

The PEWTER COLLECTORS CLUB of AMERICA

BULLETIN No. 55

DECEMBER 1966

VOL. 5 - No. 6

The President's Letter

The 1966 Fall Meeting of the Pewter Collectors Club of America held at Newport, Rhode Island on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 23, 24, and 25 was attended by approximately fifty members of the club. Our hosts, The Preservation Society of Newport County arranged for us an outstanding program of activities in this city which is probably the greatest outdoor museum of early American architecture in the country. Here, under the resourceful, sensitive leadership of Mrs. George Henry Warren we saw the results of the important work of preservation that the Society is carrying forward.

Because of the fact that most of those in attendance had travelled long distances there was no program Friday evening except for registration at the Viking Hotel. On Saturday morning we were received at Trinity Church built in 1726 by Canon Lockett F. Ballard who gave us a most knowledgeable, delightful account of the history of this church, built by the great colonial architect Richard Mundy. Nearby, we visited "Pagodo House" the 18th century residence of Mr. J. A. Lloyd Hyde furnished with appropriate furniture and accessories of the period which reflected the fine taste and knowledge of the owner. Via motor coach we were driven next to Washington Street which parallels Newport Harbor and on which are located the famous Hunter House built in 1748 at Number 54, the property of the Preservation Society and the Quaker Tom Robinson House built in 1736 at Number 64, the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Henry A. Wood, Jr. direct descendants of the original owners. The Hunter House is furnished with outstanding examples of the work of the great cabinet makers Job Townsend and John Goddard whose

shop was nearby. Mr. Amory Skerry and Mr. J. Kevin Ott members of the Pewter Club had loaned examples of pewter by the Rhode Island makers from their respective collections for the occasion. At the home of Mr. and Mrs. Wood we were to see furniture original to the house some of which had been brought from Philadelphia. Outstanding among these pieces is a chippendale "camel back" sofa with reverse curved back, one of the great pieces of American Furniture. The "Henry Barker House" (1760) at 31-35 Second Street, a short walk from Washington Street, is the home of Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Dane. Recently restored by its owners it is one of the many houses saved by "Operation Clapboard." Organized by Mrs. Thomas Pepys of Newport, "Operation Clapboard" purchases and sells at cost houses of artistic and historic importance which are in danger of destruction to people interested in properly restoring them. This organization has and is saving many fine homes of the colonial period which would otherwise have been lost. The motor bus took us next to Marble House (1892) the former residence of William K. Vanderbuilt, now the property of the Preservation Society. Built by architect Richard Morris Hunt it is a reflection of the taste of those who lived in Newport, the fashionable watering place of the late 19th and early twentieth century. We were fortunate to have as our guide Mrs. C. Oliver O'Donnell who is chairman of the restoration committee for this house. At luncheon at the Newport Casino built by the late well known architect Sanford White we were welcomed by Mr. Harold R. Talbot director of the Preservation Society. Our fellow member Mr. Amory S. Skerry gave us an entertaining ac-

count of his experiences in acquiring his great collection of American pewter. After a short business meeting we bused to 5 Touro Park West the home of Mr. Cornelius C. Moore. This sophisticated collector has one of the great collections of 18th century furniture made in Newport. His interest in the history of this 18th century seaport includes rare maps, prints and paintings of key local importance. His collection of American silver considered to be the finest privately owned was on display in the dining room where our fellow member Mr. Edgar Sittig led the discussion about the many important pieces on view. After a tour around Ocean Drive during which our guide Mr. William O'Brien gave us an amusing account of points of interest we repaired to "The Breakers" (1895) on Ochre Point Avenue the former residence of Cornelius Vanderbilt. This great house also built by Richard Morris Hunt is visited each year by more than 100,000 people whose admission fees help support the activities of the Preservation Society.

Cocktails and dinner were at "The Elms" (1901) the property of the Preservation Society which was built by the late Edward Berwind a copy of a French Chateau with a fine garden inspired by that at Versailles. After dinner during which we were entertained with music, Mrs. George Warren gave us an inspiring talk on the work of the Preservation Society. Mr. J. Kevin Ott assisted by Mrs. Ott at the slide projector talked about the cabinet makers of Rhode Island. His research in this field and the furniture shown in the slides reflected his great knowledge on the subject.

