Bulletin No. 28. June, 1951.

The
PEWTER COLLECTORS' CLUB
of AMERICA

VOLUME 2. NUMBER 9.

OFFICERS, 1950-51

President, MRS. HENRY W. BORNTRAEGER — Wellesley Hills, Mass.
Vice-Presidents, MR. ERIC DE JONGE
ex-officio, for the New York Regional Group
MRS. CHARLES A. HOLBROOK
MRS. PHILIP HUNTINGTON
MR. CHARLES F. MONTGOMERY
Governing Board, MRS. CHARLES I. BOYNTON
MRS. JOSEPH W. ROSS
MR. RICHARD STAMMERS
Clerk and Corresponding Secretary, MRS. EATON H. PERKINS
86 Ardsmoor Road, Melrose, Mass.
Treasurer, MRS. WILLIAM V. WALLBURG
1 Meadowview Road, Melrose, Mass.
Program Committee, MRS. OLIVER W. DEMING
MR. FRANK C. DOBLE
MRS. EATON H. PERKINS
Membership Committee, MR. CHARLES F. MONTGOMERY
MRS. FRANK COGAN
Publication Committee, MISS JULIETTE TOMLINSON, MRS. JOHN L. ORSER
DR. PERCY E. RAYMOND, *Chairman*

NEW YORK REGIONAL GROUP

Chairman and Acting Secretary, MR. ERIC DE JONGE
1152 Avenue of the Americas, New York City, N. Y.
Vice-Chairmen, MR. ROBERT H. ELLENBERGER
MR. JOHN M. GRAHAM, 2d
MRS. PHILIP HUNTINGTON
Clerk and Corresponding Secretary, DR. KURT M. SEMON
19 West 44th Street, New York 18, N. Y.
Treasurer, MR. CHARLES F. EDGECOMB
37 Washington Square W, New York 11, N. Y.
Governing Board, MRS. JOHN H. BALLANTINE
MR. LEDLIE I. LAUGHLIN
MR. ALLAN REITER
MR. JOHN P. REMENSNYDER
Program Committee, MR. ARTHUR W. CLEMENT
MRS. KATHERINE P. MURPHY

THE PEWTERERS OF JEWISH CEREMONIAL OBJECTS

By Eric de Jonge

The exhibit of "Pewter in Jewish Art" had a certain importance, as it was the first time that Jewish ceremonial objects of pewter had been accorded the attention they have so long deserved.

Although there have been numerous exhibits of Jewish art and ceremonial objects, here in the United States as well as all over the world, ceremonial pewter has been deplorably neglected. Although they do not, or only rarely do, suggest the ceremonies of synagogues and temples to us, they, more than any others, make us cognizant of the religious ceremonies of the Jewish home. They also convey, by the arrangement of their decorations and inscriptions, the innate sense of art in the heart of simple mankind, finding its culmination in what is known today as folk art.

Even the greatest exhibition of this kind, the Anglo-Jewish Exhibition at the Royal Albert Hall in London in 1887, did not show amongst its Channukkahlamps, examples of the few really indigenous Jewish objects, the pewter ones. The New York Jewish Museum is able to exhibit more pewter lamps than those the London exhibition had on display made from all other materials. These previous omissions should be now forgotten as this exhibit confines itself exclusively to the lowly pewter. The magnificent collection of this Museum lends itself to this task as no other one could.

Some time ago, when I mentioned that I should have to speak about "The Pewterers of Jewish Ceremonial Objects," I said that I did not know what to say about them. Someone gave me unknowingly the most pertinent fact for this part of the symposium. Misunderstanding the title of this lecture, he told me: "Confine yourself to a few words and say: 'There aren't any'."

It seems, in fact, that there were no Jewish pewterers. Although there were pewterers of every other faith and denomination who fashioned ceremonial objects for use in their individual cults, we do not have any definite knowledge of Jewish pewterers who would be the makers of their ceremonial articles, at least as far as strictly Jewish objects are concerned, and not such articles as were easily adapted to this purpose. The great majority of the exhibited specimens are of German origin. There are also numerous excellent examples of French, Bohemian, Dutch, and English pewtercraft. However, when I contemplated mentioning all the pewterers whose work is represented here, I realized that this would be an impossible task for the limited time allotted to the individual speaker of a symposium. As almost all exhibited pewter pieces are by different makers, and since no outstanding name is amongst them, a recitation of names and dates would be monotonous. I also have to consider the unfamiliarity here with the names of Continental pewterers, or even of the English craftsmen. Their names are those of simple workaday artisans who plied their affairs with greater than usual skill and sense of form and artistry.

Let us return to the Jewish pewterers or rather, to the lack of them. We can assume, that amongst those pewterers whose identities are yet to be discovered, there may have been Jews, for their co-religionists worked at all other crafts. Their anonymity can be easily explained by a little discourse on Jewish history.

Until the beginning of the 19th century the Jews in the majority of the

European countries were more or less severely restricted in their activities and endeavors. One of the foremost of these restrictions was the prohibition to learn or to take up trades and crafts in the customary manner. Official and unofficial laws and customs did not permit them to be apprenticed to an established master of a craft. Consequently they could not become journeymen. Since nobody could become a master who had not served his time as an apprentice and afterward as a journeyman for a number of years, admittance to craft or trade associations, guilds, or any other organizations which were set up to regulate and protect trade activities and procedures, was definitely precluded. Most of these organizations ruled that their members must affix their names or marks as means of identification of their products. These marks being officially recognized, provided an efficient and interesting register of crafts and tradesmen of their time. We know of these marks and names through old city registers and guild log-books.

