

The
PEWTER COLLECTORS' CLUB
of AMERICA

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*Twentieth Anniversary Meeting
Of The P. C. C. A.*

by ADELBERT C. ABBOTT

The modest notice culled from the files of the Boston press of twenty years ago adjacently appearing, cannot fail to impress our members, particularly those who attended the twentieth anniversary meeting at The Henry Francis DuPont Winterthur Museum, at Winterthur, Del., March 18, 19 and 20, of the great advances attained by the P.C.C.A. during this brief fifth of a century. Starting as a small New England study group, this meeting established the salient fact of our truly national character by the attendance of members from the Pacific northwest, California, Texas and the Central States.

The meeting itself was a masterpiece of efficient organization for which at this time we take opportunity to express our appreciation to Messrs. Montgomery, Fales and de Jonge. Most courteously, Mr. Henry Francis du Pont arranged that all available reservations for the Museum tour for March 18 through 20 be allocated to the P.C.C.A., a fine gesture herewith acknowledged by our membership.

Officially the series of meetings opened on Thursday evening at the Wilmington YMCA with an illustrated talk, "On American Pewter" by Dean A. Fales Jr., Registrar of the Museum and Editor of the BULLETIN. Using slides from the Museum library, Mr. Fales developed an analysis of comparative form in American pewter by the unique method of using two projectors for the simul-

**Collectors Meet to
Form a Pewter Club**

ALL collectors who may be interested in the organizing of a pewter collector's club are invited to attend a very brief and informal meeting which will be held at 2 P.M., Wednesday, March 21, at the Old State House, head of State street, Boston. The use of these historic quarters has been extended by the Bostonian Society, custodians of the building. Any collector who is interested in early American, English, or Continental pewter is welcome. The meeting will take whatever steps may seem advisable for the launching of a social and educational organization devoted to the best interests of pewter collecting in this country. The meeting will be held in one of the chambers on the second floor. Those who are unable to attend in person are requested to correspond immediately with the Pewter Club, Old State House, Boston, Mass.

taneous screening of the items under discussion.

Friday afternoon in the Court of the Museum at Winterthur our members found themselves in what only can be described as a pewter collectors' Paradise. For, around three sides of this large auditorium were displayed examples of the handiwork of practically all of America's early pewterers; and as an added fillip to our avid interest, a magnificent display of all forms insofar as at present known of the work of Col. William Will. Following an address of welcome by President Eric de Jonge, Mr. Charles F. Montgomery, Executive Secretary and Associate Curator of the Museum, discussed, "The Philosophy Behind the Winterthur



The Pine Kitchen at Winterthur. Photograph by Gilbert Ask.

Museum Pewter Collection". Contrary to any assumption engendered by the breathtaking display before us, Mr. Montgomery emphasized that the studied policy of the Museum was definitely not the acquisition of a large and nationally comprehensive collection of American pewter. Rather, he stated, it is considered the obligation of the Museum to the public to present for their interest examples of the lifetime handiwork of an outstanding American pewterer; in the present case that of Col. Will. His stimulating thoughts on a collectors' ladder will appear in the next BULLETIN.

Friday evening, and to the du Pont Country Club for wassail, dinner; and the formal Anniversary Meeting, Ex-Pres. Mrs. Charles A. Holbrook presiding. Mr. John J. Evans Jr. presented a most interesting talk on, "Pewter in the Colonies and the Young Republic". Mr. Evans is surely a master of platform psychology for, in addition to the serious subject matter of his talk he occasionally

screened most amusing Disney-like cartoons depicting in humorous vein the trials and tribulations of pewterers and collectors of the alloy. The final presentation of the meeting, "Johann Christopher Heyne and the Swedish Influence in American Pewter" by President Eric de Jonge, was an outstanding revelation of research into the reasons for the unusual forms affected by this early Pennsylvania pewterer, and constitutes an important contribution to the literature of American pewter. The findings of his discoveries of Heyne's Swedish career will be published soon in *Antiques*, following which other material and illustrations will appear in the next BULLETIN.

On Saturday the Museum tours were completed. And so home, stunned not only by the pewter, limitless objects, and plans of the Museum, but by their presentation and vitalization of American social history by showing the part these objects played in the early life of our country.

"All Arts Shall Flourish In Columbia's Land" (**)

By ERIC DEJONGE

The Pewter Collectors' Institute, first proposed at the annual meeting of 1953, came a step nearer to realization, when the members of the Pewter Collectors' Club of America, at the memorable Winterthur meeting, elected a committee to prepare and draw up plans for its framework.

In every collector's heart is the desire to increase his knowledge, and every student of arts and crafts is constantly searching for places where assistance and information can be obtained without needless energy and time consuming efforts. For the lovers of antiques, there are always too few centers for guidance in their specialized fields.

Consequently, it was not surprising that this committee, in informal conversations, poured out ideas and dreams of things to be done, of facilities for study and research to be created, of goals to be achieved. Out of this wealth of ideas, all eminently feasible, emanated a plan outlining the work of the Institute. As yet loosely drawn, this plan appears to be too important and too ambitious that the physical creation of the Institute should be delayed for too long a time. Upon its physical realization, this Institute, by its nature, may become the nucleus of all activities of the PCCA. It will be the culmination of long years of labor and efforts which its devoted members unstintingly gave. It possibly may serve as the pilot for similar institutes, created by other collectors' organizations, which are doing their share of research in the lore of the American arts and crafts, just as the PCCA has been doing in the past.

A brief description of the work outlined for the Pewter Collectors' Institute may be in order at this point.

1. Reference library to collect printed and written material pertaining to pewter of all countries, in all languages. Any ma-

terial which has appeared on tin mining, pewter manufacture, composition, distribution, weights, sizes, prices, etc. Also everything about pewterers, their relations to other crafts, their guilds and associations, their personal data, their workshops, their selling methods, etc.

2. Pictorial reference library of photographs of pewter ware with emphasis on forms, designs, and styles. Also, unrecorded touches, names, etc.
3. Pictorial reference library of prints, paintings, all graphic descriptions of pewter utensils and objects, pewterers, their shops and tools, pewter selling and trading, settings of pewter as demonstrated by graphic means.
4. Based on these libraries, expansion of information and reference service about pewter and anything related to it. This service to cover the pewterers and their wares of all countries.
5. Revision and publication of Laughlin's *Pewter in America* based on new developments and discoveries since its first issue.
6. Cooperating with the Society of Pewter Collectors of England in their endeavor to publish an enlarged and revised issue of Cotterell's *Old Pewter and its Marks*.
7. The publication of a monumental work on continental pewter in the English language which, according to information, has been waiting for a publisher, should be investigated and considered.
8. Creation of a traveling loan exhibit of prominent pewter objects, to be made available to all institutions, societies, and organizations which either are unable to arrange for an exhibit from their own collections, or are interested in special exhibits of applied arts and crafts. This ex-

(**) Inscription on the flag of the Society of Pewterers, 1788.

hibit to be accompanied by an informative and descriptive brochure and catalog, which selling at a nominal price, should help to sustain further activities.

