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The PEWTER COLLECTORS' CLUB of AMERICA

OFFICERS, 1945

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MEETINGS SINCE THE LAST REPORT

October 21, 1944. The Club met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Melville T. Nichols, the old Lawrence homestead in Medford. The subject announced was "A Round Table Discussion of American Pewter," but Mr. Nichols' collection of tankards was so intriguing that most attention was paid to them. At the insistent request of the members, Mr. Nichols pointed out the many rare things he had recently acquired and revealed new information which it is hoped he will soon publish.

Mr. Raymond exhibited a chart which he had prepared in the hope that it might assist in the dating of pewter tankards without involving too much reference to special treatises. This was published in Bull. 16. During the amply plenished refreshment period, the members had a chance to see Mrs. Nichols' collection above the huge fireplace in the dining room and Mr. Nichols' "active service" array of tankards and mugs around the intimate table where so many Pewterclubbers and Rushlighters have for years gathered for discussions.

November 25, 1944. Article IV, section 3 of the By-Laws (published in Bull. 14) makes it almost obligatory that the Club meet in November. President Wallburg invited us to her home in Melrose for this meeting, which was of an informal nature. Several members brought recently acquired pieces and told something of their nature and history. Pewter turns up in the most unexpected places. Mrs. Leroy Lang showed two similar pieces, one which she purchased at Ober Ammergau, and another which she found in a chicken yard in Milwaukee. Mrs. Wallburg had one cast up on a beach by a storm. These informal exhibitions and discussions are most valuable and instructive features of the life of the Club. Pewter-talk continued through the refreshment period.

January 18, 1945. The annual dinner was held at the Hotel Vendome in Boston on this date. Mrs. William V. Wallburg, who had presided so gracefully at all the meetings during 1944 was re-elected as President. The only change in officers was the returning of Mrs. Eaton H. Perkins to her former position as Clerk, an office which she filled efficiently before she was wrested from it to serve two terms as President. Mrs. Perkins was supposed to be the speaker of the evening, but she embarrassed the members and guests by asking them questions. "Forever Amber," a *succès fou* in these parts, partly because of its being banned in Boston, was the result of years of research on the part of the author. Its 1200 pages contained numerous references to the pewter used at the time of the Restoration of Charles II. Mrs. Perkins asked twenty questions based on the validity of these references, and gave first and second prizes to those who answered most nearly correctly, the arbiter being the published work of the late H. H. Cotterell. The audience proved to be remarkably well informed and succeeded in finding a few flaws in the information of the author of the book. Strangely enough, those present seemed to enjoy being quizzed, and the meeting aroused renewed interest in your present reporter's hobby, XVII century English pewter.

April 11, 1945. The Eleventh Birthday Dinner was also held at the Hotel Vendome in Boston. As is the custom on this special occasion, those

members entitled to do so wore their Master-Members medals, and President Wallburg awarded them to the two whose five-year period of probation ended at this time.

After the dinner, Mrs. Perkins again propounded questions, Mr. Rupert W Jaques conniving with her as joint interlocutor. This time the glossary in Carl W. Drepperd's "Primer of American Antiques" provoked the discussion. Only those terms which applied to pewter were taken into consideration. As the present writer remarked in the New York Sun: "Mr. Drepperd's ears must have burned, but he came off remarkably well, considering that he was at the mercy of a group of specialists. Everyone learned something, as would Mr. Drepperd if he had been there." Each member of the Club appears to have some special knowledge, as was demonstrated when Mr. John Webber vindicated Mr. Drepperd in his definition of an article no other member had ever heard mentioned. Mrs. Perkins has long advocated the publication of a glossary of this sort, as applied to pewter, in the Bulletin. The publication committee would welcome it. The chief difficulty is in the organization of the material. Perhaps it could be published piecemeal, and organized later. After all, we aim to be informal.

June 9, 1945. Mr. and Mrs. Charles K. Davis entertained the Club and guests most royally at their home, Highwood, Winton Park, Round Hill Road, Fairfield, Connecticut. This was one of the best-attended meetings so far held, and was the result of long and careful preparation by our loyal members, Mr. and Mrs. Davis and Mr. Charles F. Montgomery. We are a national organization, with a widely scattered membership, yet meetings are, by force of circumstances, mostly in the vicinity of Boston. We have had successful gatherings in New York City, New Jersey, and Albany, but it was not until this June that we realized how much interest the "grey metal" had excited outside our particular area.

Few of us had known that the Davis home housed one of the really great collections of American pewter. Possibly it was not until he prepared the catalogue, copies of which were presented to those present, that Mr. Davis himself realized how well he had done. It is no haphazard assemblage, but one purposefully and carefully chosen. Three hundred and three pieces, by ninety-six American makers are listed, but more are displayed in the two well-arranged pewter-rooms. The single piece which probably attracted most attention was the engraved quart pot with the legend "Huzza for Capt. Ickes," but everyone, according to his predelictions, found something rare for him to admire, and perhaps covet. Your reporter, also a Rushlighter, was pleased to see the forty-two lamps, and like everyone else, was intrigued by the globular Bassett teapot. He respected Mr. Davis' strength of character in restraining himself to nine teapots, but he does wish that someone who has the space would get together a full set of these vessels, however Britannic and Victorian they may be.