There is concrete evidence that Jewish craftsmen worked at almost every trade for their own use or for the benefit of their community. Some of them, with a superior skill and talent were even called upon to serve outside of their own circles. As they were unable to enter any established craft in a recognized capacity, their names cannot be found in any of these registers and although they worked unofficially at these trades, it would have been very imprudent to put an identifying mark onto their handiwork. Severe penalties would have been the consequence. In countries with less restrictive laws the order for identification marks was not so stringently enforced, but even there the additional expense of a die to stamp their products might be avoided.

There are some indications that in a few countries, particularly Bohemia, France, Holland, and in Eastern Europe, Jewish pewterers were active. However, one cannot give too much consideration to names, symbols or residences which point in that direction. Without definite proof, we have to be satisfied with the assumption only, and we recognize, that if not all, the overwhelming part of the Jewish ceremonial pewter was not made by Jews. We are not even able to find a Jewish pewterer who worked in the 19th century, after their emancipation was a reality. But at that time the decline of the pewterers craft began, and concurrently with the lifting of the restrictive laws, the business of being a pewterer became unprofitable, and it became an almost forgotten craft a few decades after the Jewish emancipation in Europe.

As with the ceremonial and ecclesiastical pewter objects of other faiths, full use was made originally of those domestic utensils which could be readily adapted to a loftier purpose. One only had to take a plate or charger of sufficient size, decorate it or have it decorated with the Hebrew words, ornamentations, and symbols pertaining to the ceremonies for which the object was intended. From the wriggled, joggled, and, more rarely, engraved decorations, we see that this work was done mostly by some unskilled home artist in his leisure time, for in most cases the ornamentation is simple and amateurish, in other cases, very crude. Some were decorated by highly skilled artist-engravers, an art in which the Jews of that time excelled to such an extent that a number of them were in the highly respected employ of reigning sovereigns.

Since all Passover and Purim plates follow the conventional forms of their periods, domestic use was their original destiny. The beginning of the

19th century brought a deviation from this pattern, a differently styled plate in which the ornamentation and decorations were integral parts of the casting. These later plates were not, or scarcely could be used for ceremonies, as the rather deep and heavy reliefs of the pictorial ornaments did not lend themselves conveniently to this purpose. Interpretations of the wording clearly indicate that they were cast to serve as decorations and ornaments of the Jewish home only, just as the renaissance plates of Germany and France were meant for this purpose. Judging from the execution of these pictorial castings, rather expensive molds could at that time be afforded by the pewterers to satisfy an expanded market.

The existing examples of hollowware again are adaptations to a purpose from the domestic utensil. Special molds for ceremonial hollowware probably would have raised the price of these articles so high, that with a slightly greater sacrifice, silver could have been bought just as well, silver being the ultimate goal of everyone for devotional purposes.

Not every ceremonial piece could be adapted from a plain domestic utensil. The indigenous Jewish pewter object, which was made only for one particular purpose and could only serve for this, deserves special consideration. Under typical Jewish pewter we may include the Channukkahlamps, Shabbothlamps, and certain types of spice boxes. I might perhaps include the wall fountain in the possession of this Museum, for it is ornamented with a number of biblical figures surmounting the cover, an exquisite specimen of the work of a gifted pewterer. It is hard to believe that some of this indigenous pewter could be the product of a small local pewterer, for it required pretty expensive molds which were out of proportion with the profit derived from an occasional casting of one of these lamps.

Some parts of these Channukkahlamps could have been adapted from pewter salt or taper boxes, but even then they required additional molds to finish them. The majority, however, have unique designs and relief castings requiring special molds altogether. Molds were always costly affairs even for pewter which sold more readily than the Jewish pewter. They probably could be afforded only by a very affluent pewterer with an extensive clientele. So when we find that a great many of these lamps have identical designs and ornamentations on their bases, but that other, movable parts differ, and when we also observe that they bear the touches of different makers, not necessarily of the same town, but within the same area, we again have proof that the exchange of molds or their loan through guilds, holds true in this case.

These pewter Channukkah and, even more so, Shabbothlamps are somewhat rare articles. That so few survived is due partly to the destructive heat to which they were subjected when they were not properly watched. Brass or tin wick-holders replaced in many cases the all-pewter wick-holder, and lamps furnished with this improvement fared much better. Most of these lamps were made during the 18th century in Germany, where towns were relatively close together and where Jewish communities thrived. A ready market was assured which could be served easily by pooling molds. Some lamps, with so-far unidentified touches, seem to have originated in countries adjacent to Germany, which is reasonable to assume as they also had their Jewish communities and their pewterers.

Adolphe Riff, in his *Les Etains Strasbourgois*, comments, that even though

the Strasbourg museum has a number of Passover plates in its possession, it never had a pewter Channukkahlamp, particularly not a French one, or, *mirabile dictu,* one made by a Strasbourg pewterer. He concludes, that although a French lamp was unknown to him at the time of the publication of his book, (1925), the French and Alsatian pewterers must have made them also, since they made everything else. Ordinarily, this would be a very disputable statement, in view of the fact that there was always a ready interchange of goods and even pewterers across the borders of this area, but this statement is not without logic.

