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DR. SCHOENBERGER'S ARTICLE

This is the address given by him at the special meeting of the New York Branch of the Pewter Collectors' Club, December 1, 1949.

The meeting was held at the Jewish Museum at 1109 Fifth Avenue, at 92d Street, New York City, on the occasion of the opening of a special exhibit of Jewish Pewter. The Museum has an extraordinarily good collection of its own, and on this occasion it was supplemented by several loans.

At the request of its author, the address is here printed as delivered, a point which the reader should bear in mind, as explaining the use of the present tense.

The introductory address was given by Mr. Eric de Jonge, the Chairman of the Branch. It was printed under the title of "The Pewterers of Jewish Ceremonial Objects" in Bulletin 28, June, 1951, pp. 170-174. It should be reread in connection with the present article.

We are indebted to the Jewish Museum and Dr. Stephen Kayser for permission to reproduce the excellent photographs which illustrate this article.

P. E. R.

BOOKLETS AND PAMPHLETS

American Pewter, by John M. Graham, II. The Brooklyn Museum, Price 80 cents, post paid.

Pewter of the Connecticut Valley, by Juliette Tomlinson. The Connecticut Valley Historical Museum, Springfield, Mass. Price, 25 cents.

Albany Pewter and Its Makers, by J. D. Hatch, Jr. Albany Institute of History and Art, Albany, N. Y.

The France Gift of Pewter, by Marshall B. Davidson. Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, October, 1944. 5th Ave. at 82d St., New York. Office of the Secretary. Price, 30 cents.

PEWTER OBJECTS IN JEWISH RITUAL ART

By Doctor Guido Schoenberger

My attempt to answer briefly the question in which forms and for what purposes pewter was used in Jewish ritual art leads to two interesting problems which belong in general to every discussion of ritual art. First, is there any ritual reason for using a specific material i. e. in our case to use pewter for certain Jewish ritual objects? Secondly, was the use of pewter essential for the creation or the development of specific forms of Jewish ritual art?

The literature on Jewish art does not mention these problems and it might be added that in the literature on pewter the objects of Jewish ritual art are very rarely mentioned. Therefore, I hope that this symposium will be of special interest to the members of the American Pewter Club who are with us tonight.

To my knowledge there is no ritual significance whatsoever in the use of pewter for any of these objects, which you will see in our exhibit. However, there are ritual reasons for pewter not being used for a large and important group of Jewish ritual objects, namely the Torah ornaments (the Breast-plate, the Crown, and the Pointer used to follow the line when reading the Torah). These are of silver, often completely or partly gilded. Apparently pewter was not considered precious enough for these sacred Jewish rituals.

The use of pewter is almost completely confined to the Jewish ritual in the home. It has to be emphasized that in the Jewish religion the festive ritual in the home is of great importance and extent. This gives us a hint why and when pewter became important for Jewish ritual use—only after it became the widespread material for the common tableware and other home furnishings like oil lamps or lavers i. e. during the late 16th and 17th century replacing wood and silver for every day needs.

During the Jewish festival year there are two occasions on which we find pewter used often enough so that it might be termed a usual if not preferred material.

The first is at the Seder Meal which unites the family during the first two nights of Passover. At that time the biblical account of the Exodus from Egypt is read and the family partakes of food symbolic of that biblical time, followed by an elaborate repast. For the symbolic food a plate has to be provided, made of silver or pottery, but in Germany and Poland during the 17th and 18th century usually a pewter plate.

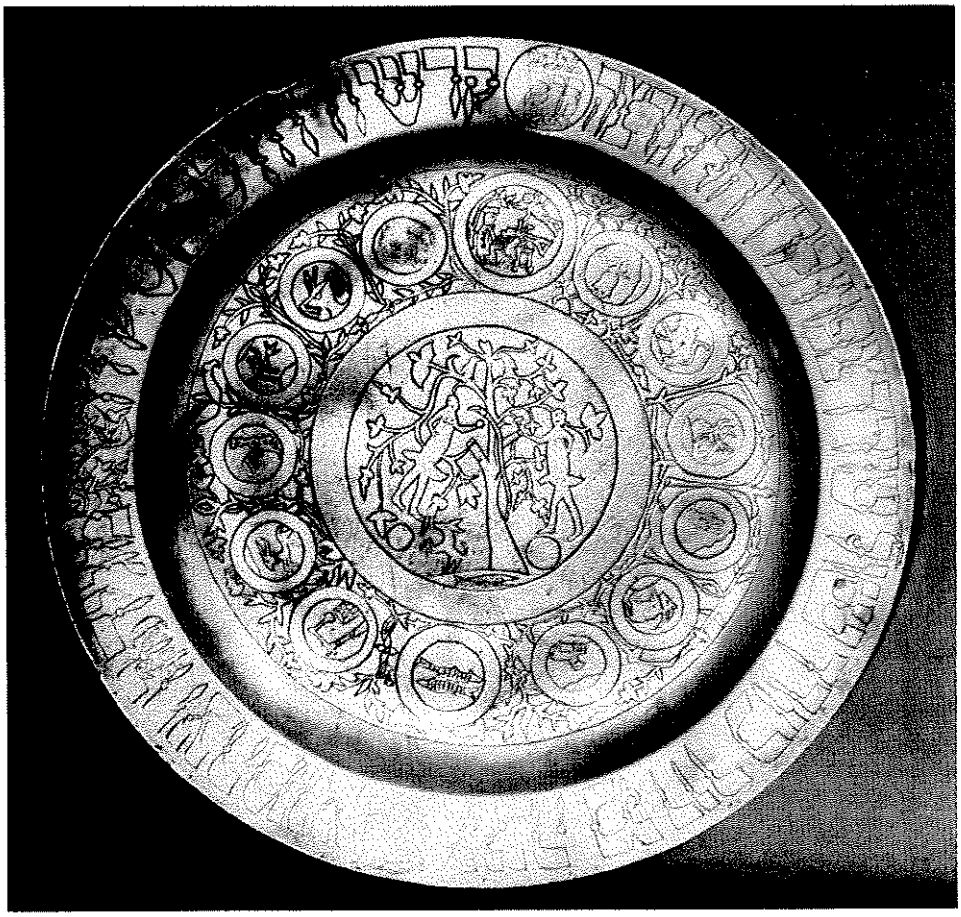
The Jewish Museum has, through the Collection of Doctor Harry G. Friedman of New York, perhaps the greatest collection of these Seder or Passover Plates, as we call them. If you look through the exhibit which we have arranged for you tonight and examine the pieces you will realize that no new form of plates was developed for that purpose. The common forms (which you all know) were used, i. e. the circular flat plates, the broad rim in the 17th century, the narrower rim and reeded or waved edge of the 18th century. The distinction from ordinary tableware consisted only in the very diversified and richly engraved—sometimes hammered, or cast decoration, of which Doctor Kayser will give you a short account. (Figures 1 and 3.) Origin of the plate and the decorations themselves are often considerably distant in time and place. The pewter masters, from all over Europe, were usually Christian; the engravers were very often Jewish folk, artists mostly from Germany and Poland. This

1. A Seder or Passover plate. Double reeded.
2. A 17th century broad-brimmed Purim plate showing Haman leading Mordecai on horseback.

will be shown and discussed by Doctor Kayser and Mr. de Jonge.

However, I would like to show you one more example—a combination of two pewter Seder Plates, one on top of the other. The lower one is used for the three mazzot recalling the unleavened bread of biblical times; the upper one, standing on small legs, is for the other symbolic food i. e. the bone which recalls the Pascal lamb, the bitter herbs reminiscent of the hard labor in Egypt.

