots, as they soon became known) of their finds and many assembled albums devoted to particular types. Spotters believe that one such specialist was Rudyard Kipling who is thought to have put together a fine collection of photographs of Cuthbertson's Tweedlers. Many maintain that early drafts of his poem "If" included the lines

"If you can bear to see a Cuthbertson's Tweedler broken,  
and stoop, and build it up again with worn out tools"

but Kipling later decided that the sight of a broken Cuthbertson's Tweedler was more than even a man could bear, and that anyway it didn't scan properly.

By the turn of the century, chimney pot spotting was at its height with thousands of photographs being submitted from around the world to the now permanently staffed CPSA headquarters in London, claiming records of one kind or another. Certificates were awarded to spotters who sent in pictures of high scoring stacks or stacks sporting large concentrations of particular types. As photography advanced so did trick photography and photo-retouching, so the authority had to look out for fraudulent claims substantiated by composite pictures.

The demise of chimney pot spotting came with the First World War. After the war the world would never be the same again. So many members had been killed in the trenches that the societies died out and their club houses, or potting sheds as they used to be known, were turned over to other purposes such as gardening.

Another of the many casualties of the great conflagration was Stephen Richards. The Reverend McPhail had died in 1901, the same year as Queen Victoria herself, and since then Richards had taken over as the leading light at the CPSA. When the war started he was in his fifties and was still working on the standard nomenclature. He had often joked that when his time came, he would like to be hit on the head by a falling Manly Bovington. He almost got his wish, but it is unlikely that he ever knew what hit him.

On the eighth of September 1915, 28 year old Otto Gustav Krantz was in charge of the bombs aboard Zeppelin L 13 commanded by Lieutenant Heinrich Mathy during its raid on London. The bombs dropped by L 13 killed 22 people including Stephen Richards who was staying at the CPSA headquarters. The headquarters building was razed to the ground, and thousands of photographs, files and records went up in flames. Among the photographs destroyed was one of a Bavarian Nierstiener Hauptpot submitted in 1901 by a youngster of fourteen who signed himself O.G. Krantz.

The pot spotting era might have been forgotten altogether were it not for a chance discovery in 1998 in a terraced house in Reading. When the author of this book took up his floorboards in an attempt to trace a leak in the pipe work for his central heating, he found that one of his floor joists had rotted through at its junction with the outside wall. This must have happened years earlier, since someone had shoved something under the end of the joist to support it.

On closer inspection this something turned out to be a couple of house bricks packed out with a sheaf of papers in an old manila folder. The papers had belonged to a previous owner of the house, one Stephen Richards. In addition to some signed receipts for bags of coal there were copious notes for what was clearly going to be a book entitled “Chimney Pot Spotting For Beginners.” After his death Richards’ house must have been sold and it was perhaps at this point that a builder came in to mend the floor and consigned Richards’ retirement project to the role of joist support for the best part of a century.

The remainder of the book you are now reading draws on the notes that Richards made and gives examples of some of the varieties of pot which he referred to and for which he had names in his uncompleted, unpublished and only partially preserved CPSA standard nomenclature. The CPSA has now been re-established and perhaps with the help of this book and the CPSA web site at <http://www.rsy1.demon.co.uk> pot spotting can begin to regain the popularity that it once enjoyed. Chimney pots are still being produced in new and in traditional designs by both small and large manufacturers. Antique pots are becoming valuable and many have been and are being exported to the United States.

Competition spotting can still be conducted in accordance with what is now called the Richards Standard Scoring Scheme (RSSS) which includes the first and second amendments to the difference clause. The only modification deemed necessary by the CPSA to bring the scheme up to date is that television aerials and metal central heating flue terminals must be considered as major Vile Additions when calculating the value of a stack.

One of the aims of pot spotters since spotting first became popular is to identify a stack which scores a “maximum”. A maximum is the best possible score that can be accommodated by a stack. To achieve a maximum, a stack must have a full complement of pots (i.e. one pot for each flue in the stack), each pot must be a different variety, and there must be no Vile Additions present. The bigger a stack is the more unlikely it is to score a maximum since the more pots there are the more likely it is that two of them will be the same. A stack with one flue is bound to score a maximum unless it has a Vile Addition. Two flue stack maxima are commonplace. For a four flue stack to score a maximum is much less common, particularly since Vile Additions in the form of television aerials now abound. A maximum on a six flue or larger stack is most unusual and therefore of course greatly sought after.

This book shows only a small number of the many types of chimney pot to be seen in Great Britain and Ireland. In deference to Stephen Richards and to the Whiteknights Pot Spotting Society of which he was a member, the photographs of chimney pots used as examples in this book were all taken in and around the town of Reading in Berkshire.

## Example

The pages which follow this example illustrate how the Richards Standard Scoring Scheme works. The pot names shown in bold are those names invented by spotters which now make up the CPSA Approved Nomenclature, again largely the legacy of Stephen Richards. The pot names shown in brackets are common manufacturers' names. Brackets containing the abbreviation NKE indicate that there is No Known Equivalent manufacturers' name. The notes after each example are for the most part taken from the notes that Richards wrote for "Chimney Pot Spotting for Beginners".



### **4 Biscuitmen** (Plain Squares) **& 1 Tapir Snout** (NKE)

Pots: 5

DVs (Different Varieties): 2

VAs (Vile Additions): 1

UV (Unadulterated Value): 70

SV (Stack Value): 60

Four Biscuitmen together on a stack like this do look a bit like a biscuit tin, but these pots were named after the Reading Football Team which was founded in 1898 and which in turn took its nickname from the town's association with Huntley and Palmers. How there came to be one Tapir Snout with these Biscuitmen is a mystery, but since two different varieties of pot are present, a twenty point bonus is scored. Sadly ten points must be deducted because of the television aerial attached to the stack, which is a Vile Addition. The Tapir Snout is of course named after the flexible proboscis of the South American ungulate mammal.