Strange as it may seem, there is not a piece of Russian pewter in this large collection. One would expect that the large Jewish population of the old Russia would be well represented. It is my idea that here England enters the picture. English and Russian pewter were at times so intertwined that one hardly knows the difference. We know that a great many Russian pewter objects bear English touches. Germany, Bohemia, and Sweden all had pewterers working in Russia and the export from these countries into Russia also was considerable. England, however, seems to have played a singular role. According to Zebelins *History of Moscow*. an English pewter factory was set up there as early as 1629. Russia at that time had very little pewter and even fewer pewterers. Trade with Russia started to boom and a valuable export to Russia was English pewter; not the metal, the finished products only. This one-way trade reminds us of the English exports to its colonies in America. The import increased and by the beginning of the 18th century, hardly a household of the gentry or landowners was without English pewter. With only four pewterers in Moscow in 1650, the local pewter supply must have been very small and did not improve greatly until Russia commenced to import foreign craftsmen. After Russian pewterers emerged from their apprenticeship, they could not replace the foreign masters completely, so the English pewterers still played a dominant role. Their touches were always a recommendation and since the Russians in many instances worked with inferior metal and had mediocre forms and designs, one desired the better product. The English factory worked under one restriction; it could sell directly only to the courts of nobility and to the churches. To the general public they could only sell through the medium of Russian wholesalers, who very often affixed their own marks to the finished pewter objects. This seems to explain why we find Russian as well as English touches on the same specimen, the Russian touch designating the vendor. A not uncommon experience amongst our American pewter.

Neither are we able to find a Jew amongst the Russian pewterers, although here more than in any other country they earned their livelihood as craftsmen. Here also they worked under restrictions. Whatever rules and regulations there were, they never were really enforced and very few bothered with expensive dies when it was much safer and cheaper to make pewter articles or trade them, when they could not be too easily identified.

Unless the pewter bears a definite mark identifying it with Russia, our only means of identifying Jewish ceremonial objects made there by a Non-Russian pewterer are the interpreted decorations and inscriptions and it is quite conceivable, that some of the "English touches" in this exhibit, could be considered Russian.

I realize that I have covered rather inadequately the "Pewterers of Jewish Ceremonial Objects." Due to the short span of time allotted to me, I had to omit more than I like. But one more field has to be mentioned, a field too important to be disregarded entirely.

For about 300 years, Jews have settled and worshipped on these shores. They had their temples where they prayed the same prayers as they were prayed elsewhere, and I do not think that their home ceremonies here were different than they were in any other country. And as it was elsewhere, there were not too many who could afford ceremonial objects of precious metal. We have excellent examples of silver ceremonial articles which were made here, but I have yet to see an American pewter object serving as a Jewish ceremonial piece. When the Jewish silversmith Myer Myers could work at his trade and could become in the 18th century one of the foremost American artisans, could not the same hold true in the craft of the pewterers? But so far no one has been able to discover even a single Jewish ceremonial article by *any* old American pewterer. What happened to it, who made same, and who shaped it? I simply cannot admit that all such pewter as must have existed was imported from across the ocean when there was such a galaxy of American pewterers in every town and city where there was a sizable Jewish community.

An untrodden field has been opened to the pewter collector; he gets glimpses of pewter discoveries to be made in an almost unknown sector of the ecclesiastical and devotional pewter field. Again he is reminded that any pewter object deserves close inspection and is not to be passed by with the thought; "I don't know what it is." It will be a prize possession for any "American pewter only" collector and for that matter, for any collector to discover and possess a Jewish pewter article made by an American pewterer.

This was the first of a series of papers presented at a Symposium on "Pewter in Jewish Art" on December 1, 1949. The occasion was a meeting of the New York Regional Group of the Club, at which Mr. de Jonge presided. The Jewish Museum had at the time a special exhibit, a splendid display of unusual and most interesting pieces.

TAB-HANDLED PORRINGERS

A Letter from Mr. Francis D. Brinton

In reply to your request for articles to publish in the Bulletin, I can merely say that my own studies on pewter have been confined to the Pennsylvania tab-handled porringers, of which I have now examined about 80 in 28 different collections, with no further discoveries, or data, since my notes to you in February, 1948, except that only eight different moulds seem to have been used.

The four makers which can be recognized are Elisha Kirk, Yorktown, who learned his trade with Isaac Jackson; "I. A. B.," John A. Brunstrom, Philadelphia; small S. P., Samuel Pennock, Chester Co., Pa.; and large S. P. Simon Pennock, son of the above, who moved to lower Lancaster Co.

We know that Isaac Jackson, of New Garden, Chester Co., Pa., who died in 1807, had a mould and about three dozen porringers, in the inventory of his estate, but none of his porringers was marked.

Also, Robert Porter, of Caln township, Chester Co., who died 1785, owned a brass porringer mould, one of soapstone, and 45 porringers, which were sold at vendue. The latter brought about two shillings each. Again, no marked specimens are known, and we cannot yet identify his work. The true Westtown porringer is really a heavy basin, having no handle, and weighs about twenty ounces.

I still have several collections to examine and hope I may discover more marked pieces. So far, only ten marked Pennsylvania porringers have come to my notice, mostly the small S. P.

If any collector has one of these tab-handled porringers and would care to bring it to compare with my eight examples, I should be pleased to see them.

FRANCIS D. BRINTON.

Oermead Farm, West Chester, Pennsylvania

A BOARDMAN LOVING CUP

ANOTHER LETTER FROM JOHN F. RUCKMAN

Recently I was fortunate in acquiring a very interesting piece of pewter—doubly so, because it is an unrecorded form in American pewter, and because of the light it would seem to throw on the activities of its makers. It is a quart loving cup by Thomas D. and Sherman Boardman. Similar cups in English pewter turn up from time to time, but, so far as I know, this is the only American one to have survived. The nearest approach is in the double-handled beakers by Thomas D. Boardman. (Laughlin, vol. 1, pl. xxxiv, Nos. 228, 230.)

It is the standard Boardman quart mug with additions; a second handle opposite the normal one, and a 3/8 inch molding added at the base to give it a height of 6 1/4 inches and greater stability. There are also two 5/8 inch strapwork bands, similar to those sometimes seen under the fillet of a Boardman flagon. One is 1/2 inch below the lip, the other 1/4 inch below the fillet. The straps and the extra molding at the base have been soldered on, rather than cast with the mug, for the straps are carefully cut out to fit around the ends of the handles, rather than running under them as is the case with similar straps on the Boardman flagons.