President Wallburg opened the meeting, held out-of-doors in delightful surroundings, and turned it over to Mr. Montgomery, who had done so much to insure its success. He called first on Mr. Davis, who extended a cordial welcome to the sixty-seven members and guests present. He expressed his great admiration for the pioneer work of Kerfoot and Meyers, for the definitive monograph of Laughlin, and also for the others who had written on American pewter.

He acknowledged his indebtedness to these specialists and experts, and would also have mentioned Mr. Montgomery, if he had been allowed to do so.

Mr. Montgomery then made a brief but thoughtful address, introducing the later proceedings. The following paragraphs are quoted from what the present writer reported to the New York Sun, and published June 22, 1945.

"Mr. Montgomery spoke of the few great private collections in the country, including that of Mr. Davis, and warned collectors against the practice of passing over pieces of importance because they are relatively common or unmarked. He pointed out that the reason why the product of some makers was relatively common was because it was well made and well designed. Some people are inclined to look down on the Boardmans, but the reason so much of their pewter has survived is because it was good metal, not because of cheapness or their methods of merchandising. Their communion flagons were excellently designed, and Capt. A. V. Sutherland-Graeme of London praised them warmly in a letter recently received by Mrs. P. J. Franklin, which she read at the meeting. Sutherland-Graeme is the honorary secretary of the Pewter Collectors Society in England.

"Unmarked pieces may be interesting in themselves, and, in many cases, their makers can be identified by comparison with marked specimens. Your reporter would interpolate the suggestion that it is about time for us to begin collecting pewter rather than marks. Touches are indispensable in learning the chronological succession of forms, but once that succession is established one can get pleasure by looking at a piece without turning it wrong side out looking for the maker's name.

"Marshall Davidson, associate curator in the American wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, gave an exceedingly interesting address on 'The Heyday of Pewter in America.' He defined this as the period from 1730-40 to 1830-40. This he considers as the time of transition from primitive living conditions to the beginnings of comfortable life. It marked the departure from the old communal style and the adoption of a mode which gave the individual a greater degree of privacy. The old 'great hall' of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, which had served for eating, drinking and sleeping, had survived not only in the one-room houses of our early settlers but also to some extent in the more pretentious structures of the gentry. But by the end of the period it had dwindled to the entrance hall of today, and dining rooms, parlors, bedrooms and back as well as front stairs were to be found in even ordinary homes. In the early days there was generally only one chair. Father 'took the chair,' and the others sat on forms or stools. By the end of the heyday chairs were selling at sixty-two cents apiece.

"Mr. Davidson adverted to the influence of these changing conditions on the production of pewter. Glass was extremely expensive in the early days, so the commonalty drank from pewter, which explains the relative abundance of mugs, beakers and the porringers which were commonly used as drinking vessels. Water was generally abhorred in the old days, and with good reason. Pure spring water was too cold, and the warmer water was apt to be full of 'germs,' although the people did not, of course, realize this. Cider, rum, and tea were more healthful beverages.

"Mr. Clement then invited the club to meet at the Brooklyn Museum in October, offering an unusual opportunity to see and study their collection, which centers about the pieces gathered by John Poole."

August 25, 1945. The meeting was held at the home of Mrs. Leroy Lang in Melrose, Mass. At the business session, seventeen new members were elected. Only one of them lives in Massachusetts, eight being from Connecticut, five from New York, two from Delaware, and one from Pennsylvania. For the first time in our history, the majority of our members live outside Massachusetts, a healthy sign for a National organization.

Mrs. Lang presented an interesting paper on English, French, and Germanic pewter. China and Japan may have been the first to produce pewter, but our knowledge of their beginnings is vague. We read much about Roman pewter, but nearly all the preserved Roman pewter was made in England, where the Cornish tin and the lead of the border district of England and Wales furnished the ingredients of the alloy then employed. Most of the vessels so far found seem to date from the third century, A.D. So far as the records go, it was not until a thousand years later that the composition of pewter was improved by the addition of copper in the form of brass. Some writers have inferred from this that the pewter of the 13th century contained zinc, but such was not the case, for the "brass" of those days, like the brass of the Bible, was really bronze, that is, copper and tin.