## **2 Tadcaster Stoats** (Plain Round Flue Linings)

Pots: 2  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 0  
UV: 20  
SV: 20

The Tadcaster Stoat is a cylinder with no rim or lip at the top. It is the simplest type of pot. Here we see a pair of male Stoats, about Size 5 with two inch Exuberance. Male Stoats are completely plain whereas females have rings.



## **3 Tuscans** (Plain Roll Tops)

Pots: 3  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 1  
UV: 30  
SV: 20

Taking its name from a Roman column with an unadorned shaft, the Tuscan in its simplest form is essentially a Tadcaster Stoat with a rim or rims. For this reason the Tuscan is known in some circles as a High-Brow Stoat. However this is somewhat misleading since some Tuscans also differ from Stoats by having flared bases.



**2 Bridlington Artichokes,**  
(Crown Tops), **5 Ringed**  
**Tuscans** (Roll Tops), **and**  
**1 Horrid Little Stump** (Metal  
Gas Flue Terminal).

Pots: 7  
DVs: 2  
VAs: 1  
UV: 90  
SV: 80

Three of the Ringed Tuscans above appear to be the same colour whereas of the two remaining, one looks lighter and the other darker. If the pots were made of differently coloured material then they would count as different varieties. Closer inspection revealed that in fact the pots were originally all the same colour and are merely affected to varying degrees by soot. The small pot at the right hand end of the stack is a Vile Addition -a metal central heating flue terminal sometimes known as a Horrid Little Stump.



**3 Crows Nests** (NKE).

Pots: 3  
DVs: 2  
VAs: 1  
UV: 50  
SV: 40

The three Crows Nests above are indeed reminiscent of a three masted vessel with the taller main mast in the middle. Because one pot is taller it counts as a different variety. Happily these Crows Nests are free of Vile Additions such as chicken wire which is often added to prevent real crows from building real nests.



**3 Sevastopol Redoubts: 2 Standard and 1 Stretched**  
(Square Based Octagonals)

Pots: 3  
DVs: 2  
VAs: 1  
UV: 50  
SV: 40

It is unlikely that there were any defensive towers at Sevastopol of quite the same design as these pots, but the Crimean War was within living memory of many early pot spotters, and these pots could have been named by an old soldier. Because the right hand pot is a Stretched Sevastopol Redoubt whereas the other two are Standard, the two varieties attract a twenty point bonus.



**2 Cuthbertson's Tweedlers**  
(Roll Tops with Barrel Tops) &  
**2 Two Banded Bandits**  
(Round Pots)

Pots: 4  
DVs: 2  
VAs: 0  
UV: 60  
SV: 60

The Cuthbertson's Tweedler is in fact a Bovington with a Barrel Top. A Scottish spotter named Ian Cuthbertson claimed that the pots of this type on his house made a strange tweedling sound on windy days. This is how the name arose but few other Tweedler owners have reported the phenomenon. Why the Two Banded Bandit is so called is not known (apart from the obvious presence of two bands). Perhaps the name was chosen by a whimsical spotter simply for its alliterative quality.



**3 Huntingdon Honey pots  
(Round Mouldeds) &  
1 Bathurst Monstrosity.**

Pots: 3  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 2  
UV: 30  
SV: 10

Some Victorian spotters were so disgusted by the Bathurst Monstrosity (named after its much reviled inventor, Archimedes Bathurst, and one of only a few Vile Additions to have its own name) that their scoring system awarded it 500 minus points. Under the RSSS it is treated as any other Vile Addition and causes a 10 point deduction.



**18 Hooded Howitzers (Cannon  
Heads with Hood Tops)**

Pots: 18  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 1  
UV: 180  
SV: 170

A high scoring stack of identical pots with inserts, marred only by a single Vile Addition. This building has ten more stacks each with a single row of 9 Howitzers. Some of the stacks have a different variety of Howitzer, but only one variety on each stack. When calculating the total for the building, the different varieties do not result in a bonus as it is simply the stack values which are added. There is 1 more VA so the Building Value (BV) is 1060 points.



**4 Square Spiked Sentinels &  
6 Square Spiked Sentinels**  
(Panelled Spikes)

Pots: 4	Pots: 6
DVs: 0	DVs: 0
VAs: 0	VAs: 0
UV: 40	UV: 60
SV: 40	SV: 60

Classic Clusters - an In-Line Four and a Straight Six. In a competition to find high scoring houses, these two unadulterated stacks would net 100 points. Manufacturers names for square pots are even less imaginative than their names for round pots, but spotters are more inventive.



**4 Beau Belles (Beehives)**

Pots: 4
DVs: 3
VAs: 0
UV: 70
SV: 70

There are two fine pairs of Beau Belles on the above stack. The spotter who named them could have been thinking that their shape was reminiscent of the Bow Bells, but on being written down the name got corrupted. The larger variety subsequently became known as Buxom Beau Belles. The left pot of the central pair is a slightly different shape from the right one. This is not unusual, but according to the RSSS the difference in appearance means that they count as different varieties.



