

# Inverness Silver



## Style: Inverness vs. Edinburgh



Can you tell which one of these spoons was made in Inverness?

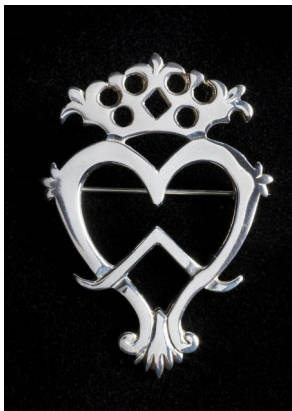


The Scottish Enlightenment brought a burst of changes in thought, technology, art, literature and fashion. The movement had its centre in Edinburgh and silversmiths there were commissioned to make objects that reflected the new trends. Objects were produced in many styles, from older designs to the newest fashions.

In Inverness, styles were simpler. Natural materials such as animal horn, hooves and wood were sometimes incorporated into designs.

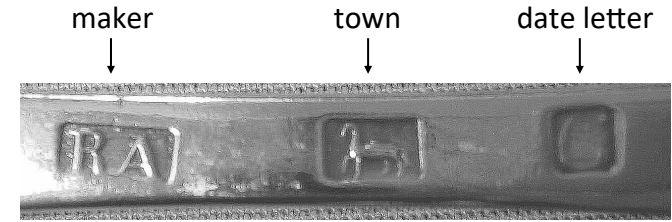
## Heart Brooches

Heart brooches were popular as betrothal gifts or love tokens in Scotland during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They are sometimes called 'Luckenbooth' brooches. This name comes from the 'lucken' (locked) booths in Edinburgh from which heart brooches were once sold.



The style of brooch popular in Inverness had a heart, a crown, a leaf decoration similar to a fleur-de-lys and a V-shaped chevron symbol at the bottom of the heart.

## Reading Makers' Marks



Silversmiths use several identifying marks on their objects. The maker's name is usually put first in initials. The next mark gives the town of the maker, shown either as an abbreviation or as a symbol that represents the town. Inverness is often seen abbreviated as INS or INVS, but it can also be signified by a camel or a cornucopia, like on the city's coat of arms.

Sometimes a 'date letter' is given that can tell us when the object was made. However, since letters were used instead of numbers, the dates associated with many letters have been forgotten.

Other marks may be used as well. A duty mark (profile of the monarch's head) was used to show that a required tariff had been paid for the silverwork, which was determined by how many ounces of silver were used in it.

Another mark you may see in the silver gallery is the thistle. For many years, this was the symbol of the assay master in Edinburgh, who would check the quality of the silver of all the works made in Scotland. There is no assay office Inverness, so Inverness marks are unofficial.

What information can you tell from the marks below?



G&MC head in profile castle (mark of Edinburgh) thistle K

## Who were the Inverness silversmiths?

The silversmith trade was a very important part of Inverness's economy from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. Silversmiths produced a large variety of objects, from spoons and jewellery to trophies and baby's rattles. Their shops were in the busy main streets of Inverness—Bridge Street, Church Street and High Street.

### Robert Anderson (c.1733-92)

Anderson was involved in governing the town. After completing his apprenticeship, he was made Boxmaster (treasurer) of the Hammermen's Incorporation and oversaw several apprentices' essays (objects made to prove skills for entry to the Hammermen's Incorporation). He was also a member of the Freemasons and even served as Master for five years.

This spoon crafted by Robert Anderson (*right*) is a fine example of the simplicity favoured by Inverness purchasers.

### Charles Jameson (c.1754-1829)

Charles Jameson went into a brief business partnership with Robert Naughten before the latter set up his own shop. In 1817 Jameson became a Constable (officer of the peace) of Inverness. He often used a sideways 'J' after his marks, which makes them unique.



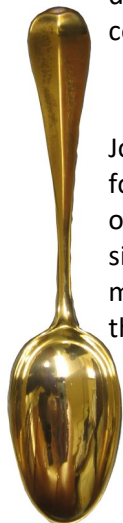
### Donald Fraser (c.1780-c.1829)

Not much is known about Donald Fraser. Apprenticed to Charles Jameson, he learned the trade in

Inverness. His shop was situated at a corner of Church Street and High Street, a busy place and good location for business.

### Robert Naughten (1786-1857)

Robert Naughten also did his apprenticeship under Charles Jameson. Afterwards, Naughten set up his own shop in Church Street and eventually added engraving to the services available in his shop. His business was very successful: at the time of his death, he owned a butcher's shop, a stable and coach house, a local inn and three houses!



### John McRae (c.1804-72)

John McRae was born in Inverness and worked here for many years. He was skilled in several trades. At one point a local directory listed him as a jeweller, silversmith, watch and clock maker. He eventually moved to Pollokshaws, near Glasgow, and worked there until his death.

## Highland silversmiths today

### Lucy Woodley

Lucy Woodley grew up in a seaside town in the Highlands. Today, she works with gold, silver and other metals to create her artworks, which are inspired by nature.

<http://www.lucywoodley.co.uk/>



### Alan Baillie



Alan Baillie also uses the beauty of the Highlands as inspiration. Based in Culloden, he creates wonderful works in gold and silver.

[www.alanbailliesilversmith.com](http://www.alanbailliesilversmith.com)

## Find out more about Scottish Silver

### Other collections in Scotland:

The Tain & District Museum  
<http://www.tainmuseum.org.uk>

Perth Museum and Art Gallery  
link via <http://www.pkc.gov.uk/>

National Museum of Scotland (Edinburgh)  
<http://www.nms.ac.uk/>

### Resources:

Moss, G.P. and Roe, A.D. (1999) *Highland Gold & Silversmiths*. Edinburgh: NMS Publishing Limited.

Dagleish, G. and Fotheringham, H.S. (2008) *Silver: Made in Scotland*. Edinburgh: NMSE – Publishing.

**Inverness Museum & Art Gallery**  
Castle Wynd, Inverness IV2 3EB  
Tel: 01349 781730  
**[www.inverness.highland.museum](http://www.inverness.highland.museum)**

### April - October

Tuesday - Saturday: 10:00 to 17:00  
Sunday & Monday: Closed

### November - March

Tuesday - Thursday: 12:00 to 16:00  
Friday & Saturday: 11:00 to 16:00  
Sunday & Monday: Closed