Although Cornwall was the chief source of tin for occidental nations in the early days, Spain, Saxony, and Bohemia produced some. Lead was plentiful, but the people of central Europe seem to have made vessels of what we call "block tin" before they used the alloy later known as pewter. Thus the name for pewter in Germany is the same as that for tin, Zinn, and in France both are called Etain. Block tin is not, as some appear to think, pure tin, but the product as it comes from the smelter, with various impurities, some of them difficult to remove. In Nuremberg in Bavaria, in Saxony, in France, in Holland, and in Belgium, the pewter industry has flourished since the 12th and 13th centuries. It was controlled by guilds in various local centers, not by a single great company as in England. One of the curious facts, to which Mrs. Lang did not advert, was that although English "tin" became the standard for the Continental Countries, it was to the French formulae brought to England after the Restoration in 1660 that English pewter owed its superiority.

Mrs. Lang had dug up many facts that were of interest in the history of Continental pewterdom, one of which was that a Charnold Lucas once worked at Ghent. Was he a relative of our as yet somewhat fabulous Ivory Lucas?

During her numerous wanderings in Europe, and North and South America the speaker had found various interesting pieces which served to illustrate her talk. It is regretted that many things conspired to keep the attendance at this meeting below the normal level. It is to be hoped that it was the last of those influenced by war conditions.

October 20, 1945. A second unusual event of the year was the meeting at the Brooklyn Museum on Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, Long Island. The Trustees and staff acted as our hosts, and entertained us most royally, with both mental and physical refreshment. As our honorary member, Charles Messer Stow, said in his Quester column in the New York Sun, on October 26:

"A considerable number of members from the parent organization in Boston came down and found (a) the best collection of American pewter possessed by any museum in the country; (b) the ennoblement of their pots and panni-

kins, their bowls and basons into the expression of an art form; (c) a stimulus in the New York pace which will do the somewhat easygoing otiose Boston spirit no harm whatever." (I looked up that word otiose in the dictionary and am not sure whether it was intended in the common sense of being at leisure, unemployed, indolent, idle, or in the anthropological sense of a supreme deity, remote, or aloof. I have a feeling that we have received a hint.) At any rate, we saw that the Brooklyn Museum is exceedingly alive, and we left full of enthusiasm as well as other things.

Madame President, Mrs. William V. Wallburg, was expecting her son home on that day from a thirteen-month tour of duty in the Pacific, so she deputized ex-President Mrs. Eaton H. Perkins to preside, which she did in her usual capable manner. The one great disappointment of the meeting came when she asked those members of the Club present to raise a hand. Only sixteen responded, although two or three more came in later. This poor showing was doubtless partly due to the fact that it was Navy Week. "The fleet was in," and the New York hotels refused reservations to many, much to their own subsequent chagrin. Invitations to the meeting had been sent to about 125 members of the Club, about 175 non-members, and about 200 members and friends of the Brooklyn Museum. There were about 75 people present.

The meeting being outside the Boston area, the duties which normally would have fallen to Mr. Rupert W. Jaques as program chairman were performed by the chairman of the local committee, Mrs. Philip Huntington. She was at her best, claiming the meeting, not for New York, but as the first in her beloved forty-ninth state, Long Island. She introduced Curator John M. Graham 2d, who welcomed the gathering in behalf of the Trustees and Staff. She then called upon "that peculiar person," Mr. Arthur W. Clement, who gave the main address. We soon saw why he might be called peculiar. In the first place he is a Trustee who works as actively and intelligently as a Curator, he is a member of the Club who doesn't own a single piece of pewter and doesn't want one (he buys it and gives it to the Museum), and is a man who in less than a year has become so much a master of pewter-knowledge that he was able to make us old-timers sit up and take notice. His enthusiasm is unbounded and infectious. Yet he is an authority on ceramics, on which he has published and is writing. This eulogy of a Trustee is perhaps called forth by my forty-one years of experience in working under them. Mr. Clement is *avis rara.*

One does not know which to admire more, the principal address, or the splendid exhibition of pewter which we were especially invited to see. To quote again from P. E. R. in the New York Sun:

"Pewter is at last recognized as a form of art, not merely a craft, in its exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum. Too few people realize how pewter vessels were made. Most directors of art museums think that all that was involved was the pouring of a mess of hot metal into a mold. But that is not the whole process. The cast so produced was turned on a lathe, reshaped, hammered, parts soldered together, finished. It was not a purely mechanical process. The human element entered. If the artisan was an artist, even a humble plate gained something from his work.

"And how about the designers of the molds? Too often we are told that pewterers merely copied the silversmiths. There is some truth in that, for

everyone wants to be in fashion, whether it be in dress or the streaks of paint which are accepted as art. Reverting to the humble plate, dish, or platter, the silversmiths never reached the heights achieved by the late seventeenth century pewterers. Somehow the designers of the molds found a proportion, a sense of balance, a beauty of line, that made a purely utilitarian vessel an object of art.