9. Creation of a lecturing service. (Who can forget the charming slides of the Evans' collection?)
10. More frequent and regular editions of the bulletin.
11. Creation of a pewter museum for comparative study. It shall assemble for close study and comparison, pewter objects of all descriptions, forms and shapes, of all national types of pewter.

The Pewter Collectors' Club of America has been an active and ambitious organization from its inception, with all its arrangements eventually leading to a major accomplishment, the Pewter Collectors' Institute. The time has passed, when mere consideration of future plans, wishful thinking and dreams of things to come, are sufficient reason for its being. The PCCA is confronted with the consolidation of its 20 years work of love and enthusiasm, and there is no question that this challenge can be met.

When the Institute was first proposed, the question of its financial organization was held in abeyance until the sentiments of the members of the PCCA could be evaluated. There was never any doubt, that this Institute would be a major undertaking with financial problems far beyond the resources of a comparatively small collectors' organization. However, considering the accomplishments of other, similar organizations, which were not only able to create their own library and reference service, but more important, were able to install them in a headquarters in its own building, can we not hope that the PCCA members can do equally as well? Theirs is now the task to work for this goal, theirs is now to search their memory for friends and sponsors whom they could interest in our plans, since we apparently must ask for assistance outside of our own ranks.

The writer admits to be a complete failure as a promoter as well as a publicist and, worse luck, is unable to extract from his, at times fertile mind, any idea what could be done in the way of promoting the Institute. Is there someone amongst the membership of the PCCA whose promotional capabilities

have been dormant and who is willing to go on from here?

The committee has successfully accomplished the assignment it was asked to do. The burden to solve the financial problem for the creation of the Institute will rest upon the shoulders of every member. In its preamble, the proposed new constitution of the PCCA stresses its educational and scientific purpose of our organization, a purpose which may be important in our quest for assistance. What tangible support will be ours in the creation of the Pewter Collectors' Institute of America?



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The Dolbeares

by REGINALD F. FRENCH

I. THE DOLBEARES REAPPEAR CARRYING PACKAGES

The Dolbeares have marched occasionally through these and other pages in the empty-handed way of all seventeenth-century pewterers, excepting of course Mr. Copeland of Chuckatuck who carries a broken spoon in his right hand. Here I mean to tell of a brief and challenging glimpse of the Dolbeares, bearing pewter dishes in their hands and walking rapidly toward a great warehouse where they cast their wares behind them and walk off stage.

II. THE PEWTER

One of these dishes, as a matter of fact, has been in my possession for some years. It is a multiple-reeded dish of $16\frac{5}{8}$ "", marked four times on the upper rim with the E.D. pseudo hallmark with five stars in a shield. These four E.D.'s are lined up very irregularly and there is no trace whatsoever of a name touch on the under rim. With this, I have also two broad-brimmed dishes, similarly marked, measuring $15\frac{15}{16}$ " and $13\frac{1}{8}$ ". Mr. Rockwell Gardiner has a multiple-reeded dish with the E.D. four times and the Winterthur Museum has a 15" multiple-reeded dish, marked I.D. in a heart with three stars, repeated four times on the upper rim. None of these five dishes has the slightest trace of a touch mark! They are all of but fair pewter, certainly not of the exceptionally high quality of London dishes of the period. They are hammered all over, a little unevenly, and the final skimming has been done haphazardly so that incisions have been made into the under reed.

III. THE CASE FOR THE DOLBEARES

When Mr. Fales first produced the remarkable I.D. dish and we compared the handsome hallmarks illustrated here, we were more than impressed. Certainly no one who sees their stars and irregular lining-up can deny that there is a necessary connection between their makers. Certainly they belong to a close association, perhaps a family one . . . perhaps they represent two generations of the same family since the owner of the E.D. die made broad-rimmed dishes and our only I.D. is later. The history of pewtering is full of

such family tradition, witness the Danforth swords. Again, the way these hallmarks are repeated without a name touch, urges us to accept as our premise that E.D. and I.D. were related and must have lived in the same locality. If this premise is accepted, then we are left only with the problem: where could two closely related pewterers who have produced such metal and had such marks have worked together in the period of their pieces?

For such a search, we have as positive evidence the pewter itself, the style of marking, the place where the pieces were found and, on the negative side, the absence of these marks in lists already compiled for other places.

The five pieces are obviously not London quality; they are not made in a very superior way; they are quite provincial. The use of hallmarks without touches was of course prohibited by the guild and is virtually unknown on London dishes. The use of hallmarks without touch for that matter is rare enough on English provincial dishes. The use of four identical hallmarks alone is virtually unknown. We are faced here with a situation which seems definitely un-English. If only one or two pieces had appeared with hallmarks and no touch, we should not perhaps think it too significant and hope that one day the touch would show up too. But with *five* pieces as data, the absence of touches becomes very significant and one could guess that E.D. and I.D. didn't even have a die!

Here we must check against recorded marks. Mr. Ronald F. Michaelis, Librarian of the Society of Pewter Collectors, who in his collection of English marks has virtually doubled the number known to Cotterell, writes: "I am intrigued with your news of the multiple reed plates with marks of ID and ED and I will say right away that I have no trace of these ever having turned up in England . . ."

On the Continent one occasionally finds a repetition of pseudo hallmarks, but they are completely different in character from these hearts and shields. Moreover, the type of reeding on both the E.D. and I.D. dishes

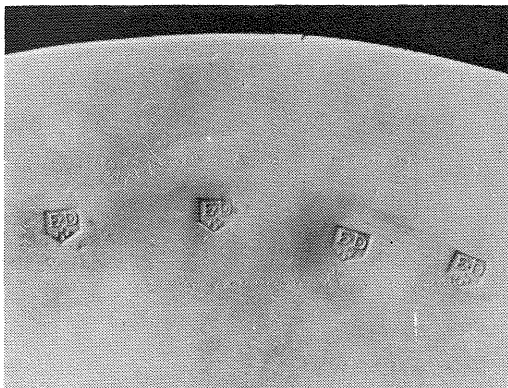
is exactly that of our English tradition, 1670-1695.