The second Jewish festival for which the standard forms of pewter plates were used, again distinguished only by a specific decoration, is Purim, which takes place about one month before Passover and commemorates the rescue of the Jewish people by Mordecai and Esther from the Prosecution of Haman, according to the Book of Esther. This Book also tells of the Jews rejoicing and their sending of gifts to neighbors. This became a part of the home ritual of the Purim festival, gifts being sent to friends and neighbors on plates. In Germany these plates were made of pewter of which you see here a beautiful example of the 17th century, decoratd in 1778, (i. e. almost a century after the plate was made) showing Haman leading Mordecai on horseback through the streets and inscribed with a passage from the Book of Esther concerning the giving of gifts. (Figure 2)



3. A plain-brimmed Seder or Passover plate.

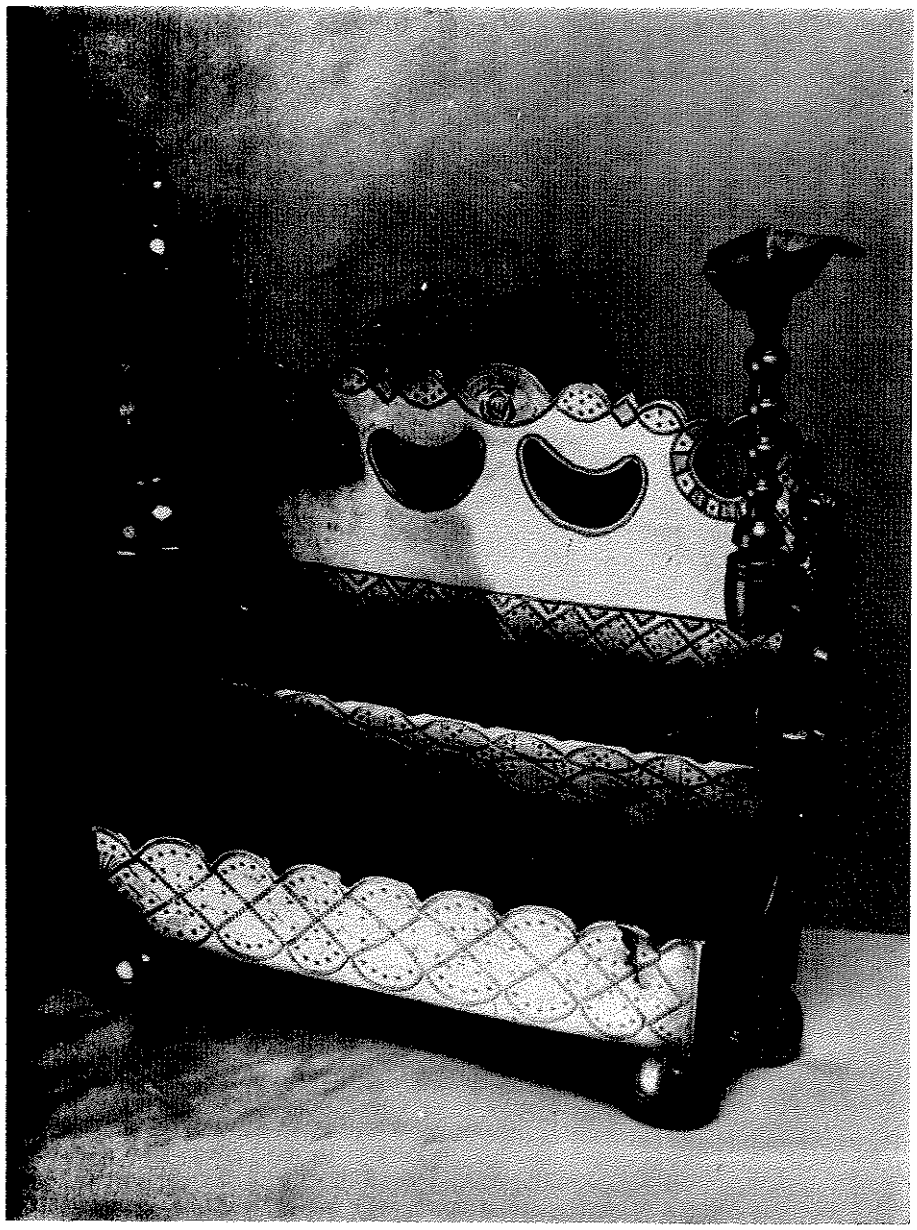
Another group of pewter objects, which you know as common every day forms adapted only by inscription or decoration to Jewish ritual use, are the lavers. They are connected with the daily meal and also the Seder meal twice during which a ritual washing of the hands take place. You see one form—pitcher and basin marked by the Hebrew inscription as a Passover Laver, probably German although the cartouches are not clear. You will find two other basins with Jewish decoration in our exhibit.

We also have here the well known wall laver and basin, a German example of the late 18th century, first used according to the inscription, in a Jewish home for Passover, Shevuoth (the festival of the giving of the Law), and for Succoth (the festival of the Tabernacles). Not only the inscription, but the cast biblical figures of Moses, Aaron, David, and Solomon specified the laver for Jewish usage. Later on it was used as a Synagogue Laver (in Seligenstadt, a small town near Frankfort on the Main). The well-proportioned beautiful pitcher of the early 19th century was marked by the inscription and by the design of the blessing hands of the priest as a Cohanim Laver, which was used for the washing of the hands of men of priestly descent.

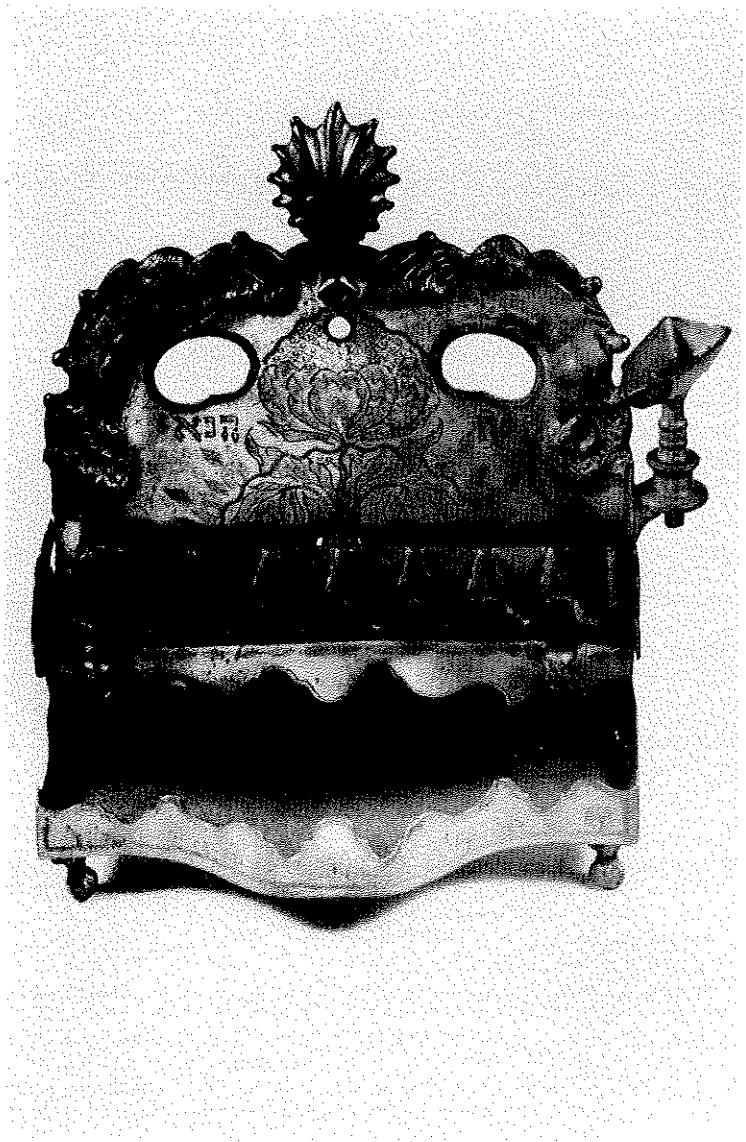
All the aforementioned pewter objects did not have any specific Jewish form. On the other hand, we have a second group, namely Hanukah Lamps, which in the 18th and the first part of the 19th century mostly in Middle and Southern Germany, were made of pewter—not exclusively but with some preference. Since "Light is a God given genuine source of life," the kindling and blessing of the light is of paramount importance in Jewish ritual. The Jews were very ingenious in developing lamp forms, based on common lamp forms, but in the course of time becoming specific lamp forms for the Jewish ritual use. Hanukah (the festival of the lights) commemorates the rededication of the Temple by Judah Maccabee after the reconquest of Jerusalem during the Maccabean Wars. This festival lasts eight days and each day an additional light, formerly an oil lamp now a candle, is kindled. Therefore, a lamp combining eight small oil lamps had to be developed. We see here an example made in Frankfort by the pewter master, I. P. Henschel, ca. 1770. (Figure 4.) It combines the eight lamps in a row on a shelf, a dripping basin beneath and a backwall to which on the right is fastened a movable ninth oil container called the shamas or servant light used for the kindling; to the left a small oil jar made of silver, for refilling the containers—brass or even pottery. Yet this is a distinct pewter type in details of form and decoration and could justifiably be called the Frankfort Type, repeatedly made up to the early 19th century by Christian masters.