"This is what the Brooklyn Museum has tried to convey in its recent special exhibition, held over for a meeting of the Pewter Collectors' Club, so, thanks to Arthur W. Clement and John M. Graham 2d, pewter has at last been shown as it should be. Mr. Clement insisted that only a few pieces, seventy-five as it happened, be selected from their wealth of material. Mr. Graham arranged the groups, with proper colors and lighting. The writer has seen the collections of pewter in most of the important museums of North America and northern Europe, but he has never previously seen anything like this. It has set a new standard and shown conclusively that pewter, properly selected, belongs in a museum of art. 'Pewter looks well on an oak dresser,' is an oft repeated statement. But Mr. Graham has shown that it looks even better against a background of buff, coral, or peach. As now shown, attention is focussed on the pewter itself, not on the Jacobean dresser on which it is placed.

"Many took part in the discussion which followed Mr. Clement's paper, in which he discussed pewter in general, and the John W. Poole collection in particular. We were glad to see there, and have identified to the audience by the presiding officer, such well-known members as Mr. and Mrs. Paul J. Franklin, Mr. Ledlie I. Laughlin, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Messer Stow, John Remensnyder, Charles F. Montgomery, Mr. and Mrs. Bertram K. Little, and your humble servant. It was an unusual, highly enjoyable, profitable occasion. Particularly important, because it led to definite plans for the long-discussed New York (and vicinity) pewter club."

PERCY E. RAYMOND,
Corresponding Secretary.

PLANS FOR ANOTHER CLUB

For many years we have hoped that local clubs, within our central organization, would be formed at places where there were groups of people interested in pewter. Several years ago we thought that one would be started in New York, but no definite action was taken.

After the meeting in Brooklyn, an informal committee got together, with obvious enthusiasm, and considerable prospect of success. Up to the time this was written (October 28), no formal organization has been made, but it is probable that before this Bulletin has been distributed, all the members within reasonable distance of New York will have heard of the project. Anyone interested is invited to communicate with one of those listed below.

Mrs. Philip Huntington, 251 Littleworth Lane, Sea Cliff, Long Island. (For New York and vicinity and Long Island)

Mrs. Paul J. Franklin, 346 Main Street, Chatham, New Jersey. (For New Jersey)

Mrs. T. Ferdinand Wilcox, Smith Ridge, New Canaan, Conn. (For southwestern Connecticut)

THREE EMBRYO NEW YORK PEWTERERS

By LEDLIE I. LAUGHLIN

In the New York Historical Society's Bulletin for July, 1939, is printed a list of five hundred residents of New York City in 1775 with their occupations. The list, which includes three pewterers of whom we, as collectors, had no previous knowledge, was taken from a thin notebook dated July 8, 1775, found among the Alexander McDougall manuscripts.

Dorothy C. Barck has provided, with the list, an interesting commentary upon its *raison d'être* and I trust that she will pardon me for presenting in abridged form that story.

News of the Battle of Lexington reached New York City on Sunday, April 23, 1775. That evening a number of hotheads broke into the City Hall and seized five hundred muskets belonging to the City. These were distributed to patriot sympathizers and in most cases, at least, receipts were signed by the recipients.

For several weeks, while a return to peaceful relations with the mother country hung in the balance, the self-appointed minute-men patrolled the streets armed with their City-owned muskets. When, in July, the Second Continental Congress called upon New York to raise three thousand troops, the muskets were called in by the Provincial Congress.

The notebook which contains the list was then prepared, apparently on the basis of the receipts for muskets which had been signed in April. Each page is ruled into four columns headed respectively: To whom Delivered, The Number of the Musket, Occupation, and Place of Abode.

The entries that are of particular interest to us are:

McCuen, Malcomb, 518, Plumber, 18 Burling Slip (no bayonet).
Van Kleeck, Peter, 801, Pewterer, Partition Street.
Van Dalsom, John, 530, Pewterer, Cortland Street.
Wilson, Joseph, 699, Pewterer, Dock Street.
Young, Peter, 871 (No occupation or address entered).

The list includes none of the New York pewterers who had well-established shops at that date. It is true that McCuen and Young are well known to us, but in 1775 they were just starting their careers. Although the list includes a few men of mature age and established standing, the majority appear to have been students, apprentices, and young journeymen or tradesmen—the material of which rebellions are made.

Only a modest search has been made for information about the later careers of Messrs. Van Kleeck, Van Dalsom and Wilson and so far nothing to indicate their later connection with pewter-making has been found.

A "Peter Van Cleck, sergeant in 3rd Co. 2nd Regt. Philip Van Cortland, Colonel," died May 31, 1777, and on September 6, 1791, letters of administration upon the estate of "Peter Van Kleek of New York City, sergeant in Cortlandt's late regiment," were granted to Catharine Seaman, late Catharine Van Kleek, widow of the deceased. It seems reasonable to assume that the young patriot who carried a musket in the days preceding the hostilities, enlisted when war broke out and died in the service.