**6 Diamond Geezers**  
(Round Moulded)

Pots: 6  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 1  
UV: 60  
SV: 50

In as much as that they are inclined to vent forth hot gases these pots might well be associated with the other sort of geyser but the name is more likely to have been chosen because of the decorative diamond shaped mouldings on their sides. For the same reason they are known in Staffordshire as Tamworth Tiaras.



**3 Slippery Jacks** (Round Moulded with Dome Caps)  
**& 3 Destroying Angels** (Round Moulded with Hood Tops)

Pots: 6  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 1  
UV: 60  
SV: 50

Whoever named these pots was clearly interested in Fungi and called them after the Toadstools of the same names. The two Slippery Jack pots in the foreground do bear a passing resemblance to Slippery Jack toadstools, but the Destroying Angel pots don't really look much like the toadstools at all. It is perhaps conceivable that the toadstools were named after the chimney pots (hence the once well known saying - "which came first, the chimney pot or the toadstool"), but this seems unlikely.



**1 'Ammersmith Aitchbone**  
(H Pot) &  
**1 Flared Base Tuscan**  
(Plain Roll).

Pots: 2  
DVs: 2  
VAs: 0  
UV: 40  
SV: 40 (2 flue stack max)

The 'Ammersmith Aitchbone could surely only have been so called by a cockney pot spotter. Pot spotting became enormously popular in London in the late nineteenth century. Although Conan Doyle makes no mention of it, the spotting societies believed that both Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson were keen spotters in their spare time, which of course they had very little of. An alternative name for the Donnington Drainpipe shown below was the Sherlock's Brier.



**3 Donnington Drainpipes**  
(NKE)

Pots: 3  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 0  
UV: 30  
SV: 30

The Donnington drainpipes were first identified by the Whiteknights pot spotting society in Reading, of which Stephen Richards, founder of the Richards' Standard Scoring Scheme, was a member. The pots can still be seen in Donnington Gardens, Reading, and do indeed appear to be lengths of upended drainpipe.



#### **4 Mancunian Maji (Bishops)**

Pots: 4  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 0  
UV: 40  
SV: 40

The naming of these pots seems to have been hopelessly inaccurate all round. Why the manufacturers call them Bishops is anyone's guess since everyone knows that Bishops wear Miters which look completely different. The Broughton Park spotters (of Brierley Hill fame) who christened the pots Mancunian Maji clearly had the three kings in mind, but a Magus was a Persian Priest rather than a king and is unlikely to have worn a crown.



Outside: **2 Trumpet Majors**  
(Round Mouldeds) &  
Inside: **2 Fotheringay's**  
**Fag-ends** (Louvres)

Pots: 4  
DVs: 2  
VAs: 1  
UV: 60  
SV: 50

Cigarette smoking started to catch on in the 1880s after soldiers in the Crimea had adopted the practice of rolling tobacco in paper. Fotheringay's Fag-ends were perhaps named around then. They do bear a passing resemblance to cigarette ends, particularly when there is smoke coming out of them of course. The Trumpet Majors were no doubt named by spotters who read Thomas Hardy, although they were also known as Fanfare Flatheads.



Left: **1 Totem Warrior**  
(Ornamental Pocket) &  
Right: **1 Budleigh Salterton**  
(Round Pot).

Pots: 2  
DVs: 2  
VAs: 0  
UV: 40  
SV: 40 (2 flue stack max)

You have to look at the Totem Warrior from the right angle to interpret its pockets as eyes, nose and ears so that it lives up to its name. In the above example the right “ear” is obscured. There is no record of the Budleigh Salterton having been manufactured in the South Coast town of that name, so perhaps an enthusiastic Devonian spotter simply wanted to put his home town on the map. The Budleigh Salterton is very similar to the Two Banded Bandit but it is slightly tapered and the upper band is not so pronounced.



Left: **1 Flared Base Tuscan**  
(Plain Roll) &  
Right: **1 Vulgar Boatman**  
(Round Pot)

Pots: 2  
DVs: 2  
VAs: 1 (out of shot)  
UV: 30  
SV: 40 (2 flue stack max)

The Vulgar Boatman is vulgar in the sense that it is prevalent or in common use. No doubt the name was a Spotter’s little joke alluding to the famous picture of Bargemen on the Volga completed by Ilya Repin in 1873, or the title of the Russian song associated with it.



Fnt L: **1 Bastard Tweedler**  
(Barrel Top)

Fnt R: **1 Smeaton's Tower**  
(Louvre)

Back: **2 Diamond Geezers**  
(Round Moulded)

Pots: 4            DVs: 3  
VAs: 1            UV: 70  
SV: 60

Any Barrel Top which was not a Cuthbertson's Tweedler by virtue of being mounted on a Squat, Mid, or Manly Bovington became known as a Bastard Tweedler. The top of the Smeaton's Tower looks a bit like the structure after which it was named but the body of the famous Eddystone lighthouse which was rebuilt on Plymouth Hoe in 1882 is actually shaped more like a Flared Base Tuscan.



**2 Beadle's Needles**  
(Moulded Fluted)

Pots: 2  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 0  
UV: 20  
SV: 20

Continuing on the theme of lighthouses, here are two pots named after the lighthouse at the well known rocks off the Isle of Wight. The naming was presumably done by a spotter called Beadle, or else by a church officer. Spotters should note that because the pot is named after The Needles lighthouse, the singular form is one Beadle's Needles, rather than one Beadle's Needle. Similarly the plural form is two or more Beadle's Needles rather than two Beadles Needles. Quite straightforward really.