Here we have another example which could be called the Horb Type (a small town in Southern Germany) first made ca 1750 by the Christian pewter master, Carl Sickler, and then by his son and also other masters using the same devices, measurements and decorations. The devices as shown here are very elaborate. You see again to the left the servant lamp, standing on a bench or shelf which has two spouts to collect any overflow of the oil in two little buckets for reuse (if possible only the purest olive oil which was rather expensive was used). You will find in our collection two lamps of this workshop, unfortunately the little buckets are missing. (Figure 5)

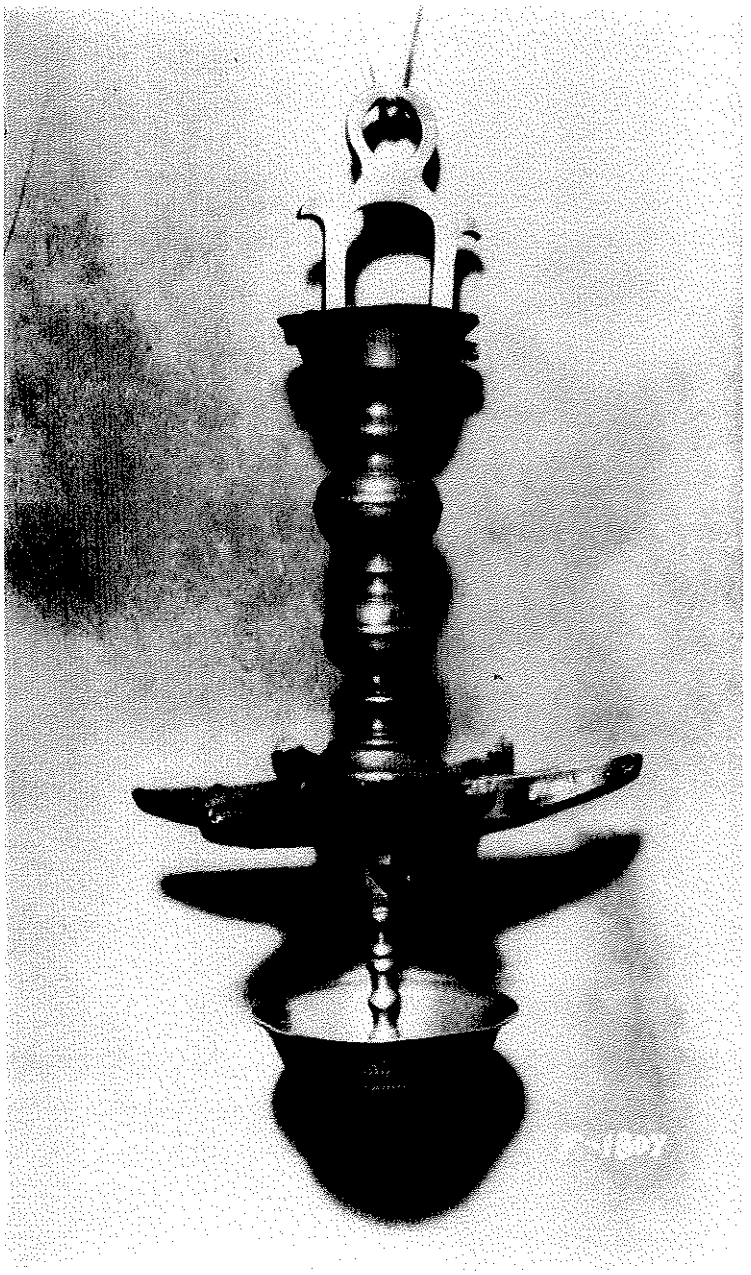
Whereas the Frankfort and Horb lamps were made by Christian masters—



4. A Hanukah lamp, of the Frankfort type. Note the shamas at the right and the oil jar at the left.



5. A Hanukah lamp of the Horb type.



6. A Sabbath lamp.

7. A porringer with added spout.

Mr. De Jonge will explain why this one, most probably Bohemian, might have been made by a Jewish workman. The material is not "Fine Zinn" but has a great percentage of lead and has no hall or touch mark. It has the date 1774/75 in Hebrew together with the benediction over the Hanukah lights. In the upper center is a Hanukah menorah in the form of the Temple candlestick between two phoenixes, a special Jewish form representing the tree of life and used with predilection by Eastern European Jews. The pear-shaped form of the oil containers also points to Bohemia, perhaps even to the most important Bohemian city, Prague. Thus you can see by the three pewter Hanukah lamps shown here not only a specific Jewish form exists in general, but even local types can be established.

Another specific Jewish lamp form is the Sabbath lamp, a hanging lamp in star form of which the great majority of preserved examples are made of brass. However, here you can see one of the rare pewter examples. The badly burnt spouts prove that pewter was too soft a metal to be used for the Sabbath lamp which had to burn for a long successive time. (Figure 6)

After the symposium, when you will look through our exhibit here and also on the third floor, you will find a few additional pewter objects for Jewish use. There is a salt dish used for the blessing of the bread on the Sabbath table. It is of the common pewter form but with the inscription "Salts, Good Sabbath." Another interesting piece is the pewter spice box given to us as a loan from the Strauss Collection of Brooklyn, used for the Habdalah ceremony at which wine, light, and spices are blessed at the close of the Sabbath. It is a small rectangular box standing on four legs, closed with a sliding lid and in the interior are four partitions. Since the rite calls for the blessing of at least two types of spices but if possible additional kinds are used, the division of the interior into four parts is very appropriate and perhaps constitutes a more specific Jewish type of the otherwise common form of small box.