It may be recalled that William J. Elsworth, New York pewterer, married Ann Van Dalsam. According to the records of the Reformed Dutch Church

in New York, John Van Dalsen was one of the witnesses at the wedding of "William Elswort and Annatje Van Dalsen." This combination of circumstances leads naturally to the supposition that John was a young brother-in-law who was apprenticed to Elsworth to learn the pewtering trade. He evidently did not follow it for long, for in the city directory for 1791 the only man of that name was listed as a ferryman living at Courtlandt St., the same street, incidentally, which the young pewterer gave as his address in 1775 and the location also of Elsworth's shop until 1798.

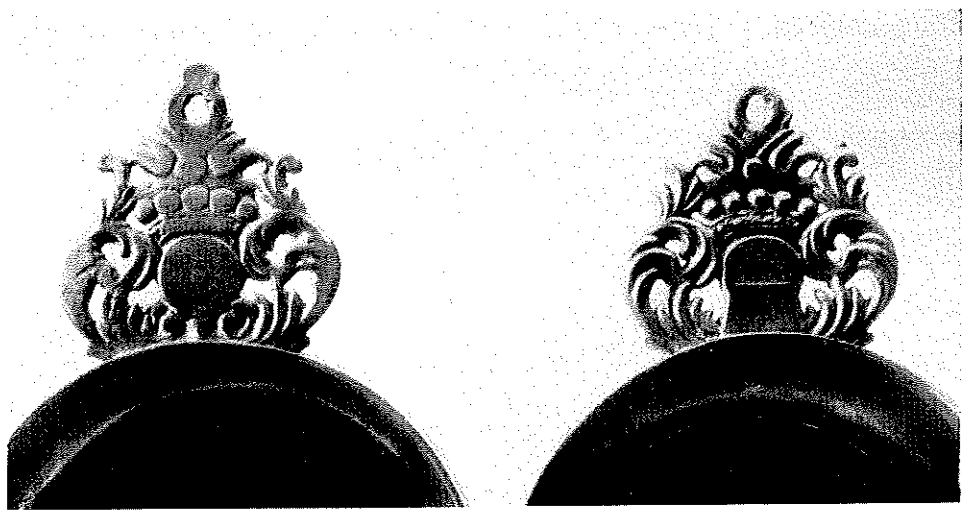
Of Joseph Wilson even less could be found. A man of that name married Sarah Hubbs on June 22, 1775, and a Joseph Wilson, soapboiler and tallow chandler, had a shop on Beekman Street in 1792. It is pure conjecture whether the Joseph Wilson of either of these records was the musket-bearing pewterer.

Had any of these men attained prominence in the pewtering business we should long before this have discovered some evidence of his work or some written record of the existence of his shop, but it may be that one or more of them had a shop of his own in New York for a short period.

CROWN-HANDLED PORRINGERS

By PERCY E. RAYMOND

Crown-handled porringers are by no means rare. Some of them were at one time so common that serious collectors declined to look at them. Others are so rare that I have never seen them. But they have always been of interest, because it has been impossible to prove the origin of the more common ones. I can furnish nothing toward the solution of the "initialed porringer" problem, but it seems a good idea to stir up old questions from time to time. I have looked at hundreds of these objects, always hopefully. With more and more people looking, questioningly, there is more and more chance that new facts will turn up.



FIGURES 1 AND 2.
Two of the four types of crown-handles,
Stephen Cox at left, TD & SB at right.
A little more than one-half natural size.

This handle is familiar to all collectors. In the lower, central portion is a flat, undecorated shield, above which is a narrow bordered band (barrulet in heraldry), ornamented with small raised dots, generally of two sizes. Above this, in turn, is a row of five or six conspicuous bosses. On either side are rococo supporters which merge into the apical, sub-triangular area with an oval aperture for hanging.

All of these porringers are of the boss type; that is, they have a large circular raised area in the bottom of the basin. But when one comes to study them in detail, one finds that there are two sorts of boss porringers. The most common American ones, including all the large ones, have a marked constriction about five-eighths of an inch below the top, above which the gentle curvature changes abruptly to a straight-sided, vertical or slightly flaring border or flange. Shall we be ungrammatical and call this the flange-boss type? Less common in this country, except in the smaller sizes, are those boss porringers in which the curvature of the basin is continuous till it reaches a narrow, horizontal rim. Equally ungrammatically, this could be called the rim-boss type. All of the crown-handled porringers which I have seen have the flange-boss type of basin.

Many of these porringers are unmarked. Most of the others belong to Kerfoot's "initialed group." These are the real tantalizers. Kerfoot listed those marked I G as by far the most common, with S G and W W tied for second place. It might be remarked that only the S of S G is reversed, and that, as Laughlin pointed out, the W W is really W N. Kerfoot said those marked R G were rare, in which I should agree, for I have never been able to purchase one. From my experience, I should say that S G and I G were about equally common, and W N somewhat less so. Incidentally, one of my specimens of the latter is marked W N 44, if that means anything. The X may be an imperfect X.