Sunday morning Rabbi Theodore Lewis told us the story of the history and restoration of the Touro Synagogue. Here for our examination was displayed the silver made for the Synagogue by the silversmith Myer Myers. One of the most interesting features of this great Georgian building built by the architect Peter Harrison in 1763 are the five brass chandeliers all of which are dated.

A short drive to Portsmouth brought us to "Green Animals" where we were given coffee and refreshments by Miss Alice Brayton its owner. Looking over Narragansett bay Miss Brayton's residence features a Topiary Garden which is famed throughout the country. All of us at the meeting appreciated greatly the wonderful program arranged for us by Mr. Harold R. Talbot, Director of the Preservation Society.

Mr. and Mrs. Ledlie I. Laughlin have invited the Pewter Club to Princeton,

New Jersey, for our annual spring meeting to be held May 12th and 13th 1967. The opportunity to see the famous Laughlin collection and to visit with Mr. and Mrs. Laughlin is an occasion that should not be missed by any member of the club. Remember the dates and plan to be present at a memorable meeting.

Thomas D. Williams, President

Charles F. Edgecomb

It is with sorrow and deep regret that the death of our friend, fellow member, and former Club president, Charles F. Edgecomb, must be announced. His unexpected passing in August from a brief heart illness will bring a feeling of loss to all who were associated with him.

Charles was P.C.C.A. President in 1962-1963 and New York Regional Group Chairman 1958-1961. He served the Club in many capacities and was always ready to assist other officers with their problems. He was a contributor to the "Bulletin" and many of us will remember with pleasure his authoritative article on porringers and their identifying characteristics.

His own collection of pewter was extensive and although there were many fine pieces from notable makers, his deep interest in form and beauty was evident in their selection and arrangement. At his New England farm house in South Berwick, Maine, his pewter was a part of a very large and beautiful Queen Anne dining room of the less formal "country" style. A substantial number of pieces were kept at his Washington Square apartment in New York.

It is perhaps appropriate to re-print the closing paragraph of his President's Letter, published in the March, 1963, Bulletin, in which he summarizes his term of office and takes his leave as P.C.C.A. president. His words now become a final farewell. "And now au revoir. You put a two year trust in me. I have tried, though not spectacularly, to be true to that trust, and I of course wish for unbounded future progress for our distinguished Pewter Collector's Club of America. Sincerely, Charles F. Edgecomb."

Charles has joined those other past members of the Club whose sincerity and sense of trust has been responsible for the progress we have made and the future which we see before us.

Lennox F. Beach

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VOLUME 5

No. 6

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Rhode Island Holloware At the Newport PCCA Meeting

One of the features of the PCCA's Fall Meeting at Newport, Rhode Island was a visit to the pre-Revolutionary HUNTER HOUSE on Washington Street overlooking Newport Harbor. Among the many antiquities contained therein was a room full of Rhode Island pewter representing practically all of the makers who worked in that State. This wonderful display of our favorite metal was from the collections of, and through the courtesy of, J. Kevin Ott, Amory Skerry and the Hunter House.

Almost every form made by the old-time Rhode Island pewterers was there to be seen, and Club members lingered long and longingly in the room handling and closely examining each and every piece.

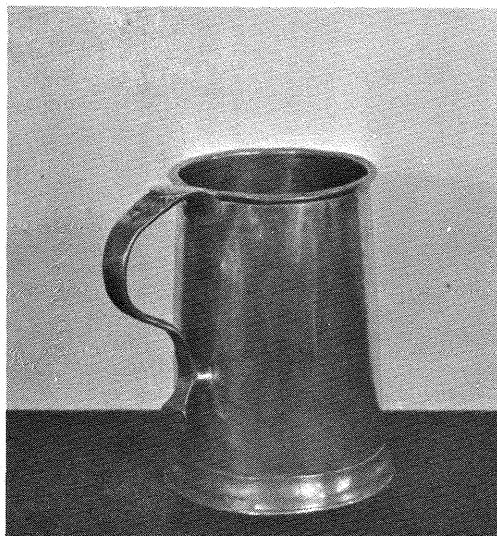


FIG. 1. Quart mug with strap handle attributed to Gershom Jones, Providence, R. I. (1774-1809).