**L: 1 Peterborough Pulpit**  
 (Ornamental Octagonal) &  
**R: 1 Emperor Penguin**  
 (Two Pocket Barrel)  
 Pots: 2  
 DVs: 2  
 VAs: 0  
 UV: 40  
 SV: 40 (2 flue stack max)

It may be that among the things that Robert Falcon Scott and Ernest Henry Shackleton brought back from their 1901 expedition to Antarctica were some of the earliest photographs of penguins, and that these inspired the naming of the above pot with its two little wings. Some pots of this type have more than two wings and are known as Mutant Penguins (see below). The Peterborough Pulpit meanwhile must surely have been named by a churchgoing spotter.



**1 Mutant Penguin**  
 (Eight Pocket Barrel)  
**1 Tapered Tuscan**  
 (Plain Roll Taper)  
**1 Pontefract Pig Pen**  
 (Loose Cap)  
 Pots: 3            DVs: 3  
 VAs: 2            UV: 60  
 SV: 40

Whereas a Tuscan is straight and a flared base Tuscan is tapered at the bottom, the Tapered Tuscan is slightly tapered all the way up. The Mutant Penguin is a variant of the Emperor Penguin described above. The Pontefract Pig Pen isn't a pot at all. Where inserts or additions such as this are used in place of pots they count as pots when it comes to evaluating the stack.



**4 Beau Belles (Beehives) &  
1 Peter Rabbit (Round Pot)**

Pots: 5  
DVs: 3  
VAs: 1  
UV: 80  
SV: 70

A spotter who tampered with photographs or illustrations to make bogus claims was known as a trick spotter. Because she produced watercolours it was (wrongly) said of the lady who wrote Peter Rabbit in 1893 that she might “be a trick spotter.” Spotters believed that it was her amusement over this accusation that led the famous writer to favour her second name, Beatrix, over her first, which was Helen. The Peter rabbit was possibly so called because it’s a sort of coney shape.



**11 Tadcaster Stoats  
(Plain Round Flue Linings)  
& 1 Walnut Whip  
(Plain Taper)**

Pots: 12  
DVs: 4  
VAs: 12  
UV: 160  
SV: 40

This stack is interesting because nearly all the value of the pots is negated by Vile Additions. What value remains arises from the three different varieties of Stoa present, (two different sizes and one different colour) and the Walnut Whip - the barely discernible truncated cone fourth from the right. It is unusual to have such a large difference between the UV and the SV.



**3 Stoats (1 hooded)**  
(Plain Round Flue Linings),  
**2 Fag-ends (Louvres) &**  
**1 Clarkson's Super Projector**  
(NKE)  
Pots: 6  
DVs: 5  
VAs: 2  
UV: 110  
SV: 90

Tadcaster Stoats and Fotheringay's Fag-ends we have met before although here we see a Hooded Stoat and a Fag-end without a fag as well as a normal Fag-end and two normal Stoats (the furthest left being difficult to distinguish from the stack). Nothing is known of the Clarkson who gave his name to the Super Projector, he could have been the designer, the manufacturer, or the spotter who first recorded it, but a super pot it certainly is anyway.



**3 Fag-ended Warriors**  
(8 Pocket 3 Ring Louvres),  
**& 1 Horrid Little Stump**  
(Metal Gas Flue Terminal)  
Pots: 3  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 1  
UV: 30  
SV: 20

The Fag-ended Warrior is like a Totem Warrior or indeed a Mutant Penguin but with a louvre top rather than an ornamental top or a barrel top. The horrid little stump is not the same as the example we saw earlier, but who cares? Be they metal or plastic, a horrid little stump is a horrid little stump. Ceramic gas flue terminals count as pots and for the spotter they are the only acceptable treatment for central heating installations.



**3 Dimbleby Dorrits**  
(NKE)

Pots: 3  
DVs: 2  
VAs: 2  
UV: 50  
SV: 30

The Dimbleby Dorrit is thought to be a Scottish pot, or at least to have taken its name from the old Scottish proverb:

“Nery a whendle be trobbledy swee  
but seldom a dimble be dorrit”.

To understand what the proverb means you’d really have to ask a Scot, and one who was born in the Nineteenth Century. The central pot on this stack is sufficiently taller than the others to be considered a different variety.



**1 Helter Skelter**  
(Smoke Cure)  
**1 Mid-Bovington**  
(Roll Top)

Pots: 2  
DVs: 2  
VAs: 1  
UV: 20  
SV: 10

Victorians were keen fun-fair goers and it is not hard to see how the helter skelter chimney pot got its name, although if real helter skelters were built to exactly this design the unfortunate punters would drop off the slide about half way down the tower. Readers of Dickens preferred to call this pot the Oliver Twist. The Vile Addition on this stack is not easy to see but is a piece of lead over the top of the Mid-Bovington at the back.



**1 Ringed Tuscan**  
(Roll Top)  
**& 2 McConkey's Donkeys**  
(NKE)

Pots: 3  
DVs: 2  
VAs: 2  
UV: 50  
SV: 30

There appears to be a hydra stuck up this chimney with two of its monstrous heads poking out of the top. McConkey however opted to name this type of pot after a somewhat less fabulous beast, probably because it had a better ring to it when concatenated with his surname. Also they do look a bit like donkey's heads, and can of course be found singly in which case the hydra analogy would be inappropriate.



**9 Lundy Lighthouses**  
(Moulded Fluted)

Pots: 9  
DVs: 2  
VAs: 1  
UV: 110  
SV: 100

Yet more members of the lighthouse family. These pots are of similar design to the Beadle's Needleless we saw earlier but are shorter and a different colour. They take their name from the two lighthouses built at the North Western and South Eastern extremes of Lundy Island in the Bristol Channel in 1898. One of the above pots is noticeably narrower than the others and so counts as a different variety of Lundy Lighthouse. There is another row of three lighthouses at the back of the stack which cannot be seen in this picture.