Finally I would like to show you a very interesting and rare example of a piece of pewter for Jewish use in the Harry G. Friedman Collection of the Jewish Museum, namely a porringer which was "next to plate and basin the popular article of tableware." We may well assume that it was also used on the festival table. However, specific Jewish designation by inscription or decoration seems to be rare and exceptional. The handle of this porringer shows a brass inlay of a Star of David with the name of God in the center. This most probably was an amulet which is supposed to give special protection and blessing to the food or drink put into the vessel. (Figure 7) In the Babylonian Talmud Sabbath VI, ii Fol. 61b (Goldschmidt I, page 616) are special regulations governing the disposal of a worn-out vessel on which appears the name of God. The vessel can be disposed of in the usual way, but the part containing the name of God has to be kept. This shows that the piece in our Museum was not the only one of its kind. The addition of a spout to the porringer indicates that it may have been used for drinking soup or any other liquid by a person lying in bed i. e. a sick person or a woman after childbirth whose special protection by such an amulet ornament seemed desirable.

OUR ADVANCING KNOWLEDGE OF AMERICAN PEWTER

By ARTHUR W. CLEMENT

Until say 1905, American pewter was generally regarded merely as interesting historical souvenirs and as pleasing decorations for a country home.

In 1904, H. J. L. J. Massé published his *Pewter Plate,* the pioneer book on English pewter.

In 1905, Mrs. N. Hudson Moore published *Old Pewter, Brass, Copper, and Sheffield Plate* in which she printed in an appendix a list of English pewterers which she states was derived from Mr. Massé's book and a further list of *Some American Pewterers* compiled by Mrs. Moore almost entirely from old directories and newspaper advertisements. Mrs. Moore did not distinguish between makers of pewter and dealers in pewter and only seventeen or eighteen of the thirty-three names on her list are today accepted as actual makers of American pewter.

In 1909, the Metropolitan Museum exhibited in its Hudson-Fulton Loan Exhibition, ten pieces of American pewter, viz. three plates marked *B. Barns Philada,* a plate and a tankard marked *P. Boyd Philada,* two plates marked *I Danforth Philada,* two plates marked respectively *Boardman Warranted* and *Boardman & Hall Philada* and a "tankard with lid" made by William Will.

The introductory note to that portion of the catalogue written by Dr. Edwin Atlee Barber listed as New York pewterers, William Bradford, Joseph Leddell, Robert Boyle, and Francis Bassett and as Philadelphia pewterers, James Everett, Simon Edgell, Cornelius Bradford, William Will, George W. Will, Parkes Boyd, Thomas Rigden, Christian Heave, Thomas Danforth, B. Barns, and Robert Palethorp, Jr. We thus have in 1909 a list of sixteen American pewterers, and if we correct Christian Heave to Christian Hera, all of those sixteen excepting only Thomas Rigden are accepted still as American pewterers. At that time Dr. Barber was quite unaware that there were two pewterers named Joseph Leddell and two named Francis Bassett.

Two early students of American pewter deserve mention.

Ledlie I. Laughlin states that he obtained invaluable information from the notes of Benjamin R. Boggs of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, who had in 1909 made a systematic search for Pennsylvania pewterers but had for some unknown reason failed to publish his notes.

J. B. Kerfoot records that he first heard of American pewter in 1910 when Wilford R. Lawshe of Trenton, New Jersey, told him that he had seen pewter with an eagle mark.

The next step forward came in March, 1923, when Madame Henri L. Berger published in a supplement to the *Bulletin* of the Wadsworth Atheneum, a list of American pewterers consisting of 151 names compiled as she stated from other published lists, old records, directories and marked pieces. A general list so prepared necessarily contains names of men who are no longer accepted as American pewterers but, as Mr. Laughlin has pointed out, Madame Berger's list did provide the spring-board from which J. B. Kerfoot made the first real study of American pewter.

In 1924 J. B. Kerfoot published his brilliant *American Pewter* in which he stated that he proposed "to publish the complete list of American pewterers as it stands today to the best of my knowledge." His list of 131 names con-

tains many names no longer accepted as makers of American pewter but it is more notable for the fact that a carefully prepared list as late as 1924 does not include such outstanding pewterers as Peter Young and Timothy Brigden of Albany and the American master pewterer Johann Christopher Heyne of Lancaster.

Mr. Kerfoot's book is now out-dated but it will always be entitled to respect as it interested so many successful collectors in the study and collecting of American pewter.

In 1926, Louis G. Myers published *Some Notes on American Pewterers and Their Work* which added newly discovered information.

In 1940, Ledlie I. Laughlin published the definitive book *Pewter in America* with a carefully corrected list of names of all makers of pewter, Britannia, and block tin in America prior to 1850.

American pewter was singularly fortunate in having three such students as Mr. Kerfoot, Mr. Myers and Mr. Laughlin who each combined so successfully exceptional capacity for research with the ability to write.

Mr. Laughlin's book completely supersedes all previous books on American pewter but our knowledge of American pewter is even now far from complete.

New forms continue to be found such as the recently discovered John Carnes tankard, the first example to be found of the early Boston hollow-ware and the delightful William Will communion service at Aronsburg, Pennsylvania.

New facts are also being ascertained such as the fact that so distinguished a pewterer as Francis Bassett II worked in New Jersey at Horseneck (Caldwell) and Crane Town (Montclair) 1780-1783, during the British occupation of New York.

The interest of art museums in American pewter grew slowly and it was not until 1944 that the Metropolitan Museum of Art placed on permanent exhibition its present large and comprehensive collection.

In assembling that collection, it has had the most generous cooperation of Mrs. J. Insley Blair to whose many individual gifts the Museum added in 1944 a gift from Joseph France of forty-five pieces which he generously allowed the Museum to select from his collection. These gifts were supplemented by the long-time loans of several New York rarities by Yale University from the Garvan Collection and a representative group of nineteenth century pewter from the collection of Mrs. Stephen S. FitzGerald.

In such a distinguished collection it is possible to single out for individual comment only a few outstanding pieces.

Perhaps the finest of all is the fifteen-inch hammered dish by Simon Egdell, the chalices by Johann Christopher Heyne, Peter Young, and Timothy Brigden, the early New York tea-pot by William Kirby, a dish bearing the marks of Thomas Danforth I and that of his son John of Norwich, Connecticut, the only known example of the work of Thomas Danforth I, a handsome flagon by Henry Will and the unique marked example of a foot-warmer also by Henry Will.

In short so fine is this collection that it fully justified Marshall Davidson's claim for it as a collection of "real eminence" and the finest on public exhibition.

Yet within a few months its supremacy was challenged by an equally com-

prehensive collection placed on permanent exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum of Art.

In January, 1945, that Museum acquired the pioneer collection formed by John W. Poole which it has supplemented with judicious purchases and gifts of eighteenth century pewter and a representative group of fine nineteenth century examples selected from the mass of pewter which had accumulated through the years in the Museum's storerooms. Here again we can refer only briefly to a few outstanding pieces such as a unique group of early Philadelphia teapots by William Will and John Andrew Brunstrom, a Frederick Bassett two-quart tankard, a John Carnes plate, a flagon and chalice by Johann Christopher Heyne and the unique covered ink-stand and the unique oval platter both by Henry Will, and a bronze bowl mold.

Each of these two permanent museum collections is so distinguished that no good purpose would be gained by attempting to appraise their relative merits. The fact is that between these two collections a visitor to New York museums may now see, publicly exhibited, representative examples of practically everything that was ever made in American pewter. The missing pieces are extremely few and we can be certain that practically all of them will eventually be added to one or the other of these supreme public collections which graphically depict the result of forty years of tireless collecting and conscientious research.

Note: Many of these pieces are illustrated in the Metropolitan Museum *Bulletin* for October 1944 and November 1948 and in the Brooklyn Museum Booklet *American Pewter* by John M. Graham II.