The holloware received as much attention as any of the forms and elsewhere in this issue of the *Bulletin* are shown a few of these more noteworthy pieces. A close look at Fig. 1 will disclose that the body or drum of the strap-handled quart mug attributed to Gershom Jones is less tapered, more straight-sided than those by other makers of the period, a feature that may be seen better in Fig. 1a. Fig. 1a is included to point out the anthemion decoration just below the handle thumbrest



FIG. 1a. Closeup of strap handle on Jones mug shown in Fig. 1. Note anthemion decoration below thumbrest with single boss below center ray, and also boot-heel handle terminal.

with but a single boss beneath the center ray. Compare this with Fig. 123 in Ledlie Laughlin's *Pewter in America*. The latter shows *two* bosses beneath the center ray *plus* a raised cross-ridge below the second boss. It also has a body with more taper than in Fig. 1 or 1a. Hence, if Jones made both mugs, he must have had two sets of moulds for both bodies and handles.



FIG. 2. Quart mug with thin hollow handle by Gershom Jones.

The Jones mug in Fig. 2 is apparently from the same moulds as that shown in Laughlin's Fig. 121, but is less finished, has no decorative banding just below the lip, has no fillet just above the lower handle juncture, has a much plainer base moulding, and has a less bulbous handle terminal. Could this mug shown in Fig. 2 have been made by a less skillful pewterer who acquired Jones' moulds — possibly one of his two sons, James or Samuel, either when in partnership with their father in 1806 or after his death in 1809?

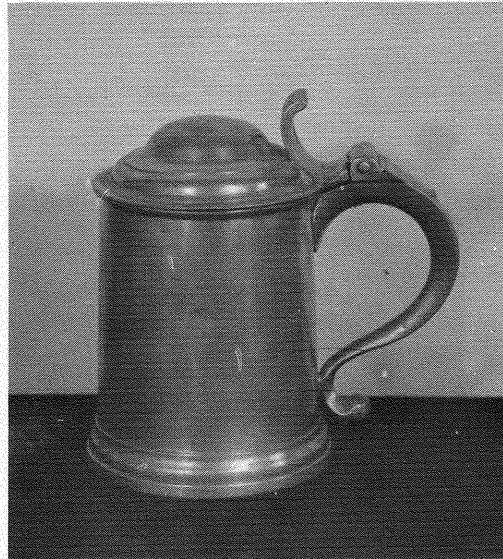


FIG. 3. Quart Tankard by John Fryers, Newport, R. I. (1705-1776), with hollow handle and bud terminal.

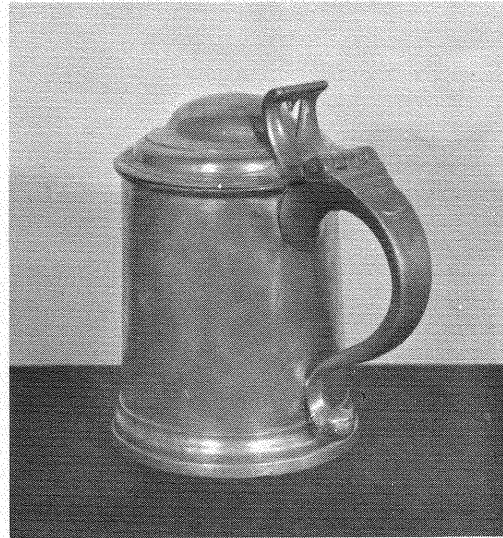


FIG. 3a. Another view of the Fryers tankard showing pierced heart opening on thumbpiece, thin tongue-like decoration on handle below hinge, and bud handle terminal.

The quart tankard by John Fryers of Newport (Fig. 3 and 3a) is in wonderfully fine condition for a surviving piece by a worker whose products are so extremely rare today. Any collector would cherish ownership of this fine example of pre-Revolutionary pewter.

The pair of Samuel Hamlin quart mugs in Fig. 4 are also in excellent condition. Both bear the maker's touch and hall marks below the rim and to the left of the handle. The two Hamlin pint mugs (Fig. 5) are in fine condition, too, and are of a most attractive form.