Front: **1 Witherspoon's Fantastic Appendage**  
(Smoke Cure) &  
Back: **1 Pigott's Spigot**  
(NKE)

Pots: 2  
DVs: 2  
VAs: 1  
UV: 20  
SV: 10

Whoever Witherspoon was he must have been the envy of all when he first unveiled his magnificent Fantastic Appendage. When the RSSS was first introduced there were many spotters who argued that fine pots such as the two on this stack must surely be worth more points than two Tadcaster Stoats. However the Fantastic Appendage became something of a status symbol and being less rare it is now a less valued spot than some varieties of ringed female Stoa, so Richards' decision on the equality of pots was vindicated. The Piggot's spigot is interesting because successive caps can be rested on the top by virtue of the spigots. The above example has two caps, the one below has none.



**1 Pigott's Spigot** (NKE)  
**1 Vulgar Boatman** (Round Pot)  
& **1 Topless Tapered Tuscan**  
(Plain Taper)

Pots: 3  
DVs: 3  
VAs: 0  
UV: 60  
SV: 60 (3 flue stack max)

It is unusual to see a Piggot's Spigot like this one, with no caps at all - which makes the spigots clearly visible but rather pointless. If more than one cap is added, each cap apart from the top one has further spigots on the outside for the cap above to rest on. The Topless Tapered Tuscan has no roll top, although there is a hint of a rim on the left hand pot here.



**1 Sleeping Gibbon** (Round Spiked) **1 Squat Bovington** (Roll Top) **& 3 Grinling Gibbons** (Round Spiked)

Pots: 5  
DVs: 3  
VAs: 1  
UV: 80  
SV: 70

A Victorian naturalist with interests in primates and pot spotting is believed to have told his young son that Grinling is something that Gibbons do. Grinling, like breathing he explained, is something Gibbons do all the time they are awake, but unlike breathing they stop doing it when they are asleep. He named pots like the three right hand ones on this stack after the waking Gibbons, because you can see their eyes open. Pots like the left hand one he called Sleeping Gibbons, because you can't see their eyes.



**2 Holey Joes**  
(NKE)

Pots: 2  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 0  
UV: 20  
SV: 20 (2 flue stack max)

The Holey Joe is essentially a Bovington with holes in it. It is likely that the holes are intended to enhance the smoke or draught management qualities of the pot, and it is equally likely that they don't. Holes of this type could be described as doing for a chimney pot what a go-faster stripe does for a car - very little except make the owner feel that he or she has got something special.



#### **4 Spioenkops** (Fluted Spiked)

Pots: 4  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 2  
UV: 40  
SV: 20

Spioenkop is a hill in South Africa from which, during the Boer war in January 1900, British troops attempting to break through to Ladysmith were driven by artillery bombardment from neighbouring peaks. Why the name should have been given to a chimney pot is not clear, other than that Spioenkop was up high and was associated with a lot of smoke.



#### **2 Sitting Bull's Telegraphs** (Stretched) (NKE)

Pots: 2  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 1  
UV: 20  
SV: 10

Another pot which owes its name to an association with smoke, in this case smoke signals, is the Sitting Bull's Telegraph. In 1876, while terraced houses with chimney pots were being built in England, the famous Sioux chief defeated Lt Colonel Custer. News of this event would have been spread by telegraph which was invented in 1837.

The pots above are stretched versions of the Sitting Bull's Telegraph and have rings, perhaps reflecting the smoke rings which supposedly emanated from them.

**Sitting Bull's Telegraphs  
(Standard) 9 & 7 (NKE)**



Pots: 9  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 1  
UV: 90  
SV: 80

Pots: 7  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 0  
UV: 70  
SV: 70

Stretched versions of the Sitting Bull's Telegraph such as those on the previous page are also known as Big Bighorns while the standard sized variety like those above are called Little Bighorns. The standard size have larger rims than the stretched version but no rings. In manufacturer's terms the protuberances on these pots are pockets rather than horns, the latter being cylindrical protrusions, but in this case the Little Bighorn refers to the location of Custer's last stand.

**2 Flying Phalanges  
(Roll Top) &  
3 Hooded Howitzers  
(Cannon Heads with Hood  
Tops)**



Pots: 5  
DVs: 2  
VAs: 0  
UV: 70  
SV: 70

Someone must have thought that the The Flying Phalange looks a bit like a boney finger. Whereas the Proud or Manly Bovington has a slightly convexed curve to it, the Flying Phalange can be straight, slightly tapered or have a slightly concaved curve to it. The right hand pot of the two above appears to curve both ways, and so could be confused with a Bovington, but a Bovington would never do this.



### **3 Tadcaster Stoats**

(Plain Round Flue Linings)

### **1 Fotheringay's Fag End**

(Louvre) & **1 Carmarthen Christmas Tree** (Venetian)

Pots: 5

DVs: 3

VAs: 0

UV: 80

SV: 80

The three Stoats on this stack are of about twelve inches exuberance which is fairly tall for a Stoa. The Fotheringay's Fag-end shown here is a louvre top on a Stoa whereas the ones we saw earlier were on Ringed Tuscan. A louvre top on any round pot qualifies as a Fag-end. The Carmarthen Christmas Tree is also a type of louvre. Where there are two louvres (no more and no less but they can be among other pots) on a stack, the stack is known as a Lautrec.