A DIVERSIFIED COLLECTION OF AMERICAN PEWTER

By PERCY E. RAYMOND

Mrs. Stephen S. FitzGerald's collection is one of great interest to the student of pewter. She has not specialized in any one group of articles or of makers, or any one period. Her collection is therefore representative of what was made by American pewterers from about 1750 to 1850. Naturally, New England is better represented than any other region, but New York and Philadelphia have a large quota, and even St. Louis and Cincinnati are not entirely neglected. If she can be said to have pursued any particular group of makers, it would be the Danforths, whose products occupy one side of her pewter room.

Her total collection includes about 580 pieces, 380 of which are marked American. About 150 more are American, but without touches. The remainder are chiefly English.

To indulge in some statistics, it can be said that 107 American makers are represented. Four of them worked before the Revolution, one each in Newport, Rhode Island, Norwich, Connecticut, New York, and Philadelphia. Nineteen worked during the Revolution, and also either before or after it. They are what I call Trans-Revolutionary workers. Twenty-four are Post-Revolutionary men who made real pewter. Seventeen more worked in the Transition period, casting pewter in their early days, and spinning britannia later. Forty-three were busy during the true Britannia period. Several of these men, as, for example, the Boardmans, continued the use of the old method

of casting for a large part of their product, although they used the improved alloy.

Even statistics are sometimes interesting, at least to the person who compiles them. We find that, of the Trans-Revolutionary pewterers represented, there are four each in Boston and New York, five in Rhode Island, four in Connecticut and one each in Albany and Philadelphia. The largest number of Post-Revolutionary, seven, are in Connecticut. Five are in Rhode Island, three each in Boston and Philadelphia, one in Greenfield, Massachusetts, and one in Virginia.

As would be expected, Connecticut furnished the largest number of Britannia men, ten, but I was surprised to find New York a close second with nine. This is due largely to their candlestick makers. Massachusetts is next, with eight, Philadelphia has five, Maine three, Vermont two, Cranston, Rhode Island, Albany, Cincinnati, and St. Louis, one each.

Fifty-one of Mrs. FitzGerald's pieces are on exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and thirty-four in the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum in Springfield, Massachusetts.

Divided between these two Museums is a perhaps unique set of measures from the half-gill to two-quart, part by Samuel Danforth, the others by the Boardmans. In the Metropolitan one may see her plates by Simon Edgell and Francis Bassett, and one attributed to Thomas Byles. There also is the unique solid-handled porringer by David Melville, bearing the porcupine. This is Laughlin 316, a specimen which formerly belonged to Mr. Dwight Blaney. Several other touches in Mr. Laughlin's book were photographed from specimens in Mrs. FitzGerald's collection.

As has been said, the Danforth family is well represented. Thomas I, Thomas I and John (the T I touch), Thomas II, Thomas III, Joseph, Sr. and Jr., Edward, William, and Samuel of Hartford are all there. Perhaps the most unusual of the pieces by any of them is a deep dish with the T I touch.

There is not space to mention all of the interesting and important specimens. The one which appeals most to the writer is not pewter, but fashioned from the despised britannia. I do not choose it for its age or its touch, but for its downright good appearance and design. As I have remarked elsewhere, the method of fashioning of britannia gave more scope to the artist than did the casting of pewter. And Oliver Trask was a real artist. It is one of his christening bowls which is my choice. It stands on a table along with one by his older brother Israel.

The two bowls were made in the same way, probably on the same chuck, for they are of closely similar design. But Oliver's specimen is infinitely the more graceful, and tremendously improved by the false bottom he put in it. Both show the inverted pear-shaped body which was so much in vogue in silver in the middle of the 18th century. This same feature is shown in the pigeon-breasted teapots of Israel Trask, Roswell Gleason, the Taunton Britannia Manufacturing Company, and others, with varying success. And Oliver Trask used it for his flagon which goes so well with the christening bowl. Mrs. FitzGerald has one.

While on the subject of ecclesiastical pieces, a pair of offertory plates by Daniel Curtiss should be mentioned. These, with some other pieces in the

collection, came from a church at Turin, New York. The tall Danforth beakers go well with them.

Another splendid piece, which, so far as is known, is unique, is an 11¾-inch bowl with G: RICHARDSON BOSTON stamped on the convex brim. It is a bowl, rather than a basin, for it has a low ring-foot. Whether it was used as a christening bowl, or for the more lowly office of handwashing, is an open question.

Having mentioned teapots, it may be said that the best one in the collection is by Parks Boyd. The body is drum-shaped, the spout straight. Boyd was a finished craftsman, and this is a splendid example of his work. Another straight-sided teapot is one by the mysterious W. Parkin, of whom we know nothing more than that he made teapots with bright-cut decoration.

Candle-sticks are always attractive, and the collection contains examples by the well known New York makers, Henry Hopper, Thomas Wildes, and Ostrander and Norris. Thomas Wildes is supposed to be especially rare, but is represented by a pair of 10-inch ones. Those by Sellew & Company of Cincinnati are good, as is almost everything they made.

Candlesticks lead to lamps, but I shall mention only one, a bull's-eye, by Roswell Gleason. There are four unmarked bull's-eyes, among them one with the label London.

Now as to drinking vessels. First place goes to a perfectly designed and built tankered by Frederick Bassett of New York. Almost as good is one of those by the maker who puts his initials, either I C or I G, in the mold of inner side of the handle. The peculiar "barrel" handle-terminal shows that it is not English. An unmarked tankard, with a simple convex lid, was undoubtedly made by Peter Young. A somewhat oversized tankard, with a spout, is probably really a dwarf flagon. It was made by Boardman & Company.

Among the quart pots is one by Samuel Hamlin, one by Joseph Danforth, and an especially well designed one by William Will. A pint mug by Samuel Kilborne is a rarity, and one by Samuel Pierce still more so. And Parks Boyd specimens are none too common.

A bed-pan by Roswell Gleason has a most unusual handle. It is truncated conical, with a convex screw-cap at the end. It would be interesting to know if this was his usual style. Incidentally, Gleason is represented in the collection by plates, candlesticks, a bull's-eye lamp, a hot-water urn, a five-quart pitcher, a mug, teapots, a coffee biggin, a cruet stand, a cuspidor, and a whale-oil lamp. Did he make everything? The writer has a wash-hand bowl of his, and we are fairly certain that he made the heart-pierced porringers with an R cast on the back of the handle.

Another rare piece is a sander by W. Potter, and a curiosity is a two-handled hinged implement to be used for lifting eggs or other hot things from the pot. It has no makers mark, but is stamped "Pat.," hence is American.

Plates, platters, and dishes are present in abundance. Our Boston friends, John Skinner, Thomas Badger, Nathaniel and Richard Austin are all there. Nathaniel Austin is represented, among others, by an 8¾-inch specimen with a reed ⅜ inch wide, an unusually large proportion of the width of the brim. A rare item is an 8 3/16 plate by S. G. Boston. Other rare specimens include a William Elsworth plate, a 11 3/16 inch Joseph Belcher platter, and a deep dish, 14⅞ inches in diameter, by Samuel Hamlin. Samuel Kilbourne is rep-

resented by common plates and a deep one. Samuel Pierce was kind enough to make seven plates for Mrs. FitzGerald, one of them with the rare large touch.

A most surprising little dish is what must certainly be a cup-plate. It is only 5¼ inches in diameter, has an unusually narrow reed, and there is a narrow chased ring inside the groove. The outer portion of the brim is flat, and there is a low ring-foot. It was made over in Malden by J. H. Putnam, and, in spite of its late date, seems to be pewter.