Now the origin of the five pieces is fairly clear in each case. The larger multiple-reeded dish came from middle Massachusetts (Phillipston), the broad-rims from Massachusetts in the Connecticut Valley, the smaller multiple-reed from Connecticut, the I.D. from Boston. In no case does it seem possible that they are imports or come from the good old "grand tour." One must always be cautious in this matter, as we all know, but the better guess is that these pieces have always been in the Boston area. Perhaps we should turn to Boston for E.D. and I.D.

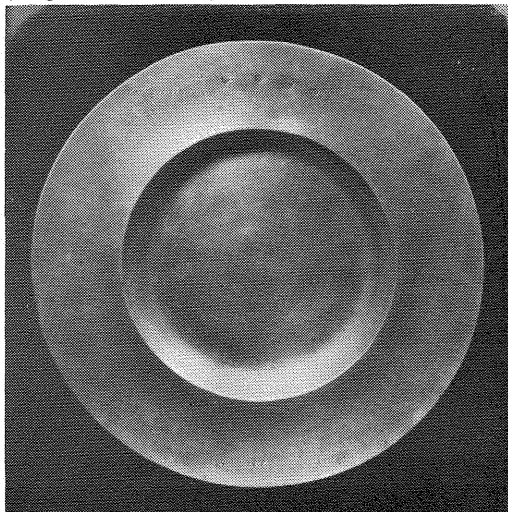
Here style enters the argument, and much in favor of Boston. As we know, Edmund came from Ashburton to Devon to Boston ca. 1670. His sons Joseph and John were old enough to be making pewter on their own before 1700. If John (or Joseph) had to have a die, in 1690 let's say, what would it be like? Anyone who knows Boston silversmiths' initial marks can answer that a heart with

pellets (often a star below) was the "rage" in these years. Dummer, who set up ca. 1666 had such a die. Hull's heart was apparently substituted for this other mark only after his association with Sandersen, so that silversmiths were actually changing from the E.D. sort of thing to the I.D. sort of thing in the years of John and Joseph's apprenticeship. This new style continues into the next century and it is *not common* elsewhere.¹

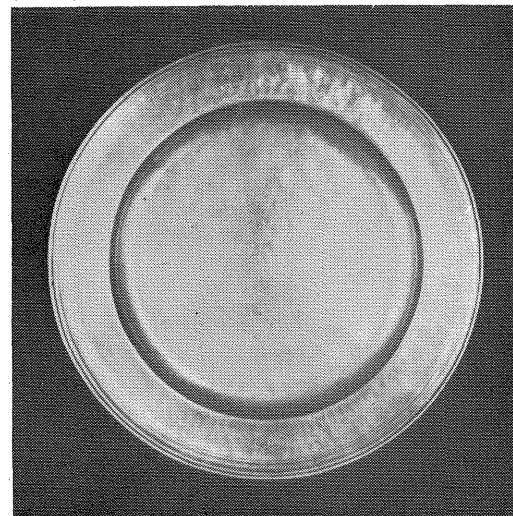
The argument for the attribution of the E.D. and I.D. marks to the Dolbeares then is that we recognize that the two have a necessary connection and that, if the pieces are not English, we may find a ready solution by accepting the evidence of the locale where they were found and recognize in them Edmund, Father, and John (or Joseph) Son, Dolbeare of Boston where their style of mark was in vogue. Really the only other possibility is that these are the marks of some provincial Englishman who, by some freak, got five such pieces into America when by



Figs. 1 and 2. 15 5/16" broad brim ED dish (Reginald F. French).



Figs. 3 and 4. 15" multiple reeded dish by ID (Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum).



another such freak their home production got long since eaten up by time.²

IV. TOWARD THE WAREHOUSE

That this conclusion fits the historical facts is not hard to demonstrate. If Edmund came from a provincial town ca. 1670, he would have every reason to bring with him his moulds for broad-rimmed dishes (expensive articles!) They were still in style at that date, particularly in the provinces.³ Perhaps Edmund knew too that the colonies were conservative: they were more interested in solid dishes than in the latest whim. Indeed one could easily imagine, judging from the extraordinary state of preservation of E.D.'s broad-rims, that they were made later than period and might be interesting evidence of "lag" of style in the colonies.

And let's suppose that Edmund lost his dies en route and upon arrival discovered only his one E.D. die. This he could use for small pieces; what more natural than to repeat it several times for bigger pieces?

Now if Edmund was a poor taxpayer in 1700⁴ and if son John was a big operator soon afterward, isn't it curious that we have before us four of Edmund's pieces and only one of John's? And where is the pewter of John's sons James and Benjamin who were both affluent people?

I think that a study of the Dolbeare papers in the Massachusetts Historical Society goes a long way toward explaining this. Benjamin's letter⁵ about his family for instance says that Edmund had not even added ironmongery to his pewtering. This implies that he was a pewterer pure and simple. And after all he had been at it for thirty years in 1700 and if Mr. Laughlin is right he revived soon after for perhaps another ten active years.

But John, I suspect was not a pewterer for long. That he served his time along with Joseph as apprentice to Edmund, we know from Benjamin's letter. From a curious document where we find Edmund and John together in a suit against Ebenezer Way of Newport (1698), we may guess that he was in partnership with his father. But in the many documents we have, John is universally called "Brazier" and I suspect that, even if he was apprenticed to his father, and married Sarah from John Comer, even if he had a partnership with J. Jackson and mentions

pewter in some of his early lading bills, that he made little of it himself, leaving it to Edmund or to Jackson.

James, John's son, was associated with him for some years, but aside from a receipt for quart pots and basins, any reference to James' partnership with his father, or to him alone, has to do with braziers. He died a young man (not as late as Mr. Laughlin suggests) in 1743 and at no time does he seem to be working much alone.⁶ He is always called "Brazier" even during his stay in London. When he died, he left everything to his mother who continued to pay the rent on the shop or "workhouse" he rented with James Gibson near Mackerel Lane. She, by the way, still owned the "Brazier's Shop on the Dock" when she died in 1744 and Benjamin enters it in the accounts for 1800.

If John and James left pewter for braziers, Benjamin the dear younger Dolbeare, went the whole way of the world into merchandizing! To leave handwork and become a middleman, this of course was the great temptation of the time. In 1740 he took an apprentice! but it was an apprentice in the "Art of Merchandizing"! With this defection all down the line, Edmund is the only "pure" pewterer left us and it is not surprising that we have, if E.D. is indeed he, more pieces for him than from the others. But the marvel is that we have any seventeenth century pewter, to say nothing of being—what shall we say?—*fairly sure* that it is Dolbeare, and to say nothing of having retrieved something before the family disappeared completely into braziers and the warehouse.