All these initials are in relief, and, except for the W N, somewhat clumsily cut into the mold in which the handle was cast. About equally common with the ones marked W N are those in which the shield bears the stamp T D & S B in intaglio, the well-known touch of Thomas D. and Sherman Boardman of Hartford, Conn. There can be no question about their origin. The most spectacular of these specimens is the double-eared one figured by Myers. The unmarked and initialed specimens are, as Kerfoot said, "frequently found in the country tributary to Boston," and are doubtless of New England origin.

Kerfoot, on page 145 of his well-known book, refers to "Fig. 227" as a "five-inch specimen with the once fashionable English type of handle." One wishes one knew why this remark. It is undoubtedly correct, but so far as I have been able to learn, there is nothing in the published literature available to Kerfoot to justify it. The only English crown-handled porringer I know or can learn about is one which Merton Wheelock got from George Gebelein some years ago, and later let me have when he broke up his collection of porringers. We do not know the original source. The handle is peculiar, in that it is less convex than the ear of any American specimen. One gets the impression that that this is due to hammer-work, rather than to the original casting, for the barrulet is almost completely smooth, and the five bosses above it are flattened, and thus abnormally large. I hope other members have English specimens, so that we can learn what the normal appearance was. Perhaps the flattening is due to over-enthusiastic scouring. Mr. Laughlin has a Kirby specimen with similar flattening, and attributes the condition to wear.

On the under side of the ear is a circular touch, which evidently read originally STEPHEN COX. All that remains in the present condition is HEN COX. This touch is not in Cotterell. There was a Stephen Cox at Bristol who was apprenticed to Edward Gregory, was elected to freedom in Bristol, July 4, 1735, and who died in 1754. His three known touches are totally unlike that on the porringer in question, two being of the waisted type, one square. Yet somehow one is inclined to think that this Bristol man may have had a circular touch. We know that Bristol had a busy trade with the Colonies, and that much Cox pewter is found here. It is probable that this was one of many crown-handled porringers which came across between 1735 and 1754.

Kerfoot's statement that this type of porringer was once popular in England is further supported by two of the rarer American forms. These are the earliest specimens known to have been made in this country, and each is represented by a single example. I have to thank Mr. Laughlin for calling my attention to them. One I knew about, but had forgotten. That is by Joseph Belcher of Newport, well illustrated by Calder in the photograph on page five of his "Rhode Island Pewterers" of 1924. Whether this was made by the elder Joseph Belcher, working probably from 1769-1776, or his scape-grace son Joseph, working 1776-1784 (*teste* Laughlin) cannot be proven, but it matters little, for father owned molds, one-half of which were left to Junior. Who got the other half?

Curiously enough, what seems to be this mold turned up in the possession of Josiah Danforth, who worked in Middletown, Conn., from 1825-1837. For information about his porringers, I am entirely indebted to Mr. Laughlin. I had never seen or even heard of a Josiah Danforth porringer till he told me that all of Josiah's specimens were of the crown-handled type, and all like Belcher's. "All" in this case, seems to be eight or ten examples. No other Danforth is known to have used this type of mold. It would be interesting to know how Josiah got it.

The second early type, probably older than Belcher's, has been existing *incognito* for some time, and even when its picture was taken, it was with its face to the wall, so I do not blame myself too much for not knowing about it. Laughlin shows a photograph of the back of the handle as Fig. 579, pl. LXIX, of his volume 2. It is placed among the pieces having unidentified touches, but the I L in a circle, he believes to have been the mark of Joseph Leddell (working 1712-1753) or Joseph Leddell, Jr. (working 1740-1754) in New York. Joseph Leddell, Sr., brought some of his molds from England and left them to his son. This one seems to have passed on to William Kirby of New York (1760-1793). Another face-to-the-wall photograph (Laughlin, vol. 2, pl. LXII, fig. 503) shows the handle of a Kirby specimen in Mr. Laughlin's collection. Of course the identification of the I L touch is not positive, but it seems probable that what I shall call the Leddell-Kirby mold came from England; one presumes that the Belcher-Josiah Danforth mold did; but one is on less solid ground when one comes to the third eighteenth-century type of crown-handled porringers. These are ascribed by Mr. Laughlin to John (1773-1793) Danforth of Norwich or his nephew Joseph (1780-1788) Danforth of Middletown. A photograph of a part of the handle of the only known specimen is shown by Laughlin's pl. LI, fig. 357, vol. 1. This mold or one very like it,

was later used by Thomas Danforth Boardman and by Thomas Danforth and Sherman Boardman at Hartford, probably between 1810 and 1830.

Let us turn now to the nineteenth century specimens, the ones which most of us have.

Looking over my little group of nine of these vessels, I see at once that they are much alike, yet there are obvious differences. The basins are of various sizes, although they seem at first to fall into two groups, small and large. Measurements of the diameter at the top show that I G and S G (small) are 4¼ inches; W N (small), 4⅜ inches; Cox, 4⅞ inches; T D & S B and an unmarked specimen, 5 inches; and W N (large) and S G (large), 5½ inches.