One of Mrs. FitzGerald's many unusual finds was the discovery of six *Semper Eadem* plates in a house in Weston. One is not marked, but apparently belonged to the set. All have the typical touch, and the label Boston-in-scroll. Five of them probably came from one mold, for they range in diameter from 7 10/16 inch to 7 12/16 inch. There is a slight variation in the width of the reed, from 3/32 inch up to 5/16 inch. The variation in the finished size is probably due to trimming in skimming on the lathe. The diameter as they came from the mold was probably a trifle more than 7¾ inch. I have noticed the same small variation in plates by various makers. It probably is not important to measure sadware, including basins in 16ths of an inch. In this case, the trimming has produced differences in the width of the reed which are noticeable even without making measurements.

The 7¾-inch size is not mentioned by Mr. Laughlin, the 7⅞-inch being the smallest then known. The collection contains an 8½-inch one, and a more rare item, a 12 3/16-inch platter. The touch is struck twice and the Boston label is present.

As is well known, Mrs. FitzGerald has on exhibition in the Metropolitan the unique plate on which the *Semper Eadem* touch is coupled with that of R B and the rose and crown (Laughlin, 290 b, 292). She also has an 8½-inch plate with the R B touch, and the Boston-in-scroll label. Were R B and *Semper Eadem* the same man? It seems probable. But who was R B? It now seems certain that he was not Robert Boyle of New York, whose single fully identified plate bears a ship touch and a New York label.

Professor Reginald F. French has a theory that he was Robert Bonning, pewterer, who leased a shop at No. 6, Dock Square, in 1739. He then asked permission from the Selectmen to raise the roof, not with hilarity, but to accommodate the wheel to drive his lathe. The only other item that Mr. Laughlin was able to learn about him was that he married Sarah Henderson in Boston on December 10, 1731.

There is, however, a bit of circumstantial evidence which has been staring us in the face ever since Mr. Laughlin's book was published. Figures 290a and 291, on plate 44 show the *Semper Eadem* touch struck twice, with the London label. Beneath are the owner's initials, R. B. S., all crowned. And who are they if not Robert and Sarah Bonning, on a plate which he kept for his own use? Perhaps it was part of the equipment when the couple began housekeeping. This could not be interpreted as Robert Boyle, for he married Affie Waldron. We need further information about Robert Bonning, whose name is spelled variously as Benning or Bonynge. Perhaps he was an English-trained pewterer who dropped into Boston before 1731, did not have much success here, and went back again after 1739. There are two bits of circumstantial evidence for this theory. First, many of his plates bear a London label. And second, there is the touch, *Semper Eadem.* This was the motto of the

"Good Queen Anne," who died in 1714, when, in all probability Bonning was a lad of 10 to 14. Anne had adopted this motto because it was that of the great Queen Elizabeth, whom she greatly admired. It might be added, that R. B.'s church cups, preserved in the Museum at Deerfield, are of a style that would have been attempted only by a worker who had served a regular apprenticeship in London.

Mr. Laughlin has shown that David Cutler, Thomas Badger, and Richard Austin used the same Boston-in-scroll label which *Semper Eadem* and R B did. David Cutler was a contemporary of Robert Bonning, and his shop was on Union Street, just around the corner from Dock Square. It seems probable that they owned the die jointly. Where the die was from 1765, when Cutler ceased working, until 1787 when Badger began, is unexplained. It will be remembered that Mr. Kerfoot was almost sure that Badger used the *Semper Eadem* touch, for Badger made 7¾, 7⅞ and 8½ inch plates, and what was more convincing, 12¼ inch platters. No other Boston pewterer is known to have made the latter. It is possible that the 7¾, 7⅞, 8½, and 12¼ inch molds used by Bonning came to Badger along with the die for the label. This is another bit of evidence that Bonning returned to England, for he would not have removed to any other American location and left his molds behind.

The collection contains porringers by 17 makers. The unique one by David Melville has already been mentioned. There is another by him, with the flowered handle. Another unusual one is a 4¼-inch specimen by Gershom Jones, with the abbreviated flowered handle, and there is one by Frederick Bassett, with the "old English" ear. Pennsylvania is represented by a 5¼-inch tab-handled one by John Andrew Brunstrom.

Leaving America, Mrs. FitzGerald has the best rat-tail spoon mold that the writer has ever seen. It produces wavy-end spoons of distinction. On both sides of the rat-tail are beads and scrolls, and on the upper front of the handle is a head in profile. It has not yet been identified, but the long nose is remarkably like that of William III. The mold must have been made toward the end of the 17th century.

Two pieces, which must be classed as curiosities, may be mentioned. One is a nipple protector. These were made in both silver and pewter, and in many countries. There is no indication as to where this one was made. The other is a fireman's speaking trumpet, decorated with appropriate symbols. It was, at the height of its glory, silver-plated. But there is no inscription to show its origin.

There are many other pieces which should be mentioned, including a pair of the "Miss America," G. Richardson, Cranston, sugar bowls. But this is not a catalogue, merely a survey to call attention to the high-lights.

ANOTHER GOOD FRIEND PASSES

By Percy E. Raymond

Francis D. Brinton was a student of pewter, a discriminating collector, and a public-spirited man. His especial interest was in the pewter of Pennsylvania, and within that field he had become an authority on tab-handled porringers.

He was still busily engaged on their study up to the time of his death on October 18, 1951.

He had been a member of the Club since 1943, and had done many favors for it, and for individual members. He was the sort of person who could, by his letters, make one feel that one knew him personally, even though the pair had never met.

He was devoted to the Chester County Historical Society. All of his material connected with that county is to be given to the Historical Society.

The following editorial, which appeared in the local newspaper, will give an idea of how he was regarded in his own community.

FRANCIS D. BRINTON

"In the death of Francis D. Brinton the Chester County Historical Society has lost one of the best friends it ever had. To many people who were acquainted intimately with the work of the Society, Francis Brinton was the Society itself. For more than a generation he was its leading light although the nature of the work which he did never brought him before an applauding audience or gave him a spotlight place on its platform. Francis Brinton worked, as it were, behind the scenes, where much of the detail work goes on and which too often escapes the notice of the crowd. He loved the Society and for long years before it had its fine headquarters here he promoted interest and worked hard for the establishment of such a center.

"He was a gracious, quiet and unassuming man but tireless in his efforts toward preserving something of the past for the enjoyment and instruction of future generations. While Francis Brinton will never again enter the Historical Society's home here, his spirit pervades the entire place and the imprint of the many things he did for the Society will last as long as the organization itself.

"When this writer sought information of a historical nature he always found Francis Brinton ready and willing to help. He was a gentleman in every sense of the word, and his passing leaves a vacancy in the hearts of all who knew him and were inspired by his kind and gentle disposition."

PEWTER AT THE NEW HAVEN COLONY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

By Dean A. Fales, Jr.

The pewter collection of the New Haven Colony Historical Society consists of approximately five hundred pieces. The original gift of the Eugene de Forest collection has been augmented by a most generous group of Connecticut Valley pewter by Mr. Charles K. Davis and a loan of the Katharine Prentis Murphy collection. While innumerable fine English and Continental forms are exhibited, the emphasis is generally on American pewter; particularly that of the Connecticut Valley.

In the de Forest collection there are several prizes worthy of mention. Perhaps the most important is a pint infusion pot by Frederick Bassett, a hitherto unrecorded form. For the handle it appears that Bassett used the upper two-thirds of a quart mug handle, thus giving ample room for the vapors to heat the handle of the pot so that no one could touch it! Among the porrin-

gers are a fine four-handled taster by Richard Lee and an unusually good English Queen Anne example. There are also two English baluster measures of the "bud" type, one a half-pint, the other a gill. One of the better pieces of the collection is an oval-covered small box, as illustrated in Laughlin 259, the Society's example marked on the bottom with the hallmarks of Edward Danforth. Among the examples of the later period, there is a ladle with the small "Hamlin" name touch, two small pitchers by Henry Hopper, and a 4⅛-inch round mirror with a britannia frame, the paper label of Babbitt and Crossman pasted on the back. All of these pieces are notable for both their rarity and form.