1 Difficult to make statistics. What is a star? Is Dummer's pellet a star? In any case, Boston 1670-1720 had four or five times as many heart and pellet marks as the rest of the country.

2 One could summon up Erasmus Dole II of Bristol who had a son John. Erasmus sent much good pewter to this country, beautifully and regularly marked. If he had a second mark for the colonies, why didn't he use it exclusively? And would a first-class pewterer like Dole use this exotic combination of four identical hallmarks?

3 In the remarkable collection at Henley-in-Arden is a broad-rimmed dish dated 1677.

4 Laughlin, I, 55.

5 *Ibid.*

6 James, born 1705, probably apprenticed to father until ca. 1727, partner with his father 1727-1735, with James Gibson 1735, until death in 1743. Meanwhile he was absent in London, 1736-ca. 1739.

The Continental Touch

It has been the writer's good fortune to call Robert Vetter one of his pewter friends. Mr. Vetter, formerly of Holland, and now of Vienna, Austria, is a pewter expert of renown and known to the English speaking pewter world as an intimate collaborator of the late H. H. Cotterell. Mr. Vetter in his own right is a researcher and writer on pewter of no mean capabilities. His own collection constitutes the most representative private collection of national types of pewter, which compares extremely well with the one in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

Robert Vetter has been an enthusiastic and prolific correspondent, whose letters are always a joy to read. The writer values his opinions and sentiments so much, that he feels they should be shared with all pewter collectors. This he proposes to do in publishing the more prominent passages of the letters in the Bulletin. The letters are written by a man with extraordinary pewter knowledge, which he is always willing to share with modesty and simplicity.

The American pewter collector will get a deep insight into the thoughts of a serious pewter collector and student who, in his travels over the continent and his residence in various countries, was able to acquire by his continuous occupation with the pewter of every continental country a greater storehouse of information than anyone of us could hope to possess.

The writer does not comment on Mr. Vetter's thoughts. However, where he deems an explanation to be necessary, he apologizes for doing so.

E. de J.
January, 1953 . . . Having resided in various European countries for a considerable time and having always taken a keen interest in the regional arts and crafts, I not only have formed a collection of authentic pieces but also gathered some information on the way, although I never had sufficient time to study methodically . . .

February, 1953 . . . I wish to thank you for sending me the many articles which I found even after my first reading extremely important. It is a flattering fact, that in U.S.A.

the Continental Pewter meets with such love and that the study of it meets with such interest . . . As an engineer I have always been interested in the technology of pewter. It seems that during the middle ages a method of casting and shaping was performed, which during the Renaissance was dropped to be superseded by more modern methods. It was indeed a pleasant surprise to see this confirmed, after having given up the intention, due to the press of business, to write a series of articles on the same subject, which should be the basis of all pewter knowledge . . .

. . . I began to correspond with the late Cotterell in 1913 and, that time we agreed to collaborate on a series of articles which was meant to appear in English magazines. (These articles appeared for a period of about 2 years in *Antiques* and were the basis of Cotterell's *National Types of Pewter* which was published in 1925. E. de J.)

. . . It was also decided to collaborate on a standard work on Continental Pewter and a few weeks before the outbreak of the second world war the publisher commenced printing. This was stopped very soon and after the war the lack of paper and other considerations prevented us from starting anew. There were over 1,000 pictures and it seems, that no publisher will finance the work now. Of course, the text would now need some revisions based on later discoveries. With Cotterell and myself, a number of contributors all over Europe collaborated and when we started there was the spirit of international collaboration for this project. All these ties were cut by the war . . . June, 1953 . . . I was very much pleased with the reports and the Bulletin of the Pewter Collectors' Club of America and its excellent articles. I can see that the Pewter Science's center of gravity is shifting to U.S.A., where the study is carried on with remarkable seriousness . . .

July, 1953 . . . I wish I could write English as well. My reason for answering in this language is that my secretary and myself have to practice it as much as possible, because nearly all my business correspondence has to be conducted in English. Furthermore,

since the time I collaborated with the late Mr. Cotterell, English has become to me the language of pewter. The same applies to all my publications.

I may say that I am trying to be an unbiased judge of national pewter types. I found that each country has produced types of distinct and, at the same time, international interest. However, collectors of every country are inclined to regard the pewter, produced by their forefathers, as the best and most beautiful. For this reason private and public collections represent chiefly national types and collections of international character are hardly ever encountered. The only public collection of a fairly all around character which I know, is the one in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. It seem to me however, that the U.S.A. would be the place for building up similar collections of representative national types. Since America takes such a leading position in serious scientific investigation in every field, I am certain that this idea will be realized some day, such as has been the case with regard to glass, ceramics, silver, etc.

Your endeavour to collect and assemble all available information which has appeared about Pewter is very ambitious. Such a source of information would furnish a sound basis for the formation of representative collections. I once had the ambition to make a complete bibliography of Pewter, but two wars and the consequent devastations of international relations have frustrated this plan completely. In addition the immense loss of irreplaceable old Pewter and pertaining written and printed materials did not encourage this idea . . .

. . . The general aspect of Pewter literature is sometimes rather dilettantic compared with standard works about glass, ceramics, silver, furniture, etc. Most Pewter publications lack originality of thought, there are exceptions however, such as the works of Cotterell, Hintze, Loefgren, and Gahlnbaeck. (Mr. Vetter was not familiar with the books on American Pewter by Kerfoot and Laughlin, which compare with those of the above mentioned authors. E. de J.) . . .

. . . I assume that you are a much younger man, and that you may be able to execute some of your plans. Of course, a peaceful

development of future international relations are a condition. Besides the collecting of Pewter literature, I would have liked to review pewter production of past centuries from the standpoint of origins and styles. On the whole, the pewterers showed little originality after the middle ages, and therefore formal inspiration was generally culled from other trades, and stylistic movements exercised a somewhat belated influence during different periods. It is extremely interesting to analyze a Pewter object and to try tracing these influences. In this perspective, Pewter collecting opens wider horizons than may appear apart from the mere value and rarity of the objects themselves, a perspective, which applies to every branch of collecting.