FIG. 4. *Two fine quart mugs by Samuel Hamlin, Providence, R. I. (1767-1801), with hollow handles and bud terminals.*



FIG. 5. *Two pint mugs by Samuel Hamlin with double-C handles.*



FIG. 6 *Pint mug by George Richardson, Sr., Boston, Mass. (1818-1828) and Cranston, R. I. (1828-1845), with hollow handle, marked with Richardson's "Glennore Co., Cranston, R. I." touch.*



FIG. 7 *What else but another of those famous sugar bowls by George Richardson, Sr.*



FIG. 8 *Two Rhode Island teapots, that on left by Samuel Hamlin, that on right by George Richardson, Sr. Note that the base of Richardson's is from his sugar bowl mould.*

The Richardson pint mug (Fig. 6) suffers by comparison with the Hamlin products. The plainness of the drum and the less shapely handle make it less attractive than those by Hamlin, but it still is a most desirable and collectable item.

The "Miss America" of American pewter was the title given the Richardson sugar bowl (Fig. 7) by J. B. Kerfoot in his well-known book. No further comment is needed.

Fig. 8 shows two rather late teapots,

both of which have their fine points. Rather than trying to point these out, or expressing a preference between the two, the task will be left to the reader.

The writer was privileged to be left alone for well over an hour with all the treasures in this wonderful exhibit while he selected the pieces to "pose" before his faithful camera. The privilege was greatly appreciated. His many thanks are extended to those who made the opportunity possible.

William O. Blaney

Description of meeting and banquet at Pewterers Hall, London

by Richard Munday

On October 18th, 1966 I had the honour, along with my good friend Ronald F. Michaelis, to be invited to one of the periodical banquets given by the Worshipful Company of Pewterers at Pewterers Hall, London. The original Hall goes back some 600 years. Destroyed in the Great Fire of London, rebuilt, and finally destroyed in World War Two, the present Pewterers Hall was completed only about three years ago. Many features have been modernised. The atmosphere remains old world, faithful to the memory of the ancient craft of the pewterer. There are some original furnishings. A Charles the Second chandelier, early chairs, etc.

Most important, the original pewter Touch-plates have been preserved. Each is covered with the Touches struck by every London pewterer, starting just after the Great Fire of London which in 1666 destroyed what was then the originals. The Touch Plates are unique. The only set in the world. Irreplaceable, with a value which cannot be assessed. One can reflect that if only one piece of pewterware had been demanded and received from each pewterer when he struck his Touch, what a remarkable and historical collection could have been acquired.

The banquet was in the Great Hall. Big, dignified, the walls covered with armorials. At the Head of the table sat the Master and the Renter Warden. At the long tables sat the Livery, Stewards, past Masters, past Wardens, Guests. After being lavishly dined and wined, came the Toasts. Tall silver-gilt covered two-handled heavy Cups of the William and Mary and Queen Anne period, were filled with wine. A napkin tied to one handle. The last to drink wiped the rim prior to passing the cup to the next in line. Traditionally, the back of the person lifting the cup to his lips was guarded against attack. This custom, a throw back to the early days when it was a necessary precaution.

The Toast to the Queen, and other Toasts being over, we all ascended to the

next floor to the large Court Room. A long curved table was loaded with rich and rare specimens of pewter of the James the First, Charles the First, Cromwellian, Charles the Second, Queen Anne, right through to George the Fourth pewterware. Part of the collection gracing the Pewterers Hall.

The Chairman of the Pewter Committee, Mr. Cyril Johnson, sat behind the table with Ronald Michaelis on his right, and Mr. Munday on his left. We were introduced as "experts" and after a few words by Mr. Johnson, the fun began. We called for questions after Mr. Michaelis and Mr. Munday had each given a little talk on pewter. The specimens on the table were used to demonstrate points made and illustrate differences in periods and continuity in designs, some overlapping.

It was most gratifying that the distinguished audience showed so much genuine interest and stayed right through the discussions until the Master intervened pointing out the lateness of the hour which no one had noticed. There will be future get-together pewter meetings with invitations to bring pewter along irrespective of merit, good, bad, or indifferent. Discussion broadens knowledge even if one finds out what NOT to collect.

Thus ended a delightful evening with all expressing enjoyment and desire to learn more about pewter down the ages.

Pewter Dollar

The following letter was received from Mr. John H. McMurray. He comments on the article "Would You Believe . . . One Dollar Will Get You \$812.00?" which appeared in Bulletin #54, page 100.

"I was especially interested in the article on page 100 on the pewter dollar as I have two of these. One is exactly like the one described and the other is an earlier one in which 'Continental Currency 1776' is spelled with one 'R'. Information on these is listed in 'Catalogue of Coins, Tokens and Medals in the Numismatic Collection of the Mint of the United States at Philadelphia, Pa. 1913', published by the Treasury Dept., on pages 7, 8 and 27 and illustrated on Plate 1, #3."