The mark, outside on bottom, is the small T.D. & S.B. touch (Laughlin, 428). Also on the bottom is engraved the initial B and the date 1807. These are deeply and skillfully cut with a rather professional touch, with serifs on the numerals and cross-hatched shading; not at all the crude owner's scratches found on many pieces.

The date 1807, in conjunction with the T.D. & S.B. mark, is interesting, inasmuch as this mark has not been supposed to have been used until about 1810. However, an examination of the facts makes it seem quite likely that the partnership between the Boardman brothers was formed in 1807. Thomas D. was born in 1784, Sherman in 1787; there was only three years' difference in their ages. Thomas completed his apprenticeship in 1804. Thus it is logical to suppose that Sherman completed his three years later. Since Sherman never had a touch of his own, it is natural to believe that he entered the partnership immediately upon finishing his apprenticeship. Laughlin dates

the T.D. & S.B. mark 1810-1830. This would advance it only three years.

There remains to be explained the large amount of pewter with Thomas D. Boardman's mark alone. I believe it is possible that he continued to use his own touch for some time after the partnership was in existence. The pieces Thomas made may have been marked with his own touch, and those Sherman made, with the partnership touch. Other Boardman marks seem to have overlapped somewhat, and occur in various combinations, so it seems unlikely that an old die was discarded completely as soon as a new one was acquired.

The cup is a handsome and impressive piece—one more example of the good taste of the Danforth-Boardman family. Undoubtedly it was made for some special purpose. On hearing a description of it, Mr. Carl Jacobs suggested that it might have been a church cup. At first, I was skeptical—it seemed much too large for that purpose. Then I stood it beside one of the huge flagons like Laughlin, 229—Thomas D. Boardman and Samuel Danforth both made them—and the proportion was perfect, the combination beautiful. I am now convinced that it was made to go with just such a flagon. Its mint condition would bear that out. Few pieces except those from communion sets survived in such unmarred state.

I have found some other good pieces since you were here; a fine 5¼ inch Thomas Danforth III beaker, a small Weekes beaker, a magnificent O. Trask baptismal bowl, an early commode, an 18th century lidless tankard—mark obliterated, condition poor, but handsome—and a pair of beautiful little Boardman and Hart beakers of a very rare form—footed, with raised fillets, again showing the Boardman good taste.

JOHN F. RUCKMAN.
Doylestown, Pennsylvania.

WILLIAM MIX I

By REGINALD F. FRENCH

Marked American pewter spoons are so rare that they are always worth treasuring—even if made after 1800—but when they bear a new mark in the roster of American pewterers, then they go to the vault to be locked up with the family jewelry! Mr. Raymond has asked me to take my pair out of the vault long enough to describe them: they are tablespoons, eight and one-half inches long, of fairly heavy metal in the style of the 1820's, and marked on the back of the handle (not on the stem) W. MIX in a serrated rectangle. When I first found them, I suspected that they were by the Mix who poured spoons for Ashbil Griswold in 1826, but this was a Thomas whose relationship to William I have not ascertained.

William Mix was a sort of father to Connecticut spoonmakers. I am indebted to the Historical Division of the International Silver Co. for my information about him. He was a blacksmith, turned pewterer, and our first evidence

of his transformation is from 1827, when he was making pewter spoons in Prospect, Connecticut. In this year there was working for him Charles Parker, who later (ca. 1849) had a business in Meriden and who has marked so many britannia spoons.

In 1831, R. Wallace started to learn the spoon-making trade with Mix and he of course later started a business in Meriden making britannia spoons and plated ware (ca. 1855).

Apparently William Mix's fostering of spoon-making did not stop here. His own nephew, Gerry I. Mix, may have learned the trade from him. In 1839 he was already pouring pewter spoons in Yalesville, although the britannia spoons which turn up marked G. I. MIX & Co. are later. Another nephew, a second William Mix, is hard to disentangle from his uncle in the records. One of them cast lead spoons, hand burnished them and sold them in New York, then moved to Woodbridge where he burnished them by waterpower. This was apparently William Mix II who later worked for the Meriden Britannia Co. (1870-1896).

Thus we have a filiation of Connecticut spoon-makers, starting with William Mix I and the last generation of pewterers, Charles Parker, R. Wallace, Gerry I. Mix, and Thomas Mix who quickly changed to britannia and then to silver plate, giving the R. Wallace & Co. and the International Silver Co. of our day.

Note on Mix

Prowling through my spoons, after receiving Professor French's article, I find I have two marked Wm MIX PATENT, stamped in, and not enclosed in a rectangle. One is a tablespoon with a slender stem without shoulder, expanding into a broad upper portion. There is a single-shell drop. The other is a teaspoon with a similar stem, and a double drop, the inner portion plain, the outer a shell. Mr. Mix seems to have had a fancy for the archaic.

Professor French mentions a Thomas Mix who poured spoons for Ashbil Griswold in 1826. Mrs. Stephen FitzGerald has two eight-inch table spoons with plain, slender stems and large circular drops on the pointed bowls. Each bears on the back of the expanded portion of the handle, a touch in two parts. First a small T, a raised letter, in a square, and then MIX, in a rectangle. This is probably the Thomas of Griswold's day.

She also has a table spoon, 7⅞ inches long, with a pointed bowl and slender drop. The upper part of the handle is expanded, has a beaded border, and bears an an eagle in relief. Above the eagle are three stars and twelve more are scattered about over the expanded portion. Stamped in the back is M & CO., presumably MIX & CO.