Turning now to the handles, it will be seen that there are numerous differences among them. The central shield is shaped more or less like an old-fashioned key-hole cover and is severely plain in the W N (large) and the T D & S B. It is plain but laterally constricted (waisted) in the W N (small), I G, S G (small), and according to Kerfoot's photograph, in the R G. In the S G (large), and the specimens with no touch, the shield is not only laterally constricted, but has a pair of conspicuous lateral basal bosses. This is carried to an extreme in the Cox specimen, in which the shield is circular, supported by a sort of stalk with lateral bosses.

Specimens by I G, S G (small), R G, and W N (small) have a row of six large bosses above the barrulet, whereas the W N (large), S G (large), the unmarked, the T D & S B, and the Cox all have five.

All handles have brackets, and with the exception of the I G, they are triangular. Those on the W N (large), S G (large), unmarked, T D & S B, and Cox are short, with an obtuse-angled apex. S G (small) has an acute-angled apex, and a definite rat-tail. I G is peculiar in that the lower end of the bracket is rounded. There is a narrow rat-tail on the under side of the ear.

I know that this analysis is rather confusing and boresome reading. It was entered upon primarily in an attempt to decide how many molds would have to be employed to produce these porringers. They are superficially so much alike that there has been a rather general impression that they may have come from one or two centers, a supposition to some extent supported by the initials I G, R G, and S G. So far as the small ones are concerned, the supposition does seem fairly well supported by the data. All three basins could have come from the same mold, and they are the only ones of 4½ inches diameter. I have not seen the R G specimen, but a comparison of the S G (small) and I G handles is interesting. The S G (small) is clean-cut, well finished. Both my I G's are crude, badly run, and unfinished. Both have rat-tails and six bosses, but seem at first glance to have been made in different molds, for the S G (small) has a triangular bracket, whereas that of I G is rounded. I think as a matter of fact, that they were different molds, the S G a permanent one, the I G a temporary one, probably made of plaster of Paris, and modified as to bracket. Various minor differences, not enumerated here, suggest this.

Some years ago, Mr. and Mrs. Paul J. Franklin interviewed a granddaughter of Roswell Gleason. Mrs. Franklin published their findings in the Boston Transcript and the New York Sun in the issues for May 7, 1938. They became convinced that Gleason made porringers of two types, but unfortunately did not find any marked examples. The granddaughter had two specimens, one

with a crown-handle, the other with a heart and crescent type, known to have been produced by Richard Lee, among others. The lady remembered getting the latter herself "over at the factory," and believed that the other came from the same source. Her grandmother Gleason owned it, and insisted that it have a tin lid. The circumstantial evidence certainly points to the Gleason factory. Mr. Franklin made a sketch of the crown handle (published in the Sun). It is not the I G, the R G, or the S G (small) type, but is that of the S G (large). Roswell Gleason had a brother Sarell, who learned the pewterer's trade, but later became a prosperous undertaker. R G were his own initials. I G does not fit into the picture at all.

Gleason advertised porringers along with other articles he is known to have made. The circumstantial evidence is strong for the Franklin theory. Yet the writer still hesitates to believe that porringers were a part of his regular output. If they were, why have we none with his well-known touches?

A possible solution to the problem is that there were a couple of old crown-handled molds at the factory, and that S. G. was allowed to play with these on his own time. The S G (large) and the unmarked handles could have been made in the same molds, although the basins are of different sizes, an unimportant feature. I G was, I think, just a plain bootlegger. Roswell Gleason would not have sponsored his sloppy work.

One reason for thinking that the S G (large) mold originally belonged to a pewterer earlier than Gleason is that the handle is exceedingly like that of the Cox specimen. Another relationship is between the W N (large) and the T D & S B. The handles of these could have been made in the same mold, although the basins are of different sizes.

From this study emerges the fact that there are two main types of these handles. One has a circular central shield, the other, what for a better term, I have called the key-hole-cover shield. There are intermediate forms, readily recognizable, so that there is a total of four varieties.

1. Belcher type. No support below the circular shield, but two small bosses beneath it. The bases of the scrolls are slender and do not turn inward. There are three bosses on the barrulet, and five above it. On the back of the handle is a median keystone-shaped reinforcement which covers the area usually occupied by the lowest pair of apertures. The Josiah Danforth handle has all these characteristics.

2. Cox type. Circular shield with a narrow support. The basal portions of the scrolls turn inward and upward, supporting bosses next to the shield. There are five bosses above the barrulet. The I L (Joseph Leddell) and Kirby handles are of this, which might well be called the English type. Mr. Laughlin has also figured (vol. 1, pl. XII, fig. 60) a W N (small) specimen of this type.

3. Danforth type. Plain key-hole-cover type. There are no bosses at the base, and the scrolls are more perfect than in the two mentioned above. There are five or six bosses above the barrulet. Those with five are the I D (John or Joseph Danforth), T D B, T D & S B, and the large W N. Those with six bosses include the small S G and most of the small W N. The exception is mentioned above under the Cox type.