1966 New England Regional Group Fall Meeting

The weather, colorful foliage, hospitality of our hosts and an exceptional collection of pewter all contributed to a very enjoyable meeting of the New England Group on Saturday, Oct. 8, 1966.

Thirty-two members and guests first met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Peter H. Alderwick in Pittsfield, Mass. where they had an opportunity to view and handle the large number of pieces on display. As smooth brimmed plates are the Alderwicks' first love, these were present in particular profusion.

Before we adjourned to the Yellow Aster Restaurant for lunch, Mr. Alderwick spoke briefly to the Group. He accounted some of his experiences in pewter collecting. In addition, he commented

that possibly the P.C.C.A. could be of greater service to its members by acting as a clearing house or accumulator of information about various pieces of pewter. This information would help members to possibly identify newly found items.

This idea was discussed to some extent, but no definite conclusions were reached though apparently it was generally felt that this would not be practical.

Several members who had brought pewter to the meeting showed these pieces and commented on them.

After lunch, 25 people drove to the Hancock Shaker Village where the village was toured under the guidance of the curator, Mr. Eugene Merrick Dodd. The tour was very interesting and informative and apparently enjoyed by all. The staff of this restoration have accomplished a great deal in a relatively short time.

Paul R. Glazier
Secretary-Treasurer

Pewter at New England Group's Pittsfield Meeting

The pewter seen, handled and drooled over by Club members at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Peter H. Alderwick in Pittsfield, Mass. last October was most outstanding in its variety of form and in its wide diversification of makers' touch marks impressed thereon. Some pieces were brought to the meeting by attending members, but the vast majority belonged to the Alderwicks, with special emphasis on their large collection of smooth brim plates, probably the finest of its kind in the country. To say they have a corner on the smooth brim plate market may be humorous but probably true.

It was most difficult to select pieces to be photographed and shown on accompanying pages of this *Bulletin*, and undoubtedly some worthy items have been omitted. The smooth-brimmed plates were passed by because basically each one looks pretty much like all others. A few comments on pieces illustrated are:

Fig. 1 includes what is probably an unique beaker by Moses Lafetra, a solid, well-made beaker with an exceptionally fine base moulding. Every collector would like to have the Peter Young chal-

ice among his possessions. The John Will creamer, while unmarked, has been checked against a marked specimen and found to be identical in every respect. The capacity of the John Bassett tankard was not measured, but a comparison of it with the quart mug on the left in Fig. 1 indicates it will hold substantially more than a quart.

The two almost identical strap-handled mugs in Fig. 2 would appear to have come from the same body and handle moulds. The fillets on both are wider than those found on most strap-handled mugs. Note the almost triple or compound fillet on the left-hand mug. The bottoms of both mugs are flush with the lower edges of the base mouldings, unlike most mugs on which the bottoms have been set in, or slightly recessed inside, said base mouldings. It would be nice if these could be attributed to some specific pewterer.

Attribution of the mug in Fig 3 to one of the Richard Lees was made by a top authority. Note the narrowness of the body fillet as compared to those on the mugs in Fig. 2.

The quart tankard in Figs. 4, 4a and



FIG. 1. A grouping of unusual and rare pieces from the Alderwick collection. From left to right — a. Unmarked quart mug with strap handle. b. $3\frac{3}{8}$ " beaker by Moses Lafetra, New York, N. Y. (1812-1816). c. Chalice by Peter Young, New York City and Albany (1772-1800). d. Unmarked creamer by John Will, New York, N. Y. (1752-1766). e. $3\frac{1}{2}$ (?) pint tankard by John Bassett, New York, N. Y. (1720-1761).



FIG. 2 Two unmarked quart mugs with strap handles and flat bottoms of almost identical make, unidentified as to maker. (Courtesy of Amory Skerry and Peter H. Alderwick.)



FIG. 3. Unmarked quart mug with strap handle attributed to Richard Lee (Sr. or Jr.), Mass., N. H. and Vermont (1770-182?). (Courtesy of W. O. Blaney.)



FIG. 4 Unidentified quart tankard by "I. H." with rams horn thumbpiece, hollow handle and boot-heel handle terminal. (Courtesy of Peter H. Alderwick.)