P. E. R.

A NOTE ON TIN-PEST

It should be remembered that it is the decomposition of the tin in pewter which leads to the scale. Therefore, the better the metal, the more apt it is to show decay; the higher the proportion of lead, the less apt. Hence we find 17th and 18th century measures, with their 15% to 20% lead, in better condition than neglected plates of the same age.

I have an excellent example of this in a lighthouse teapot made by George Richardson during his Boston days (1818-1828). He was then making his teapots of block tin, as advertised in the *Columbian Centinel,* March 28, 1821. Some vandal had had the body cleaned before I got the piece, but the spout, which had become detached, escaped. It has a splendid, rich brown patina, evenly spread, not patchy as in pewter. It forms a sort of crust, which flakes off in irregular chips. Block tin is not pure tin, nor is it as near to it as the product used commercially, for tin-plating, etc. It is a part of the tin as it is run off into blocks after such purification as it gets by being boiled after it first comes from the smelter. It generally contains iron, arsenic, copper, and other impurities, but only in small amounts.

P. E. R.

ZINNSEUCHE

What follows appeared in the New York Times under the date line of Vienna, March 8.

"A strange disease has broken out in the famous crypt in Vienna's Church of the Capuchins, where all the Habsburgs since the Thirty Years War lie buried.

"The victims are not the illustrious dead, but their ornate pewter coffins, which are beginning to crumble away.

"They have been attacked by 'Zinnseuche,' or 'pewter pest,' a disease described by Plutarch in the first century A.D. He declared that it could neither be prevented nor cured and he was not far wrong. If caught in its earliest stages its progress can be delayed by varnishing with acetyl cellulose, but once the pewter has become spotted with white—one of later symptoms of the trouble—nothing can be done, according to the Austrian experts.

"The cause of the trouble has never been established. Some experts contend that the exposure of pewter to below zero temperatures, even if for only a brief period, will cause it.

"There are 141 dead Habsburgs in the Capuchin crypt and they lie in 138 coffins. One of the most splendid is that of the Empress Maria Theresa, and that is one of the most seriously threatened."

This note was handed to us by Mrs. Frank C. Doble.

If the Austrian "experts" had consulted a boy who had taken chemistry in high school, they would have learned that the white spots indicated that the coffins were made of lead, not pewter. Coffins and heart-cases have been made of lead from time immemorial. Perhaps the royal Habsburgs could afford to put a little tin in the mixture and call it pewter. Water, in the presence of air, quickly attacks lead, forming the hydrate—just plain dampness is enough to do it. If carbonic acid is present, the hydrate is changed to the white basic carbonate, and the corrosion becomes continuous. This would not happen under water. Air must be present.

If the loyal admirers of the Habsburgs would stop breathing on the royal caskets, they might be able to check the spread of the disease.

P. E. R.

AN INVITATION

A recent cordial letter from a member of the Society of Pewter Collectors contains the following paragraph:

"Furthermore, if you or any of your fellow collectors (i. e. members of the Pewter Collectors' Club of America) are in England, do not fail to come up here to see the magnificent cathedral and the many, many quaint old parts of Norwich. And heaven help the soul of any of your Society who does come, and fails to get in touch with me! I shall be only too pleased to talk and show my pewter, and to advise on things to be seen in Norwich. But please circulate my wish to meet any of your Society first of all."

Further information will be supplied to any member who plans to go to England this year.

P. E. R.

DINNER AT HARVARD, 1751

Reading *John Adams and the American Revolution,* by Catharine Drinker Bowen, I ran upon a reference to pewter. John made his breakfast on bread soaked in beer, using a bowl in the process. But, after classes from 8 until 12, he had dinner in what seemed to him the grand manner. The tables were spread with linen, which was, by order of the Corporation, changed twice a week. At home, the family ate on bare boards, except when there was company. And he was proud to be waited upon by his fellow students, to eat from a pewter plate, and to have his milk served in a pewter mug. But most of all he enjoyed being able to talk without interference from his little brothers, or being shut up by his parents.

ANNE BORNTRAEGER.

DOMESTIC PEWTER

By JENNY TURNER

We have learned much from ancient inventories and occasional records of household expenses. From them we learn that a "garnish of pewter" was a trade term, indicating a service of twelve of each of the sizes of plates, platters, and dishes used. The early tankard was a vessel used for ale in the private house as well as in the tavern.

Pewter was the chief metal employed in homes before pottery, glass, and china came into use. Pewter plates, dishes, and mugs were more durable than the common earthenware of the seventeenth century. The ability to use it instead of wooden ware was an indication of high rank in society. Shining pewter on the sideboard or in the kitchen indicated a good housekeeper.

The heavier pieces of table pewter consisted of dishes and plates. There were many little sweetmeat dishes, salt cellars, pots for pepper and mustard, and egg cups. Later, sugar bowls and creamers were made. In the nineteenth century many of the tea and coffee services were made from britannia. Even at an early date, barber's basins, bleeding dishes, and many sorts of candlesticks and spoons were made from pewter.

DRY GRIPES

"Dry gripes" were particularly prevalent and often fatal in the early days of the settlement of Jamestown, Virginia, in the West Indies, and among other early English colonists. It was a form of lead poisoning, for which the use of pewter was often blamed.

Mr. Gerald W. Johnson, in his book, *Our English Heritage,* Lippincott, 1949, tells the real cause. In order that their beer and wine should not spoil on the long voyages to America, the vinters and brewers put white lead or sugar of lead in their products. A little did little harm, but they used too much.

Pewter is not the only thing which has had to bear undeserved blame.

P. E. R.

FAIX NOBISCUM

By PERCY E. RAYMOND

Not very good Latin, but it seemed appropriate to put this label on a couple of shelves in my collection. One needs to be reminded from time to time of what he has done "that he ought not to have done."