In a special case is housed the ecclesiastical pewter of the de Forest collection. Here are entire communion sets from various New England churches. There is a TS tankard, a baptismal bowl by Israel Trask, and another by brother Oliver, the latter being one of the best forms of the later period. All in all, the de Forest collection consists of some three hundred pieces, and although only the best have been mentioned, perhaps they will serve as a key to the variety and size of the collection.

The loan by Mrs. Murphy consists of approximately one hundred specimens, the emphasis being decidedly on miniature pieces. There are four good miniature candlesticks, as well as a miniature teaset of twenty-four pieces. However, all this is overshadowed by three—yes, three—matching tankards with the lion mark attributed to Francis Bassett! These are of the general type shown in Laughlin 78, having flat tops and fish-tail handles. It is an amazing sight to see three together, to say the least.

The gift of Charles K. Davis consists of sixty-four pieces selected with great discrimination, giving a vivid panorama of pewtering activities along the Connecticut Valley, as well as a few choice examples from other locales. The Boardmans and Danforths dominate the scene, as would be expected, and the examples by these men include all types of forms. There is a double-domed tankard by TD&SB, probably made from the same mould used by Edward Danforth and Thomas III. There is a rare Boardman & Hart quart measure, as well as a pint mug by Jacob Whitmore of Middletown. Among the sadware are a semi-deep 9⅛-inch smooth brim dish by Joseph Danforth and an eight-inch plate with the combination mark of Thomas Danforth I and his son John. There is also a pair of eleven and one-half inch candlesticks by H. H. Graves, the tallest known by a Connecticut maker. One of the most interesting pieces is a baptismal bowl by T D & S B. This is made from two eight-inch basins, with the brim of a nine-inch dish added to the upper one. The cases containing the Davis collection attest to the virility and individuality of our Connecticut pewterers.

Too many superlatives make a bad effect. Yet, in even thinking about the pieces described, one's enthusiasm is bound to get the better of him. A visit to the Society will justify this enthusiasm. Its spacious quarters are located at 114 Whitney Avenue in New Haven, and the size and brightness of the room in which the pewter is displayed attest to the enthusiasm and taste of its Curator and librarian, Mr. Ralph W. Thomas. If you haven't seen it, be sure to stop the next time you go through New Haven. There will be many pleasant surprises!

A NEW AMERICAN TOUCH

By Dr. Adelbert C. Abbott

That the book is not yet closed in the matter of unrecorded early American pewterers is pointedly brought out by the recovery of an eight-inch plate, the touch from which appears in the accompanying illustration. Just who pewterer Tillinghast was, where and when he worked, is at the moment an unsolved mystery, though the surname and the incorporation of the state seal in his touch, emphatically indicate a Rhode Island province evidently of the pre-and/or post-Revolutionary period. Most unfortunately, due to wear and uneven placement of the die in striking the touch, the Christian name cannot be defined, even by the industrial X-ray technique of taking a roentgenogram at high voltage.

At the start of our attempt to identify this nebulous pewterer we were faced with the ponderous fact that Elder Pardon Tillinghast, who came to these shores in the early 1700's begat 12 sons, most of whose descendants took root in the Providence Plantations and adjacent provinces. Despite this formidable numerical complication, the extensive Tillinghast genealogies have been most carefully searched without yielding a scintilla of evidence that one of the family ever was engaged in the pewterer's art. The Vital Statistics of Rhode Island also proved equally silent, but a social note in one of the Providence newspapers of the period announced the marriage of Paris Jenckes Tillinghast at Fayetteville, N. C., in 1803. Inquiries directed to his descendants at that place indicates he was thought to have been either a merchant or a blacksmith. Could he have been a brazier instead of a blacksmith? Or a merchant-pewterer after the manner of Stafford of Albany? If so, the simultaneous migration in 1807 of Jehiel Johnson, Wm. Nott, and Jacob Eggleston to this then distant small North Carolina community could more readily be explained.

Regrettably, at this point ends, temporarily we trust, many months of pa-

tient investigation. And this constrains us to offer a suggestion. The difficulties we have, and are experiencing in the prosecution of this particular bit of unorganized research impresses us of the need within our organization of a research bureau empowered to designate special committees to search out facts sought in the records of their respective communities for the benefit of projects under investigation. The Walpole Society has successfully demonstrated that important research can be accomplished by committee. Why should not the Pewter Collectors' Club of America gracefully abstract a page from their book?

In the preparation of this preliminary report the BULLETIN is most appreciative for the assistance of Dr. Madelaine Brown, Mr. Roger T. Clapp, Mr. Carl Jacobs, Mrs. Lee Lawrie, Dr. P. E. Raymond, Mr. Henry B. Reardon, Mr. Amory S. Skerry, Mr. P. E. Tillinghast, Mrs. Nan M. Tillinghast.

ANOTHER NEW AMERICAN PEWTERER

By DEAN A. FALES, JR.

Mr. Carl Jacobs has recently acquired a plate by an unknown American pewterer, E. Crossman. The plate is 8⅝ inch with a brim of 1 1/16 inch. The touch consists of a spread eagle in a circle, with E: CROSSMAN above. The bottom portion of the touch is worn, giving us no clue to location. There are four hallmarks, the first containing the EC, the second a rampant lion, the third an eagle, and the fourth is worn beyond identification. A clue is given in the hallmarks, however. They are of the same style as those used by Gershom Jones, David Melville and his sons Samuel and Thomas, and there is little doubt that the same die cutter was responsible for all of them. The dimensions of the plate also agree exactly with examples made by Samuel and Thomas Melville. Thus, with the same style of hallmarks, and using the same mold, it would seem that Mr. Crossman tied in somehow with the Melvilles. The precision with which the eagle is modeled would indicate a slightly later date than the eagle used by Jones. Hence, giving Mr. Crossman a Rhode Island address in the first quarter of the nineteenth century seems permissible. Perhaps he was a forebear of the later Crossmans of Taunton, Massachusetts.

The figure is produced here through the courtesy of Mr. Jacobs.

RANDOM NOTES

REVERE, GOOCH

Seen at the home of Professor Reginald F. French. A pewter rat-tail spoon marked P. REVERE MEM. ASS. in a rectangle.

I heard, once upon a time, that the descendants of Paul used to gather on or about the 19th of April and receive one of these spoons as a souvenir of the occasion. The same vague memory of the conversation contains the idea that the spoons were cast in a mold which belonged to Mrs. Pauline Revere Thayer. Query. Where is the mold and has anyone else one of the spoons?

From "The Colonial Craftsman," by Carl Bredenbaugh, p. 111. "Although very little pewter was made in the colonies, John Gooch produced plates, basins, porringers, and exchanged new pewter for old 'at the Halves'." Who was John Gooch?

ELIZABETH PERKINS.

ROBERT PORTER?

A Pennsylvania tab-handled porringer recently in my possession bears a large P on the handle. The possibility of its being a maker's mark occurred to me, yet the evidence was slim indeed. Recently, however, I have heard of other examples with the same letter. This, plus the fact that the letter is centered with great deliberation, provides a good case for it being the mark of a pewterer. The porringer, by the way, is 5½ inches in diameter, and is exactly like the unmarked one shown in Laughlin 75.