4b is rather a poser. Its owner is inclined to believe it was made by the Boston silversmith, John Hull (1624-1683), who had a touch mark of his initials within a heart-shaped impression, a form rather common among silversmiths in this country and most uncommon among English and American pewterers. Another possibility is the silversmith John Hastier of New York City (w. 1726, d. c. 1791) one of whose touches or hall marks is his initials with-

in a heart impression. Hull's touch contains five dots below his initials, with said dots arranged as on the "five" side of a die — one of those small cubes the dictionary politely says are commonly used in gaming. On the other hand, Hastier's mark has what appears to be a quatrefoil below his initials, a decoration closer to the one shown in Fig. 4b. Also, Hastier worked in New York about the time most pewter tankards were being made there. It is hoped the mystery worker will be identified soon.



FIG. 4a. View of handle on "I. H." tankard showing the unusual ridged, conical decoration below hinge, and the broad boot-heel terminal.



FIG. 4b. Heart-shaped touch mark in well of "I. H." tankard with splayed three-pronged decoration below initials.

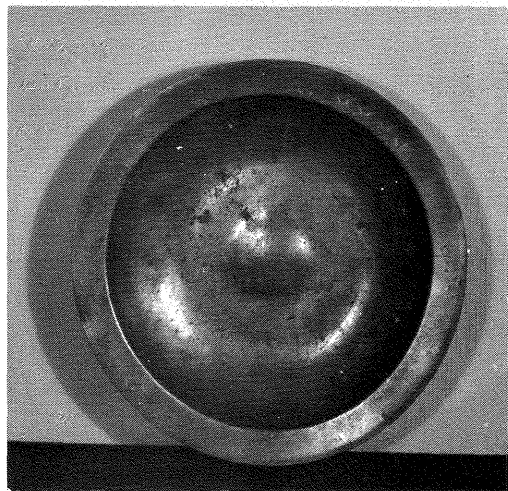
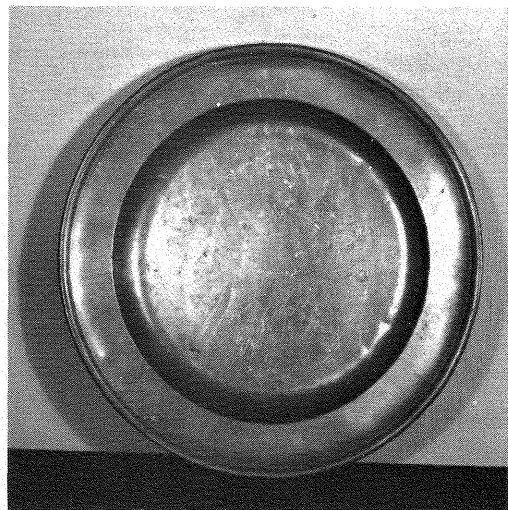
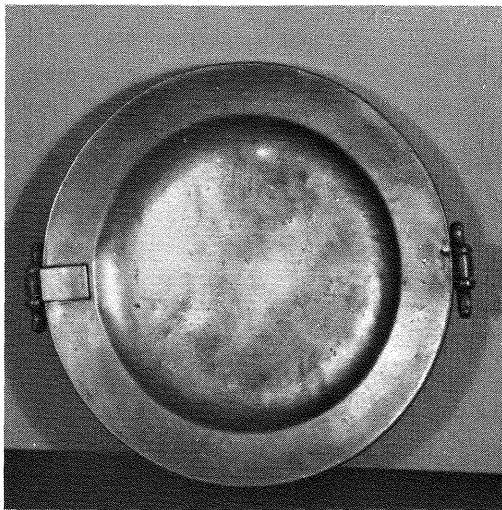


FIG. 7. Unusually fine 15" dish by Edmund Dolbeare, Boston, Mass. (1671-1702), hammered all over and with finely engraved decorations on brim. (Courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd W. Fowles.)

FIG. 8. Another rare piece by Edmund Dolbeare — this one a 12 11/16" narrow-brimmed deep dish (or broad-rimmed basin) with boss in center. (Alderwick collection.)

Mr. Alderwick believes his 14 7/8" dish by Thomas Byles (Fig. 6) is unique, as no Byles' dish of this size seems to have been recorded anywhere.