In the center is a handsome plate with beaded rim, and a typical German three-touch assemblage on the back, with the date 1708. But like "Mother's Bread," it has never been touched by human hands. No trace of knife cuts, tin-pest, or anything else to mar its beauty. I cannot remember when or where I bought it. I must have been in a trance. But it is a nice looking wavy edged plate.

Beside it are two 6⅞ inch plain-brimmed plates with the ship-touch of S. Maxwell, "May the United States of America Flourish." It even has the crowned X to show the good quality, and the maker provided them with a limited number of scratches, mostly on the reverse side, where they do not mar the "mint" condition.

At the front is a French lamp with long wick-tubes for burning gasoline. It was a "find" when I bought it, for it was guaranteed to be English. But it has no touch, and has never been used. I have to thank Mrs. Elyse Rushford for telling me what it really is.

Beside it are two drum inkwells which I placed on exhibition as fakes in our Pewter Club show at the Boston Public Library in 1936. One has the awkward touch of "F. Bassett, New York" (Laughlin, 697); the other, a crude imitation of one of the oval Boardman eagle marks, without name or initials. Even I was able to realize that these were fakes when I bought them, but it was not until recently that, on the suggestion of one of our members, I looked closely and found the word England stamped in small letters near the edge of the bottom of each.

Above these hangs a double-eared porringer with a large handsome rose in relief on the boss. Each ear bears a crowned wheel, but no maker's name or initials. Its use as an ashtray has provided it with some dark spots, simulating tin-pest. Beside it hangs a small porringer which I noticed years ago in a shop. I looked at it, but did not buy, as it had no touch. On a subsequent

visit I picked it up again and found it impressed with the W.I.C. eagle mark. The dealer, hastily taking it out of my hands, remarked, "I didn't mean you to see that." I offered him a dollar for it, to get it out of circulation. Under the circumstances, he didn't dare to refuse. Porringers, basins, and plates that Mr. Cowlishaw never had seen were common in and around Boston from 1925 to 1935. I havn't seen them lately, so I presume they have migrated. Mr. Cowlishaw used his touch legitimately, to mark the reproductions which he made and sold as such, but one of his dies seems to have fallen into bad company. His successor, Merton Wheelock, adopted a new touch, without the eagle, although he used the old name.

In previous articles, I have confessed to other mistakes. This will do for the present. But beware of Scotch tappit hens, English sconces, large, very old English baptismal basins, French pieces with repoussé dolphins, and any other especially attractive, showy pieces. Also cast basins, porringers, and other articles marked R. GLEASON, in a rectangle. R. Gleason worked chiefly during the Britannia period. Just as this goes to press comes news of a doubtful Henry Will tankard, the hall marks depressed, intaglio, not in relief. Surprising, at least.

BENJY

"The Physics Laboratory . . . is guarded by 'Benjy,' an old pewter statue of Franklin the printer, which for nearly a hundred years adorned the entrance of Harper Brothers, the great publishing house in Franklin Square." At Vassar, of course. From *The Hickory Limb*, by Henry Noble MacCracken. Scribners, 1950, p. 121.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE ARTICLES

By Percy E. Raymond

About 75 responses were received from the 215 members of the Club to whom I sent reply-postcards in November. That was not 100%, but was a most gratifying and informative result. Many excellent suggestions were sent, and a few worthy people agreed to write articles for us—in the future. We expect to have some of them in time for Bulletin 29. No one voiced any objection to our loose-leaf format, probably because everyone has gotten used to it.

Altogether too many members merely voiced the slogan, "Let P. E. R. do it." That is complimentary, but does not solve our real problem. The Publication Committee thanks all who replied, is obliged for the suggestions, and deeply grateful to those who agreed to contribute to our pages.

Some of the suggestions are printed here, in the hope that members will present articles on these subjects. There are many people in the Club who have information that would be of interest to all of us.

More information about Continental pewter, its marks and means of identification.

Prices which pewter has brought at auctions.

A "Wanted" column, to facilitate exchanges between members. (The Rushlight Club did this in the Rushlighter for several years, with rather unsatisfactory results.)

Approximate values of various pewter articles.

More about Connecticut pewter.

English pewter brought to America during Colonial days. Who were the importers?

Spoons in general, and American spoons.

Cleaning and mending pewter.

Descriptions by the owners or others of private collections.

Descriptions of collections in public museums. Where to see what.

Beakers.

Modern reproductions now available.

More about fakes.

Flasks.

More about the I. H. and "Love Bird" touches.

Use of pewter at present in table settings.

Illustrations in the Bulletin. (Any sum, however large, thankfully received.)

Pewter collars and burners on early pressed glass lamps. Who made them?

Snuff boxes, still-worms, candle molds, infusion pots, communion tokens, or any other unusual article.

Interesting experiences in collecting pewter.

List of pewterers in New England before 1810.

Photographs of unusual pieces of pewter.

Digest of Mr. Michaelis' articles on porringers, published in Apollo.

List of all pewter marks and more data on American pewter.

French pewter.

You have a wide field for choice. We hope you will all feel it a personal duty and pleasure to contribute something. Subjects of contributions already promised are not included in the list above.

NOTES ON THE DOLBEARE FAMILY

By PERCY E. RAYMOND

Mr. Ledlie I. Laughlin, in *Pewter in America,* told a good deal of the genealogy of the Dolbeare family. Although these pewterers are not represented in any known collection, they have a certain amount of interest to us.

Mr. Laughlin obtained his information from the Dolbeare papers in the possession of the Massachusetts Historical Society and other records. Now Miss Winifred Lovering Holman has published, in the *New England Genealog-*

ical and Historical Register, December, 1950, and January, 1951, issues, further notes derived from the same and another source.