Being a mechanical engineer, I was further attracted by the pure technology of Pewter manufacture, as far as deriveable from tool marks on the objects, old prints, and examination of the few still existing Pewter workshops with ancient equipment. This study increases very much the respect for the inventiveness and sound metallurgical knowledge of the old craftsmen. With regard to the latter, it would be interesting to make methodical chemical analyses of Pewter samples. The present state of micro-analysis makes it possible to carry it out with samples not larger than a pinhead. I believe that Pewter manufactured in various places differs in composition very considerably from the rules laid down by guilds or towns and very often the tin contents are higher than prescribed.

A further point of great interest is the different resistance of Pewter against corrosion and tin-pest, and a study of the conditions under which the deterioration originates, is transmitted, or stopped. For the serious student this field is very wide indeed, and what has been maintained so far, has not always coincided with practical observations. Well, all of these plans would make a program which would fill a lifetime of patient study if carried out methodically . . .

. . . In your letter you mention Mr. Gahlnbaeck . . . I suppose you know his books on Russian Pewter . . . I wonder whether old Gahlnbaeck is still alive and whether he is able to continue his researches. (Gahln-

baeck's researches on Russian and other Eastern European Pewter are of great interest to the collector of English Pewter, since he brings in his book on the Pewter of Moscow, a great number of names and touches of English Pewterers who worked in Russia or exported their wares to Russia. E. de J.)

. . . Regarding the preference by American collectors for American Pewter, this is quite understandable. However the preference of English Pewter as the second interest seems not quite justified. As you know, I have personally a great admiration for the English variety, especially on account of the splendid workmanship it displays. On the other hand however, there is a certain lack of imagination and a tendency to follow the silversmith at a period, when Continental pewterers were still free from such influences and very often set styles which were copied by the silversmiths of that period. As soon as the Continental pewterers started to emulate the achievements of the silversmiths, they did not slavishly copy their models, as their fellow pewterers of England did, but created an art of their own, which became manifest in the creations of Briot and Faust in France, Horschheimer, Caspar Enderlein and others in Germany. When later, under the impact of prevailing fashions, pewterers had to supply Baroque and Rococo table ware, here also they produced their own designs.

There is another reason which makes Continental Pewter and particularly the Dutch, North German and Scandinavian varieties so very much more desirable than the major part of English Pewter. That is their greater age. In England, practically nothing exists which safely could be dated before 1600, whereas on the Continent, Pewter dating back to the 14th century and even earlier exists in many private and public collections. This type of Pewter is perhaps the most fascinating which one can admire. The English Pewter craft never went through a period like the Silesian craft between 1450 and 1550. The guild Pewter which has come down to us from this time is probably the most valuable of all . . .

. . . The variety of shapes in Continental Pewter, and with them the more or less successful attempts in decorations by relief casting or engraving are extremely interest-

ing. In my opinion, English Pewter has nothing similar to show. However, I readily admit that the English pewterers rarely transcended the possibilities of the material and that they "knew their place" amongst the contemporary crafts . . .

. . . On several occasions, American collectors have sent me photos of their treasures but, I am sorry to say, the Continental pieces were of a poor quality, as found in every Antique Shop in huge quantities. So far I have not met with an American Pewter collector of distinction as far as Continental Pewter is concerned. I have however watched Americans buying Pewter in Viennese shops and was very much impressed by their seriousness and genuine desire to learn. If given a hint or two, they showed their appreciation for good and interesting Pewter. It seem to me that much could be done in educating and enlightening the American collector with regard to Continental Pewter. I feel, that entrusting the heirloom from our and, in many instances their past, to their hands would be in the general interest of the preservation of cultural values . . .

. . . In England there has always been a notion that "Asia begins at Calais", ignoring the fact, that British arts and crafts have forever been heavily influenced by Spain, France, Holland, Italy and finally by Germany under the Georges. This somewhat confined attitude has been, as it seems to me, transmitted to some extent to American general opinion. That is, one shies away a little from things which one does not comprehend fully because the common bond of language is absent. I have myself lived for a number of years in England and had occasion to convince myself of the excellence and singular intimate charm of the British arts and crafts. When leaving the country, I was convinced that there is nothing like it in the entire world. But I venture to say, that my horizon has become a little wider since . . .

. . . You will excuse these autobiographical digressions but they may convey to you the degree of devotion which I have given to the subject of Pewter . . .

March, 1954 . . . I have carefully read your speech which was published in the Bulletin of the PCCA. It gives expression to a truly idealistic conception of the collector's avoca-

tion which is not only to gather objects of a certain category, but to search further for information about their origin and relation to other human activities. In this manner collecting becomes an important cultural function apart from the educational effect on the individual collector.

The gathering of all available information, even the seemingly insignificant, is a splendid plan. Such an archive may be consulted by

everyone and gradually valuable data will emerge and may be put at the disposal of scientists and researchers . . .

. . . Of course, I have no objection to publication of excerpts from my letters. I would be proud if some of my hints would stimulate some "stannophile" to closer study of their treasures and thereby widen their horizon and broaden their knowledge . . .

Robert M. Vetter

Honorary Member of the P. C. C. A.

by ERIC DE JONGE

Born 1881 in Vienna, Austria, as the son of art loving parents, he acquired knowledge in his early youth in pouring over the tomes in his father's book shop. His interests in antiques were greatly furthered by his parents' collections of antiques and antique musical instruments.

Leaving college with a degree in engineering, his career brought him soon to various European countries, such as Germany, England, Switzerland, Italy, Hungary, Holland, etc. His work also brought him for a short period to U.S.A. While employed at Wintherthur, Switzerland, in 1910, he fell under the spell of pewter when he acquired an 18th century salt and became aware of the great beauty of shape, material and finish of pewter. Encouraged by Mrs. Vetter, who shares his love for beautiful old things, although resenting the extra work which their maintenance entails (this strikes a very familiar note), they searched for other pewter specimens, which Switzerland with its rich treasures of most interesting and variegated shapes and types, could still supply at that time.

Returning from the U.S.A. in 1913, he found a letter from Howard H. Cotterell, asking for information about a continental pewter type. Out of this inquiry a most fruitful partnership developed until Cotterell's death in 1934. This partnership co-operated in a series of articles on English and continental pewter, which appeared in *Antiques*, *International Studio*, *Apollo*, and other publications. Cotterell's book *Pewter Down The Ages* was based almost exclusively on the text as related to the continental pewter ware. This book, as well as the articles suc-

cessfully aroused the interest for continental pewter in English speaking countries, since they brought to the collector the knowledge of the great age of this type of pewter and showed them for the first time the stupendous variety of types and styles. His research work and his writings were encouraged and furthered by the late Homer Eaton Keyes, editor of *Antiques*, and a pleasurable relationship between these two men existed which still exists between Mr. Vetter and Mr. Keyes' successor, Miss Alice Winchester.