### **4 Papin's Pistons**

(Grooved Rolls)

### **& 1 Rapunzel's Predicament**

(NKE)

Pots: 5

DVs: 2

VAs: 5

UV: 70

SV: 20

In the parlance of motor mechanics a pot is a cylinder and a piston fits in it, but the pots above do look something like pistons with their several rings. Sadly they are all covered with chicken wire. The first engine known to employ a piston was invented by the French physicist Denis Papin in 1690. The story of Rapunzel, the princess who was imprisoned in a tall tower, was written by the brothers Grimm and published around 1815. The Rapunzel's Predicament has what could be described as a window at the top and a door at the bottom.



**1 Congreve's Revenge**  
(NKE)

Pots: 0  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 1  
UV: -10  
SV: N/A

In 1812 the British conducted a rocket attack against the Americans at Fort McHenry which gave rise to the inclusion of the line about “the rocket’s red glare” in what was then the new American national anthem “The Star Spangled Banner.” The rockets used in this attack were known as Congreve rockets, having been designed by William Congreve, a British artillery officer. Congreve rockets were also used at the battle of Waterloo in 1815. The Congreve’s Revenge is an all metal affair and therefore a Vile Addition.



**1 Mortimer's Indiscretion**  
(NKE)

Pots: 0  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 1  
UV: -10  
SV: N/A

Also of all metal construction and at least three feet tall, the Mortimer’s Indiscretion is another Vile Addition with a name of its own. Vile additions like the two on this page are neither stacks nor pots but a kind of hideous hybrid. Since they don’t appear on stacks their Stack Value is not applicable (N/A) and their negative value as Vile Additions is only taken into account when a Building Value (BV) is being calculated.



#### **4 Flying Saucers** (Flue Ventilators)

Pots: 4  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 0  
UV: 40  
SV: 40

These are inserts being used as pots, and as they are ceramic they count as pots. The Flying Saucer is a modern insert with a modern name. Another variety of Flying Saucer is the same shape but has long slots for “windows” rather than the little round ones in the examples above. Since Flying Saucers are usually used as gas flue terminals, it is not smoke which comes out of them but a shimmering heat haze which adds to their sci-fi appeal.



#### **1 Sow's Ear** (Gas Flue Terminal)

Pots: 1  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 1  
UV: 10  
SV: 0

The Sow's Ear is the ceramic equivalent of a Horrid Little Stump. As such it counts as a pot but along with inserts being used as pots it is regarded as one of the lowest forms of pot life. You certainly can't make a silk purse or even a half way decent chimney pot out of a Sow's Ear, but at least it's not metal and is therefore not reviled. In as much as that it usually screens the metal hardware of a gas flue (sometimes known as the pot plant) from view it can be considered as making a worthwhile contribution to the enjoyment of the pot spotting community.



**1 Dream of Gerontius**

(NKE) &

**3 Friar Tucks**

(Round Moulded)

Pots: 4

DVs: 2

VAs: 1

UV: 60

SV: 50

The Dream of Gerontius was named after Elgar's famous piece of music which was first performed on the third of October 1900. This choice of name was made the Whiteknights pot spotting society because several examples of this type of pot can be seen on Elgar Road in Reading. The Friar Tuck may have been so called because it appears to have a number of tucks in it near the top, or because it is simply a big fat pot and Friar Tuck had one of these.



Front: **1 Nobbly Goblin**

(NKE) &

Back: **1 Fag-ended Warrior**

(Louvre)

Pots: 2

DVs: 2

VAs: 2

UV: 40

SV: 20

It's hard luck on a Nobbly Goblin which has twelve noses to be placed next to a smoky old Fag-end as on the stack above. This stack has two television aerials which count as Vile Additions. In the case of television aerials it is the number of supports attached directly to the stack which is counted, a single support with several attachments counts as one aerial.



### **1 Taffy's Immoderate Encumbrance (Louvre)**

Pots: 1  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 0  
UV: 10  
SV: 10 (1 flue stack max)

Taffy's Immoderate Encumbrance graces, if that's the word, one of the lodges at Reading University. It is technically a variety of Fotheringay's Fag-end like the pot behind it, but had been sufficiently modified in the eyes of the Whiteknights spotters to merit a name of its own. Presumably Taffy once lived in the lodge although there is now no record of his tenure other than the name of his chimney pot. The pot in the background in this picture and also the television aerial are on a separate stack.



### **1 Macgillicuddy's Cowbell (Hooded Pocket)**

Pots: 1  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 0  
UV: 10  
SV: 10 (1 flue stack max)

Whether the cows of County Kerry were ever equipped with cowbells which looked at all like this chimney pot is far from certain, but if the bells were anything like this size it would surely have been possible to hear the cows across the length and breadth of Macgillicuddy's Reeks.



## **2 Rockets**

(NKE)

Pots: 2

DVs: 0

VAs: 1

UV: 20

SV: 10

The spotter who thought that the type of pot shown above looked like a rocket was perhaps inspired by reading Jules Verne's "From The Earth To The Moon" which was translated into English in 1873. He presumably believed that the sharp end of the rocket was buried in the chimney stack leaving the smoking and flaming tail end uppermost. Another theory was that the name arose because of the similarity between the top of this type of pot and the top of the smoke stack on Stephenson's Rocket. The spikes on the famous locomotive of 1829 were actually larger and flared outwards, more like those on the pot which manufacturers call an ornamental crown.



## **6 Tynemouth Turrets**

(NKE)

Pots: 6

DVs: 0

VAs: 1

UV: 20

SV: 10

The Tynemouth Turret is also known as the Raj Defender. It is one of the joys of pot spotting that spotters in different regions have different names for the same type of pot. The main reason for the success of the Richards Standard Scoring Scheme is that pots are treated equally whatever they look like and irrespective of what they are called.