4. The I G - S G type. In these the key-hole-cover shield is modified by a constriction of the lower portion by two large bosses. These are a part of the

shield, not attached to the scrolls. There are five bosses above the barrulet in the large S G sort, and six in the I G. There are probably six in the R G specimen, but one cannot be sure when looking at Kerfoot's poor photograph of what is probably a poor specimen.

It is interesting to note that both W N and S G had two molds for handles. I cannot avoid the feeling that these were of English origin, and that if they were used in the nineteenth century, they were "second hand."

I began this article as a *tour de force.* No one had sent in any contributions for Bulletin 17. I wanted an article on American pewter, so I wrote one myself. I sent a copy to Mr. Laughlin, and he furnished me with so much information about the rare types that crown-handled porringers have risen greatly in my estimation. I doubt very much if any one collector or institution has a full series.

I wish people who have so much more information about American pewter than I have would send in articles for publication.

PRE-REVOLUTIONARY COFFEEPOTS

Mrs. Lura Woodside Watkins has sent me the following items, culled from the account of losses sustained in the fire of 1760. They are in Boston City Documents, no. 100, vol. 29.

To a large tinn coffee pott 15/.
4 doz. hard mettle plates £40.
6 soup ditto, 6 water ditto £10.
2 coffee pots £9.
One doz. coffee [cups, saucers] £6.
4 lbs. coffee 28/.
1 coffee mill £4, 10 s.
1 Tinn coffee pott 7/6.

The values are evidently given in terms of the depreciated Colonial currency. Perhaps the chief interest lies in the references to "tinn" coffee pots. Yankees seem to have been boiling their coffee in 1760 just as they did in 1860, and for perhaps half a century more.

P. E. R.

UNUSUAL DISCOVERIES

Shortly before the invasion of Holland my brother was fortunate enough to come to the U. S. A. Knowing about my interest in pewter, he brought along a few pieces from the large collections assembled by my relatives.

When I received the gift I was in no particular hurry to check the numerous touches. However, when I did so my joy and surprise were equally great in the discovery of a plate which bears the touch and "hall-marks" of John Skinner, Boston.

The plate is 8⅞ inches in diameter, and the flat rim is 1⅛ inches wide. Holland is hardly a place where one would expect to find American pewter.

ERIC DE JONGE.

Mr. de Jonge suggests that we carry a series on "Unusual Discoveries," of which this would be the first. One of the interesting things about collecting is

the surprise of finding something outside its expected range. (See report of meeting of November 25, 1944, on a previous page.) I remember seeing a porringer with an unusually pleasing handle on exhibition at the Victoria and Albert in London. I thought it might be the prototype of the "flowered" handle, but was disgusted to learn it was made in Rhode Island. It seems entirely probable that much American pewter went to the West Indies along with Lord Timothy Dexter's famous warming pans. Have members had "unusual discoveries" on those islands?

P. E. R.

DICKENSIANA

. . . "so Sam Weller booked them all, and having exchanged a few compliments with the booking office clerk on the subject of a pewter half crown which was tendered him as a portion of his 'change,' walked back to the George and Vulture."

. . . "the beer being served up, as Mr. Sawyer remarked, 'in its native pewter'."

Pickwick Papers.

WILLIAM GAMALIEL SNOW

William G. Snow, who joined the Club when he was eighty, was stricken at his desk at the International Silver Company in Meriden, Conn., on Thursday morning, October 11, 1945, and died that afternoon. Although he was known personally to only a few of us, he had done much for the Club in making available the records of the early pewter and Britannia makers of Meriden and vicinity.

Mr. Snow joined the Meriden Britannia Company in 1893, and when International Silver took over, became advertising manager. In 1939 he retired from this post and was appointed director of research and historian of the Company.

Although he was greatly interested in printing, having edited, published, and printed the Granville (Mass.) Sun at the early age of seventeen, he was diffident about writing for publication. He contributed articles of local historical interest to the Meriden Record, but when approached for something for the Bulletin, he modestly said that he could furnish materials, but preferred that others should write them up. Some of the information did come directly to us in Ledlie Laughlin's "Rambles in Britannia-Land" in Bulletin 13. His mind was full of information about the silver industry. It is much regretted that he did not leave us a book.

P. E. R.

MEMBERS

This list is as of September 1, 1945. Contrary to usual custom, it is arranged alphabetically, instead of geographically. Those marked with an asterisk are entitled to wear the Master-Members' badge.

The Master-Members' badge is awarded at the birthday dinner to those who have remained in good standing for five years. Mistakes in bookkeeping do occur. If any person entitled to receive one has not done so, please notify

the Corresponding Secretary at once. There is no rule about wearing the badge. Traditionally, the President wears it at all meetings; the members at the birthday dinner. We were pleased to see the two badges on the wall above the collection in one of the pewter rooms at Highwood.

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