The collaboration with the late Mr. Cotterell resulted in a large accumulation of information and pictures which could not be absorbed entirely in the published articles. It was then decided to include these in a larger volume on continental pewter, which was started with the collaboration of pewter experts of various European countries such as, A. Riff, France; A. Loefgren, Sweden; A. Gahlnbaeck, Russia; and many others. Printing began in England in 1939, the ensuing World War II however, terminated this ambitious project effectively.

Mr. Vetter resided in Holland from 1920 until 1943 and became acquainted and collaborated with the eminent Dutch pewter connoisseur, A. J. G. Verster, who introduced him to the beauty of the Dutch medieval and Renaissance pewter, some of which did find its place in Mr. Vetter's collection, since he Mr. Vetter's contribution of illustrations and endeavored at all times to add to his treasures the outstanding specimens of national types of pewter. His collection, which probably has no equal on account of this planned collecting, shows Mr. Vetter's migrations in the diversity and in the unity of continental crafts-

manship, based on common origin and regional tastes and developments. It is a collection which is the envy of continental institutions and collectors. For research and comparative study of Colonial American craftsmanship, a similar collection would be invaluable to the American researcher and student.

Vienna, June 10, 1954

Dear Mr. de Jonge,

On my return to Vienna after a prolonged absence, I found a letter, dated May 24, by which I am informed that I have been elected unanimously a Master Member of the Pewter Collectors' Club of America, of which institution you are President. Joy and gratitude were the feelings which filled me when I read this message. I regret my inability to express my gratitude personally towards you and your friends for the honour bestowed upon me. I would be very glad if at an appropriate occasion you would be so kind as to read before your friends the following address (subject to your approval). I know beforehand that these words express only inadequately the joy and pride of having now become an Honorary Member of the most important association, devoted to the cause of pewter collecting and relevant scientific research.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to give expression to my deep gratitude for the honour which you have bestowed upon me by unanimously electing me an Honorary Member of your Club. Since perusing regularly the proceedings of your meetings, which you very kindly sent me, I have come to the conclusion that your Club is not merely a congregation of people who are united by a common hobby or superficial pastime, making their meetings a more or less social affair, but that serious scientific research is carried on successfully and that it is one of your principal aims.

When I became aware of this fact, I was very much pleased indeed because it gave me the assurance that the true spirit of collecting is alive in your country, whereas in Europe the ravages of two wars have frustrated ever so many plans and intentions in that and many other respects. I am therefore happy to find that your country has to a

great extent become the trustee of Western Culture. I may mention also that my own plans regarding an intensification of pewter research had to be shelved on account of the deplorable turn which European history had taken in the first half of this fateful century. Another blow to me was the premature death of my unforgettable friend and collaborator, Howard H. Cotterell, whose enthusiasm, scholarship and kindness were most inspiring.

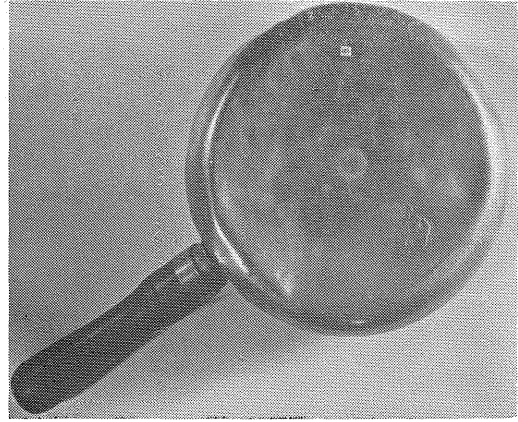
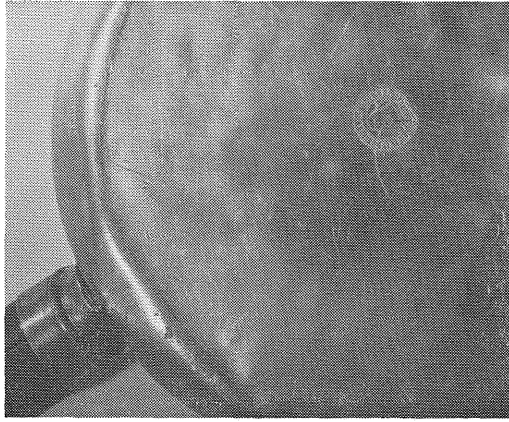
May I further say that I regard the honour of being made a Master Member, a status which I hope to become worthy of in the short time which destiny may still accord to me, as the crowning of an appreciation which I have experienced from numerous readers of articles which I had published in your country on pewter and other subjects. It all tallies with the happy recollections which I cherish of a short visit to U.S.A., exactly 40 years ago.

I have frequently expressed the idea that Pewter collecting either has a beneficent influence on character or vice versa: only a certain type of people, to which the general epithet "pleasant" applies, collect these humble remnants of by-gone days which, though not high in material value, are nevertheless eloquent witnesses of olden times which by many, and not without reason, are considered happier than the ones we were born into.

But let me not digress into philosophical reflections but rather wind up with offering you my best wishes regarding the future of your Club and may you be fortunate enough to carry out the plans for scientific research and concentration of Pewter information, which plans your able president has repeatedly mentioned to me and which in every respect have my full approval. I sincerely hope that I may be able to contribute some advice during the execution of these far-reaching ideas.

Please accept once more my most sincere wishes for the future well-being and prosperity of the Club, its president, its members and your great country. May God bless you all.

Robert M. Vetter
Hon. Master Member of
Pewter Collectors' Club of America



Figs. 1 and 2. Bedpan by Samuel Kilbourn, Baltimore, 1814-1839.

A Rare Kilbourn Form

Last fall in Vermont, I purchased the illustrated Samuel Kilbourn bed pan from a dealer near Burlington. The dealer unfortunately was aware of the rarity of this particular form by Kilbourn. She had acquired it at a farm near St. Albans, Vermont. I presented it for inspection at the December meeting of the Pewter Club and the members present were of the opinion that this form by Kilbourn had not been previously recorded. According to Laughlin, Kilbourn had advertised bed pans along with other pewter articles, in the *Baltimore American and Com-*

mercial Advertiser of December 29, 1819. It seems strange that a bed pan by a Southern maker should first show up in Vermont.