Briefly reviewing the work done on tab-handled porringers by the late Francis D. Brinton (cf. Bulletin No. 28, p. 174), there are now examples in existence coming from eight different moulds. There are four known makers. Mr. Brinton then goes on to mention Isaac Jackson and Robert Porter, both of whom were known to have owned moulds for these porringers. The gibing of the P on several porringers now in existence with the last name of one of the men known to have owned moulds, naturally rings some sort of a bell. While a positive attribution would be out of the question, nevertheless there is a possibility. Robert Porter lived in Caln Township, Chester County. He died in 1785, and this date falls within the span of the manufacturers of these porringers. So the case rests, until more can be learned. Though the evidence is tenuous, the mere fact of ownership brings with it an overwhelming desire for positiveness!

DEAN A. FALES, JR.

A LEDDEL-OWNED TANKARD

William Vilant of Philadelphia made a silver tankard for the Leddel family of New York. It bears Vilant's touch, but is signed by Joseph Leddel, Jr., engraver and pewterer, by whom it was decorated and owned. It is illustrated in the Burlington Magazine, London, vol. 54, 1929, p. 264. It was then on loan to the Victoria and Albert Museum by Lionel A. Crichton of London.

P. E. R.

SAMUEL S. HERSEY

Laughlin (vol. 2, p. 104) mentions a 19th century teapot marked S. S. Hers—, full name unknown. He was Samuel S. Hersey, listed in the Maine Register of 1855 as of Belfast, Maine, under the heading, Britannia Ware.

LURA WOODSIDE WATKINS.

Two of Hersey's teapots have been found recently, bearing good touches. And a communion service by him is known to exist.

DEAN H. FALES, JR.

LETTERS FROM ENGLAND H. I. (or I. H.)

Communicated by Edna T. Franklin

Letters from Ronald F. Michaelis, Hon. Librarian
The Society of Pewter Collectors

"Do you remember sending me a copy of 'American Pewter' by John Meredith Graham II of Brooklyn Museum? Well, I have been looking through this again and I find one item which needs correcting. I refer to the bowl which appears in Fig. 28, mark "I.H." and said to be 'unidentified American.' This type of bowl, in various sizes, is fairly common in England. I have one, size 7 inches in diameter and 4½ inches high, with same mark. The bowl is inscribed 'Kermay 1766,' and is, presumably, a baptismal basin from Kermay Church (a parish in Aberdeen, Scotland). 'John' Minchin has another with the I.H. mark; and Mr. Jaeger has another. The latter has a shallow domed cover with central knob. I also know of at least four others, all 'I.H.' and many more with no mark at all, other than Crowned X. I have one (no mark) 5⅞ inches in diameter, 3½ inches high. I am inclined to the view that it was originally identical in measurements to that shown in Fig. 28; but in the case of my smaller bowl the rim has been bent and re-straightened and in the process has been spread slightly wider, hence the difference in diameter and consequent lowness.

"There is no doubt that this mark is unidentified English or Scottish of (I should say) c. 1750 or so. I wonder if you would be good enough to pass this information to the Brooklyn Museum authorities.

"You ask how is the new Cotterell book progressing. The work is practically done, and I can show over twice the number of references as there are in the original, but the cost of publication is prohibitive. The potential sales would not cover the cost and I have had to shelve the project for the time being. Even with the assistance from the Worshipful Company and from individual members it would not be possible to raise sufficient funds.

"You ask what is the function of the Worshipful Company of Pewterers. This is very difficult to define. They certainly now have no control over the pewter industry, such as it is, and their sole purpose seems to be to control and distribute their vast possessions in the form of charities. Many of the old pewterers left bequests to the Company for this purpose, and, of course, the sums have accumulated in value as time has passed. It is very possible that the Company is one of the wealthiest in London, owning many valuable prop-

erties which bring in revenue, and being in London, continually increase in value.

"They still invest a Master and Wardens, as formerly, but these sit in meetings only for the purposes of their own charitable business.

"Relatives of old pewterers may take up Freedom or Livery, but this has not the significance of the old trade, and it exists now more as a tradition than a reality, it being somewhat of an honor to be a member of one of the old City Companies.

"It is a deplorable fact that, apart from one Liveryman, who is a collector belonging to our Society (Dr. R. Blake Marsh), and, of course, Captain A. V. Sutherland-Graeme, who was honored with the title of Honorary Freeman, there are no persons within the Company who have any idea of, or love of old pewter."

A PLATE-MOLD

By PERCY E. RAYMOND

Mr. William P. Hellen of Los Angeles, a member of the Club, has been good enough to loan us a bronze plate-mold. In February, 1951, I showed it at the Harrison Grey Otis House, during a talk on New England pewter sponsored by the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, and placed it on exhibition in their Museum. In December, I showed it again at a meeting of the Club at Mrs. FitzGerald's home. These were the only occasions on which most of us have had an opportunity to see a mold of this sort, and it proved most interesting to all.

The mold is 9⅛ inches in diameter, weighs 8½ pounds, and is capable of producing plates with a diameter of 7 15/16 inches. The plate would be rather deep, the depth at the center of the mold being ¾ inches. Allowing 1/16 inch for the thickness of the metal, that leaves a depth, when finished of about 9/16 or 10/16 of an inch. No "8-inch" plate in my collection will exactly fit the mold, those having the right diameter being too shallow. There is a narrow groove for the reed, only 3/32 of an inch, on both the upper and lower surfaces of the brim. Most plates with a single reed lack this thickening on the lower side, but I have a few which show it. Of course it could be removed during the process of skimming.

A curious feature, probably having to do with the escape of air from the mold during the process of pouring the metal, is a series of narrow grooves, probably incised in the mold after it had been cast. Three of these are on the outside of the booge, two along the inner margin of the brim. There are four more less deeply incised circles near the center of the upper half of the mold. These various grooves would appear as elevated rings on the cast, and were removed during the finishing on the lathe.

The opening for the introduction of the molten metal is wedge-shaped, 1 5/16 inch wide at the top, 1 1/16 inch wide at the bottom. It opens into the mold for the lower surface only, being blocked from the upper one. It extends into the groove which would produce the lower reed, narrowing it, which suggests that the lower reed was to be removed from the cast. The extra space here allowed for the escape of air during the pouring. The outer edge of the upper mold fits inside the lower one.

This mold could have been used either for a plate with a narrow single reed, or, perhaps even better, for a plain-brimmed one, 7¾ inches in diameter. The brim would have been just one inch wide, if the reed were removed on the lathe.

IROQUOIS INDIAN PIPES

The French explorer, Pierre Esprit Radisson, has left us an account of his travels in the realm of the Five Nations in New York. They were written in rather quaint English, and published as "Voyages of Pierre Esprit Radisson" in 1943. Extracts from them are republished in "The Eyes of Discovery," by John Blakeless, Lippincot Co., 1950.

In 1653 or 54, he was subjected to torture by the Mohawks. He had been held captive, adopted into the tribe, but escaped and was recaptured. Of a part of his experience during the torture, he writes:

"Her coming (his Indian foster-mother) comforted me much, but that did not last long: ffor heare comes severall old people, one of which being on the scaffold, satt him down by me, houlding in his mouth a pewter pipe burning, tooke my thumb and put it in the burning tobaco, and so smoaked three pipes one after another, w c h made my thumb swell, and the nayle and flesh became as coales."

Several pewter pipes have been found in Indian graves in New York, and are now in the New York State Museum in Albany. Two of them were illustrated in Bulletin 12.

This is the first account I have seen which describes them as being actually smoked. Evidently tobacco can be burned in a pewter pipe without destroying it. I had previously supposed that they might have been symbolic, for ceremonial purposes.

These pipes were no such dinky little things as the ordinary clay. There was plenty of room for the thumb.

P. E. R.