Mr. Laughlin refers to a letter written in 1772 by Benjamin Dolbeare. The one which Miss Holman published in December is probably an answer to it, for it was written 8 October 1772 by John Dolbeare of Ashburton, Devonshire, England, to Benjamin Dolbeare of Boston. It gives a brief account of the activities of five generations of the Dolbeares at Ashburton. Combining the information in her two communications, we find as follows:

Dolbeares of Ashburton, Devonshire, England

John^{1} had

Bernard^{2}, bapt. 7 Sept. 1642. He lived to an advanced age. He had

John^{3} b. Aug. 22, 1783, d. 1712, m.—— who died at the age of 82, c. 1762. They had

Susanna^{4}, b. 1702, d. 1770, John^{4}, b. 1705, d. 1735, and

Bernard^{4}, b. 1712, d. 1765. He had

John^{5}, b. 1742, and was alive in 1772, when he answered Benjamin's letter.

Bernard^{2} and John^{3} were pewterers. John^{3} died at the age of 30 but his widow took his sister Susanna into partnership and continued the business for more than 50 years. John^{4} was taken into the firm in the later part of his short life, and it is probably his touch which is the one shown as No. 1408 in Cotterell. Bernard^{4} was not a pewterer, but his son, John^{5}, was "introduced by his Grandmother and aunt into the Pewtering, Brazing, Plumbing, and Tin Manufacturing." He also dealt in bar iron.

Dolbeares of Ashburton and Boston

John^{1} had a second son

Edmund^{2}, bapt. Ashburton, 26 June, 1644. He had John^{3}, bapt. Ashburton, 12 May, 1664, and Joseph^{3}.

Edmund^{2}, John^{3}, and Joseph^{3} came to Boston about 1670, for they appear on records of 1671. John^{3} had

John^{4}, and Benjamin^{4}, who was the writer of the letter of 1772.

Edmund^{2}, John ^{3}, and Joseph^{3} were all pewterers. John^{3} added ironmongery to his business, and is also mentioned as a brazier. John^{4} was probably a pewterer, but died at 26. He was short-lived, like his cousins John^{3} and John^{4} in England. Benjamin^{4} carried on his father's business, but was listed as a merchant.

It is interesting to note the parallel development of the two branches of the family. In both New and Old England the tendency was for the pewterer to add the working of brass and iron to his business.

LIST OF AMERICAN PEWTERERS AND THEIR WARES

Mrs. Oliver W. Deming has started the ambitious project of compiling a list of all the articles made by American pewterers. She has the full sanction and backing of the Club, and when completed it will be published as a Bulletin or series of Bulletins. She hopes to get a list of all the sizes of plates, platters, and other sadware each pewterer made, also the sizes and styles of his por-

ringers, mugs, flagons, and other holloware. Mr. Kerfoot and Mr. Laughlin have told us much. Their lists will be a basis for the compilation. But much has been found since their books were published.

Mrs. Deming will soon send out mimeographed lists, based chiefly on Mr. Laughlin's data, and will ask that members supply any further information which they may have. Cooperation has already been promised by all who have been approached. Such a list would be most useful and instructive to all of us. It is very gracious of Mrs. Deming to undertake the very considerable amount of work involved.

P. E. R.

BRITANNIA TEAPOTS: THEIR STYLES

By PERCY E. RAYMOND

Every collector has one or more of these teapots. They were made in great numbers in England after Dixon and Smith began, in 1803, copying those made in Sheffield plate. In this country, George Richardson, Boston, was making them in block tin in several styles in 1818. The really productive period was from 1830 to 1870. Some are well designed, some are good, some passable, and some hideous. Collectors tend to avoid them, but end by acquiring some. One of our members recently remarked, "I hate teapots! I have twenty-two!" I feel much the same way, but have about thirty, and really like some of them. Until a few years ago they were avoided, chiefly because they were cheap, but now that prices are rising, they are becoming respectable.

In replying to my recent postcards, one of the members suggested that we should have an article setting forth what is really desirable in teapots. Since tastes differ so much, it would probably be dangerous to express a definite opinion. It has, however, occurred to me that we might make an interesting game by exchanging views on the subject. But how can we express ourselves unless we have names to apply to the various styles and shapes?

I have produced the appended list of provisional names by going through the illustrations in Kerfoot and in Laughlin. Many of them can be improved upon. All are subject to change. Try it yourself, and send in such terms as occur to you. After each name proposed I have given the number of an illustration in Kerfoot or Laughlin.

A few terms are already in use. *Duck-bodied* is the name applied to the long, low pots on four ball feet. They were made by Dixon and Smith and Dixon and Sons in great numbers. Israel Trask made a few, and one marked Coldwell has been found.

The term *lighthouse* has been used rather loosely for any tall teapot, the "coffeepot" of Kerfoot. By a strange irony of fate, Kerfoot figured only one pot, K 276, which may have been made primarily for coffee. It would seem that the name lighthouse should be restricted to tall truncated-conical ones with straight or nearly straight sides. Typical are those of Israel Trask (K. 273, L. 608). G. Richardson, Boston, made even better ones. Less typical are those like K. 271 (Henry Graves). They flare somewhat toward the lip. Oliver

Trask made nice ones of this sort with bright-cut decorations. They may be called *flared-lighthouse.*

The pear-shaped *Queen Anne* is familiar to everyone. The large britannia specimens are not so satisfactory as are the small cast ones of the 18th century. Among the makers of the later ones are William Calder (L. 191), Bailey and Putnam (K. 248), Josiah Danforth (K. 199), and Eben Smith (K. 242). The *concave-footed Queen Anne* is not so satisfactory, L. 192 (George Richardson), K. 231, (Roswell Gleason).