The handle of the pan is unusual in that it is of maple, nicely turned, with simple lines characteristic of the period. The proximal end of the handle is hollow and threaded to screw on to the threaded pewter receptacle which is the type usually found on pewter bed pans. The pewter collar apparently is to reinforce the hollow portion of the handle. I believe it is fair to assume that the wooden handle is original and its use dispensed with the need for another costly mold.

W. A. MONKHOUSE

Note From The Treasurer

According to the records of the treasurer of the Pewter Collectors' Club of America, there are about forty members who have been eligible for Master Members' Badges for some time. However, since there are no records to show who has been sent one, letters have been sent to those members for that information. Since the cost of these badges has increased tremendously in the last five years, the Club cannot afford to send a member two badges but would like each member, as he becomes eligible, to have his (or her) badge.

M. A. W.

Necrology

PAUL J. FRANKLIN

Last December death took Paul James Franklin of Chatham, New Jersey. One of the Charter Members of the Club, his research and vitality contributed much to the early success and growth of the organization. The Club extends its sympathies to Mrs. Franklin, whose enthusiasm and attendance at meetings is an example for us all.

CHARLES E. AYERS

The Boston members will miss the genial company of Mr. Ayers at future meetings. He died in April at Worcester, Mass. He was a courteous host and a good friend to pewter enthusiasts.

The Sign of The Pewter Platter

by MARTHA LOU GANDY

Sometime between 1690 and 1700 there was built on Front Street in Philadelphia an inn on land which was originally granted by William Penn to Griffith Jones. Joseph Knight, the first proprietor, was unfortunate enough to provoke Sheriff John Finney who recorded in 1704, "I seized a certain messuage or tenement commonly called or known by the Sign of the Pewter Platter."¹ At the time the property was sold in 1712 to Anthony Morris, the inn extended to a side street called Jones' Alley.

Evidently pewter platters were just as attractive then as they are today for crowds attended the inn on Jones' Alley. Most notable among the guests were Governor John Evans and William Penn, Jr. These two men were not only notable by rank and position but were especially noted for one night's activity at Pewter Platter Inn. Louis Wright in *The Atlantic Frontier* relates the story:

Their conviviality reached a dramatic climax one night in a Philadelphia public house. When they drunkenly tried to beat the constables, someone thoughtfully put out the lights, and bystanders, who claimed not to recognize them in the darkness, gave them both a sound drubbing; Penn, who tried to declare his identity, received a second beating on the grounds that he was a liar claiming to be the proprietor's heir.

One contemporary, Townsend Ward, stated that the inn in question was the Sign of the Pewter Platter and that if the Governor's term continued much longer a pewter mug undoubtedly would have been added to the platter which designated the inn.

Scandal again attached itself to the inn in 1714 when Peter Evans who was staying at the Pewter Platter challenged the Reverend Francis Phillips to a duel, charging, "You have lately scandalized a Gentle woman that I have a profound Respect for . . ."

Whether because of the notoriety of its guests, the sign of the platter, or for some other reason, Pewter Platter Inn became one of the few Front Street taverns of any importance. So important was it in fact that the name of the street where it was located was changed from Jones' Alley to Pewter

Platter Alley. When Benjamin Franklin and other members of his Junto Club began collecting the books which constituted the first Library Company in America, Robert Grace's house on the same street was used to store the collection and was called Pewter Platter Hall. At a later date, Zachariah Poulson wrote:

Jones's Alley is now called Pewter-platter Alley, and the Building in which the Library was kept was afterwards occupied by David Hall as a Printing office . . .²

Time and trade soon extinguished the name of Pewter Platter in Philadelphia. In 1740 the books which were the foundation of the Library Company of Philadelphia were moved from Pewter Platter Hall to a larger building. Between 1750 and 1760, the most flourishing period of the inn, the Sign of the Pewter Platter became the Sign of the Ship Pennsylvania. Finally the name of Pewter Platter Alley was changed to Church Street.

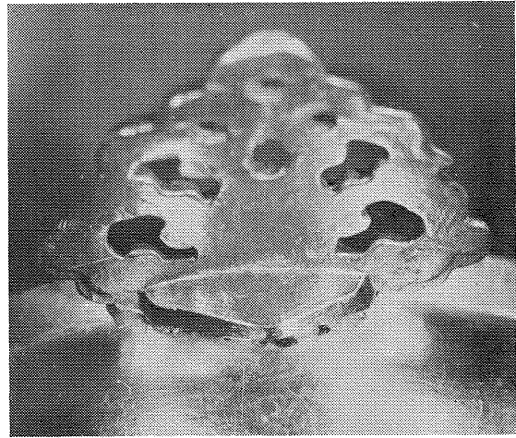
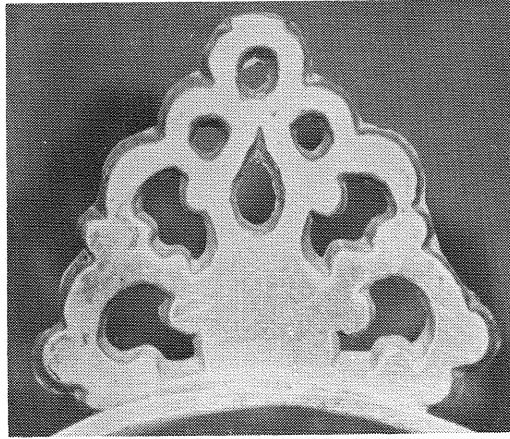
The passage of years adds dignity to the name of a once boisterous inn so that the Sign of the Pewter Platter might now be considered a respectable possibility for the name of the central repository of information for the Pewter Institute.

¹ Unless otherwise indicated all the information for this article was found in the manuscript monograph, *Inns and Taverns of Old Philadelphia*, written by Mary Emma Boggs and Benjamin Randolph Boggs at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

² Charles E. Peterson, "Library Hall," *Historic Philadelphia*, pp. 129-30.

Hannah's Reward

Joseph France of Baltimore has found an old newspaper clipping stating that the first American woman to be publicly rewarded for heroism was one Hannah Dustin who was given a pewter tankard in 1697 by the Governor of Maryland. Not only had she freed companions from Indian captives, but she had exterminated ten of the savages herself, making herself worthy of the reward.



Figs. 1 and 2. Unidentified type of Old English or conventional handle porringer in the collection of Dr. Abbott.

A Problem for The Pundits

This fine little 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ " 3 aperture porringer sans touch-mark recently came to light in central New York state. Failing of identification by study of Dr. Raymond's tables and illustrations, photographs were sent to several of our members, none of whom were able to identify its maker or definitely place its native provenience. The bowl is of typically American conformation, and the bracket, as can be seen in the illustration, closely approaches the New England linguiform type generally associated with the design of support used by Thomas Danforth, III.