**1 Grace's Googly**  
(NKE)

Pots: 1  
DVs: 0  
VAs: 1  
UV: 10  
SV: 0

Cricketing spotters originally dubbed this combination of a Bovington with a rotating cowl as Grace's Googly, presumably because the cowl is a Vile Addition and therefore makes the combination a wrong'un. They might just as well have called it a Duck, since that's what it scores. The type seems to appeal to sportsmen since golfing spotters for fairly obvious reasons called it a Ball and Tee, even though the proportions are wildly inaccurate.



Left to Right:  
**1 Ringed Tuscan** (Roll Top)  
**1 Mr Darcy** (NKE)  
**1 Tuscan** (Roll Top)  
**1 Disraeli's Delight** (Octagon)  
Pots: 4  
DVs: 4  
VAs: 1  
UV: 80  
SV: 70

The Mr Darcy is sometimes confused with the Bovington but is distinctive because its sides are parallel until about two thirds the way up when they taper in sharply. It is usually dark red in colour whereas Bovingtons are generally orangey. It is not clear why an octagonal pot should have been Disraeli's Delight although perhaps he once had an eight point plan for economic recovery.



**1 White Knight (NKE) &  
1 Prince Of Darkness (NKE)**

	Pots: 1
	DVs: 0
Pots: 0	VAs: 0
DVs: 0	UV: 10
VAs: 1	SV: 10
UV: -10	
SV: N/A	

The pride and the shame of Reading University side by side on the roof of the Senior Common Room. On the right, the magnificent White Knight itself, the pot that gave its name to the Whiteknights pot spotting society. On the left, The Prince Of Darkness, a horrifying black metal excrescence which is a major Vile Addition if ever there was one and counts for ten minus points in the reckoning of the Building Value.



**1 White Knight (NKE) &  
3 Sienna Squires (NKE)  
1 Horrid Little Stump  
(Metal Gas Flue Terminal)**

	Pots: 3
Pots: 1	DVs: 2
DVs: 0	VAs: 1
VAs: 0	UV: 30
UV: 10	SV: 20
SV: 10	

Another view of the White Knight, this time from a more favourable angle, attended by 3 Sienna Squires on an adjacent stack. There is another stack out of shot to the left with two more Squires on it, and at least one other Squire on the building. The Squires were originally called Brown Knights, and the five nearest the White Knight were called the Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday Knights. Two are smaller than the others which is why two different varieties are listed. It was subsequently felt that the name Brown Knight didn't have much of a ring to it, and that Sienna Squire was a more fitting title.



**3 Long John Silvers**  
 (Octagons) (**2 with hats**)  
 (Mushroom Tops) & **1 Ringed**  
**Tuscan** (Roll Top) (**with**  
**Horrid Little Stump**) (Metal  
 Gas Flue Terminal)  
 Pots: 4  
 DVs: 3  
 VAs: 2  
 UV: 70  
 SV: 50

It is thought that these octagonal pots are known as Long John Silvers because they are pieces of eight. Two of the Long Johns above have Mushroom Top inserts which are sometimes simply known as hats by spotters, although hat is something of a generic term which is applied to various types of insert.



**2 Square Bashers** (NKE)  
**1 Square Basher & 1 Hooded**  
**Howitzer** (Cannon Head with  
 Hood Top)  
 Pots: 2                      Pots: 2  
 DVs: 2                      DVs: 0  
 VAs: 1                      VAs: 0  
 UV: 40                      UV: 20  
 SV: 30                      SV: 20

The Square Bashers in the background don't just look smaller than the one in the foreground due to perspective, they are in fact smaller Bashers. The big Basher was sometimes known as a Sergeant Major. Square pots with round inserts such as the one above are not all that common.



### **3 Robin Hoods (D.F.E. Pots)**

Pots: 3  
 DVs: 0  
 VAs: 0  
 UV: 30  
 SV: 30

The Red Bank Manufacturing Co. Ltd describe this pot as a D.F.E. or Decorative Fuel Effect Pot. Spotters call it the Robin Hood, mainly because the hood is an integral part of the pot whereas most hooded pots are only hooded because they have a hooded insert. A stack boasting a Robin Hood, a Friar Tuck and some Merry Men (see later) would be a collector's item indeed.



**1 Manly Bovington (Roll Top)**  
**2 Flying Phalanges (Roll Tops)**  
**1 Cuthbertson's Tweedler**  
 (Roll Top with Barrel Top)  
**3 Mid Bovingtons (Roll Tops)**  
**(1 with Horrid Little Stump)**

Pots: 8                    DVs: 6  
 VAs: 1                    UV: 140  
 SV: 130

Of the three tall pots at the front, the middle one is a Proud or Manly Bovington because of its convex curve, while the other two are Flying Phalanges of different heights which count as different varieties. The pots at the back are all Mid Bovingtons, one is made different by a Vile Addition and so does not count as different, another has a barrel top or hood top and so is either a Cuthbertson's Tweedler or a Half Tweedler.



**10 Two Banded Bandits  
(including 6 Hooded Bandits)  
(Round Pots), 1 Tuscan  
(Roll Top) & 1 Half Tweedler  
(Roll Top with Hood Top)**  
Pots: 12  
DVs: 4  
VAs: 1  
UV: 160  
SV: 150

All the back row of Two Banded Bandits here are Hooded Bandits. The pot second from the right is a different variety of Two Banded Bandit as it is a different colour and has a different rim. Whereas a Bovington with a Barrel Top is a Cuthbertson's Tweedler a Bovington (in this case a Squat one) with a Hood Top is a Half Tweedler.