The *tulip-shaped* is perhaps a tall outgrowth of the Queen Anne, but they have a foot. See K. 199 (Josiah Danforth), K. 249 (Putnam), and K. 312, (Savage and Graham). An extremely severe and plain one is K. 223, by Boardman and Hall. Perhaps Quaker style.

From this it is but a step to the *bulbous* K. 288 (William McQuilkin), and what I have whimsically denominated the *dropsical.* See K. 312 (Savage) and K. 227, (T.D. & S.B.).

The tall bulbous pot by McQuilkin (K. 288) is a good example of a rather large group which I propose to call the *reversed.* Professor Henry J. Kauffman, in an article in *The Spinning Wheel,* December issue, 1949, called attention to the fact that many britannia makers produced them by joining two parts spun on the same chuck. Hence the upper and lower halves of the body are identical, or nearly so. But the parts are reversed, the foot becoming the neck. If you will look over your collection, you will probably find that you have one or more made in this way. There are several styles of them. The *depressed globular,* K. 214 (Boardman & Co.), K. 262 (T. S. Derby), and K. 299, (Palethorp & Connell), and the *globular,* L. 604 and K. 253 (L. Boardman) are good examples. Another and even more common kind has a relatively narrow bulged median portion, with a flat band above and below it. For lack of a better name, I am calling it the *annular* type. Examples are K. 199 (Josiah Danforth), K. 286 (J. D. Locke), K. 289 (William McQuilkin), K. 310 (Sage & Beebe), K. 315 (at right), (Samuel Simpson), and K. 296 (J. H. Palethorp). More or less the reverse of this is the *concave banded* K. 315 (at left) (Samuel Simpson), and intermediate between the two is the *flat-banded*, L. 603 (Daniel Curtiss).

Mr. Laughlin was the first to call attention to the reversed type of teapot, although the method used in making it was casting, not spinning. On page 401 of Vol. 1, he tells us that Samuel Danforth of Hartford probably originated the method of increasing the size of a teapot by casting two pieces in the same mold and soldering them together. Thomas D. Boardman used the same process, and a figure of one of his specimens is shown in L. 193.

Leaving the *reversed* group, we may look at what Kerfoot named the *pigeon-breasted.* They are attractive pots, of which the example in the center of K. 237 is typical. Indeed, it was to this one that Kerfoot applied the name. It was made by that excellent designer, Israel Trask. The body is of the inverted pear-shaped, the lip is much flared, and the slightly convex lid set low. Roswell Gleason also made these pots (L. 607), and copied them in diminutive size for his daughter Mary's teaset. The Taunton Britannia Manf. Co. (L. 618) made them and Eben Smith produced a less successful version (K. 242).

We may mention next the forms with the *sugar-bowl* body. K. 306 (at left) is an example of the tall type, and K. 306 (at right) of the short one.

Both are by G. Richardson, Cranston. L. 111 is a tall form by Josiah Danforth. The foot beneath the bowl of these specimens does not add to their beauty. I have one by Gleason, with his eagle and stars touch, which is really nice. The bowl is not so deep, and has a graceful curvature.

Among the tall teapots is a style which may be called the *nodose.* K. 214, L. 609, is an example by Boardman & Co. There is a narrow engirdling expansion above the main bulbous portion. K. 209 (Boardman Lion mark) is a rather stogey variant of the same style.

Among the teapots of medium height are the *convex-sided* horrors, K. 264 (Dunham & Sons), and the *concave-necked* K. 332 (L. L. Williams). Even these, however, do not afflict me so much as does the *strangle-necked* L. 606, with its ornate handle and spout. Opinions obviously differ.

L. 612, a small pot by Roswell Gleason vaguely suggests a Roman lamp, and Mrs. Perkins has a still smaller and more depressed specimen which is more nearly of the ancient form. For brevity, they might be called the *lamp* type.

There are four straight-sided types besides the true lighthouse. A common one is short, truncated conical, flared at lip and base. The lid is a depressed-conical imitation of a Coolie hat. Let's call them *Coolie* style, despite the fact that they were made down in Maine by R. Dunham and F. Porter!

A simpler type with a domed lid was made by J. H. Palethorp (L. 605). There is no flare at the base. Perhaps it can be called *plain-bodied.* It is an enlargement of the late 18th century *drum-shaped* forms, L. 194, and L. 195 (William Will). That is what the silver collectors call them.

Then there are the truly *cylindrical,* and the *straight-sided* oval, to complete this category. They have ball-feet, bright-cut ornamentation, and are among the aristocrats.

Finally, there are octagonal teapots of two sorts. One, K. 276 (Holmes & Co.), tapers uniformly upward. It is *panelled ovate.* The specimen figured by Kerfoot may actually be a coffeepot. I should like to look down its throat. The more common kind, made by Leonard, Reed & Barton, and by Roswell Gleason, is a *panelled* version of the *inverted pear-shape.* Coffee pots of this sort are more common than teapots.

The member who made the suggestion which started all this asked for an expression of opinion as to what was good. I shall venture my list. Please send in yours. I do not expect anyone to agree with me. My preference is for: True lighthouse, lighthouse slightly flared at lip, Queen-Anne without foot, pigeon-breasted, straight sided cylindrical or oval, tulip.

GOT ANY TIN ON YOU?

Charles II, being in great straits to pay for the services in Flanders, used tin for money. On August 8, 1665, he authorized Alderman Blackwell and Sir George Carteret to treat with the tin farmers for 500 tons, to be speedily transported under good convoy.

Perhaps this had something to do with the origin of the slang term "tin" for money. It was current during my boyhood. Incidentally, have you noticed that tin has risen from 75 cents to $2.00 a pound during recent months?

P. E. R.