CORRESPONDENCE INVITED

Parks Boyd Addenda

Mainly through the kindness of John J. Evans, Jr., of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, we are able to add some new forms made by Parks Boyd of Philadelphia to those listed in Laughlin. They are the following:

- 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " basin
- 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " smooth brim plate
- 12 $\frac{1}{8}$ " dish
- Drum shape teapot
- Pint barrel shape mug

Boyd's ability and variety of forms should give him a place near the top of the later American pewterers.

D. A. F.

American Smooth Brim Flatwear: A Check List

by DEAN A. FALES, JR.

While earlier forms of American flatware may exist, the single reeded rim plate and the smooth brim plate were the two forms most frequently made by American pewterers. Of these the single reeded type, which was introduced into England around 1700, was by far the most prominent type. Concerning my terminology, I remember Dr. Raymond's statement that "You say 'brim' not 'rim' when you are talking about your hat; so 'smooth brim' seems the best description to

me." On the single reeded and multiple reeded examples, however, it is the edge of the brim, or the rim, which is reeded. Hence, smooth brim and reeded rim seem to be the most fitting terminology for these types.

Over thirty years ago one commentator on American pewter stated that William Will was practically the only American pewterer to use the smooth brim form. In more recent years many more examples of this type have been found. The smooth brim plate, with its

brim of median width with a broad or narrow marginal reed on its under side, was introduced into English pewter about 1730 and by the middle of the eighteenth century had become far more popular than the single reeded type. Both types, however, continued to be made in that country until the decline of the industry about 1825. In America, however, the smooth brim form is the exception rather than the rule during this period. While the list of known examples embraces almost 50 different forms, none of them can be considered common. Examples were made as early as the third or fourth decade of the eighteenth century (Simon Edgell) and as late as the britannia period (Sellew and Company). Some had hammered booges while others did not. Others were a modified type which resembled more a single reeded plate with the top of the reeding cut away and the brim slightly concave. In general, the smooth brim form was a minor undercurrent of American pewter, yet one which was utilized by a majority of our best pewterers.

The following list is an attempt to list the various sizes of this type of flatware. Plates may be considered flat, of the normal type, and with the booges unhammered unless stated otherwise. Forms found since the publication of Ledlie Laughlin's *Pewter in America* are indicated by an asterisk. It is hoped that other members of the Club will contribute a listing of forms in their possession not covered by this list.

BOSTON:

- John Skinner— $8\frac{7}{8}$ ". Hammered booge; $9\frac{1}{4}$ " Hammered booge; $9\frac{1}{2}$ " Deep Hammered booge. Found with IS-Semper Eadem touch.
 Nathaniel Austin— $9\frac{1}{2}$ ", $9\frac{3}{4}$ ", 12".
 Thomas Badger— $8\frac{7}{8}$ ". Modified type with trace of reeding on top and convex brim.

RHODE ISLAND:

- Samuel Hamlin— $9\frac{1}{4}$ ". Two different molds used, one being deeper and found with his hard metal touch.
 William Calder— $9\frac{1}{2}$ ".
 Joseph Belcher, or $9\frac{7}{16}$ ".
 Joseph Belcher, Jr.

CONNECTICUT:

- Thomas Danforth II— $9\frac{1}{4}$ ". Hammered booge; 9"; $9\frac{3}{16}$ " Different mold than his $9\frac{1}{4}$ " example above.
 Thomas Danforth III— $9\frac{1}{4}$ ".
 Joseph Danforth, Sr.— $9\frac{3}{16}$ "; $9\frac{1}{2}$ ".
 Samuel Danforth of Hartford—9".
 Thomas Danforth I and John Danforth— $9\frac{1}{2}$ ". Hammered booge.
 John Danforth— $9\frac{3}{8}$ ". Deep.

NEW YORK:

- Francis Bassett—9".
 Frederick Bassett— $9\frac{1}{4}$ ".
 Cornelius Bradford—Listed under Pennsylvania.
 Duncan and Malcolm McEuen— $9\frac{1}{4}$ ". Hammered booge.
 Henry Will—9". Hammered booge; $15\frac{1}{4}$ " x $11\frac{5}{8}$ ". Oval dish, hammered booge; $9\frac{1}{2}$ ". Hot water plate, hammered booge.

PENNSYLVANIA:

- Cornelius Bradford—9". Hammered booge. (Philadelphia); $9\frac{15}{16}$ ". Hammered booge. (New York or Philadelphia.)
 John Andrew Brunstrom— $8\frac{1}{4}$ ". Hammered booge; $10\frac{1}{2}$ ". Hammered booge.
 Parks Boyd— $8\frac{1}{2}$ "; $9\frac{1}{2}$ ".
 B. Barns— $9\frac{1}{4}$ ".
 Simon Edgell— $9\frac{1}{4}$ ". Hammered booge.
 C. & J. Hera— $9\frac{1}{4}$ ".
 Love-bird—6"; $8\frac{1}{2}$ ". Modified type with trace of reeding on top and convex booge.
 I. Shoff— $10\frac{15}{16}$ ". Hammered booge.
 William Will— $5\frac{5}{8}$ "; $9\frac{3}{8}$ ". Hammered booge. $9\frac{1}{4}$ ". Hot water plate. Hammered booge.

VIRGINIA:

- E. W. Virginia— $9\frac{7}{8}$ ".
 Joseph Danforth, Jr.— $8\frac{3}{4}$ ". Modified type with trace of reeding on top and convex booge.

OHIO:

- Sellew and Company— $12\frac{3}{16}$ ". Deep.

MISCELLANEOUS:

- "Cup plate"— $8\frac{7}{8}$ ". A plate with the touch of a cup and plate formerly in the M. T. Nichols collection is thought to be American.
 H.S.—9". A plate bearing HS in a cartouche on the underside of the brim is likewise thought to be American.
 Boyle, Robert— $11\frac{3}{8}$ ". A plate formerly attributed to this maker (not in Laughlin) is now known to be of Scotch manufacture.

There the list stands at present. With flatware from $5\frac{5}{8}$ " to $12\frac{3}{16}$ ", and with an oval platter and hot water plates known, while American production of pieces of this type was limited, it is surprising how much variety was used within the form. In short, the smooth brim adds interest and variety to the relatively static development of styles of flatware in American pewter.

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Eric de Jonge

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