**2 Macgillycuddy's Cowbells,  
2 Tuscans (1 Tapered),  
1 Flying Phalange,  
6 Budleigh Saltertons  
(1 with Horrid Little stump),  
&  
1 Mid Bovington**  
Pots: 12      DVs: 6  
VAs: 1      UV: 180  
SV: 170

We have met all these types of pot before so their manufacturers names are not given here, there being as little space alongside the stack as there is on top of it. The back row which is obscured comprises five Budleigh Saltertons and one Mid Bovington which you can see above the Tuscan and between the Tapered Tuscan and the Flying Phalange.



**10 Squat Bovingtons**  
 (Roll Tops),  
**3 Merry Men**(Square  
 Panelled),  
**1 Kubla Khan** (Special Louvre)  
**1 Fotheringay's Fag-end**  
 (Louvre)

Pots: 15      DVs: 5  
 VAs: 2      UV: 200  
 SV: 180

This stack was a Straight Sixteen until the third pot from the left was replaced with a Horrid Little Stump. Originally it would have scored over 200 points and it is also a Lautrec. The Kubla Khan has the appearance of several stately pleasure domes piled on top of each other. The Merry Men are more ornate versions of the Biscuitmen we saw earlier and may owe their name to this or to an association with the Robin Hood and the Friar Tuck. The Bovingtons are rather skinny but much the same except for one which is almost a Mid Bovington.



**10 Treblin Cans** (NKE)  
**3 Tuscans** (1 Tapered, 1  
 Ringed, 1 Flared Base)  
**1 Mid Bovington**,  
**1 Fotheringay's Fag-end**  
**1 Pixie Smoker** (Round Pot)

Pots: 16      DVs: 7  
 VAs: 1      UV: 230  
 SV: 220

There is a television aerial out of shot to the left. The Pixie Smoker is an unremarkable round pot hidden away at the back of this stack. The Treblin Can is like a Dublin Can only more so. The Dublin can is one of the few pots which spotters have the same name for as manufacturers. It is not tapered like the Treblin Can and has no ring below the bulbous top. This fine sixteen pot stack finally takes us through the two hundred point barrier. Anything above this is pretty good going. Happy spotting!

# Appendix A

## **Summary of the Richards Standard Scoring Scheme as modified and approved by the CPSA.**

The value of a stack can be calculated in three simple steps:

1. Count the total number of pots and multiply by ten.
2. Count the total number of different varieties and multiply by ten. Add the two totals together to arrive at the Unadulterated Value (UV) of the stack.

Note that if there is only one variety present, the number of different varieties is 0, not 1. If two varieties are present, the number of different varieties is 2. If a pot looks different it is different unless it was intended to be the same or is only made different by a Vile Addition.

3. Count the total number of Vile Additions, multiply by ten and subtract the total from the Unadulterated Value to give the final Stack Value (SV).

To calculate the Building Value (BV) simply add the Stack Values together. A building with a single variety of pot on one stack and a different single variety on another stack does not score bonus points for having two different varieties of pot.

The Standard Scoring Scheme is based on the following guiding principles.

Any pot is worth 10 points.

Ten points are awarded for each Different Variety (DV) of pot.

A pot that is only different from its neighbour because it is damaged, painted, stained, set slightly higher or lower in the mortar on the stack or because it has a Vile Addition attached to it is not considered a different variety. A pot which is the same as its neighbour in all respects except for being a couple of inches different in size, or made from a different coloured material, is considered to be a different variety. A pot with an insert is considered to be a different variety from an identical pot without one.

Any metal pot or attachment is a Vile Addition (VA) and counts ten minus points. Television aerials, cowls and metal gas flue terminals are major Vile Additions while lead coverings and chicken wire are minor Vile Additions, but all are treated equally. When counting television aerials it is the number of supports attached to the stack which is significant. An aerial with several attachments which are not themselves affixed directly to the stack counts as one aerial. For a Vile Addition which does not appear on a stack but is itself a hybrid of a pot and a stack, the Stack Value (SV) is not applicable (N/A) and points are only deducted if the building total is being evaluated.

## **About the Author**

The son of two parents who were both older than he, Stephen Young was born in 1961. He grew up in inches initially and in centimeters after about 1968. He was educated at various establishments where his achievements were few and unremarkable. His other works include several excellent pieces which no publisher has seen fit to print. He now lives in a house which contains some furniture and has a garden. Whether or not he is married and has children is really none of your business. Similarly the number and type of any pet animals he may or may not keep need not concern you.

Have you got a Cuthbertson's Tweedler? Read "Chimney Pot Spotting - A Leisure Pursuit" and find out.

Did you know that....

- A stack with 2 louvres is called a Lautrec?
- Taffy's Immoderate Encumbrance is technically a variety of Fotheringay's Fag-end?
- Gibbons stop grinling when they fall asleep?
- A Piggot's Spigot can have a number of caps?
- A Nobbly Goblin has twelve noses?
- The Dimbleby Dorrit takes its name from an old Scottish Proverb?
- Witherspoon's Fantastic Appendage is worth the same number of points as a humble Tadcaster Stoat?
- The Tynemouth Turret is also known as the Raj Defender?
- The White Knight and the Prince of Darkness can be seen side by side at Reading University?

You didn't? Well then, it's time you read "Chimney Pot Spotting - A Leisure Pursuit".