17th Century pewter is certainly rare — and that by Edmund Dolbeare is among the rarest. To have two pieces by this maker at one meeting should make said meeting perhaps "unique." The multiple reeded 15" dish (Fig. 7) with its extraordinarily etched "presentation" decoration showing the initials A S M on the brim, and with hammer marks over the entire surface, was reason enough to excite members. When another rather unique piece by the same maker (Fig. 8) appeared, the excite-

ment really buzzed.

Last on the list of unusuals is Fig. 9, showing two rather late and ungainly flagons. Their maker should be identifiable, but by whom?

As indicated at various points above, the owners would like hints, clues or more positive information on the names of the makers of pieces shown in Figs. 2, 4 and 9. Also, knowledge of any other 14 7/8" Thomas Byles dish is desired. If any readers can supply any of this information, please convey it to the writer, who in turn will forward it to the owners of these pieces.

William O. Blaney



FIG. 9. *Pair of large, unmarked, late flagons measuring 13" overall, with heavy base mouldings and thin, heart-shaped handle terminals. (Alderwick collection.)*

Walton Deckelman

I have received the sad news of the death of Walton Deckelman, a noted pewter collector, and an honoured member of the Pewter Collectors' Club, also a very dear friend of my own for many years.

On behalf of myself, and of his many friends in the Society of Pewter Collectors here, I write to say how much his cheerful presence, his rare humour, and his many other talents will be missed.

I met him originally in 1955, when he last visited this country, and since then he and I have kept up an animated correspondence on pewterware generally until both his own, and my own, poor health latterly prevented the rapid interchange which had been our habit.

I found him exceptionally interested in the subject of both American and English pewterware, with a rare thirst for knowledge and accuracy of detail, and I envied him his especial talent and aptitude in the former editorship of your own Collectors' Club bulletins; I think it was only his thorough immersion in these activities which compensated him for the loss of his ability to continue in

his former field of music.

He was, as his many friends will know, a very great and talented musician until his disability prevented him from active participation.

He leaves behind a devoted wife and family, to whom are extended the greatest sympathy in their loss, and many others who will seldom, if ever, find a truer friend.

Ronald F. Michaelis
(Hon. Librarian of the
Society of Pewter Collectors)

Correction, Please

Not mentioned by Laughlin, but assigned a working date 1721-17 . . ., by Carl Jacobs in "Guide to American Pewter", we must now assign a much earlier working period to Edmund Davis, a Philadelphia pewterer.

The "American Weekly Mercury" (Philadelphia), #79, of June 15 - June 22, 1721, carries the following paragraph: "The Moulds and Tools of Edmund Davis, late of the City of Philadelphia, Pewterer, are to be sold by Owen Roberts and Thomas Tresse, His Executors."

Eric de Jonge

New York Regional Fall Meeting



No. 1. Mr. Lewis Rubenstein, Curator, John Jay Homestead, holding a Jay family 18th Century French Tobacco Jar.



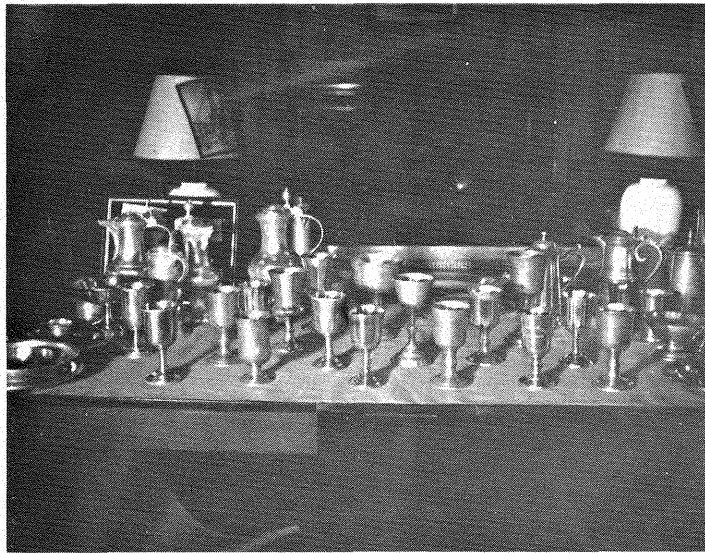
No. 2. A group of flagons.

The Fall meeting of the New York Regional Group was held at Emily Shaw's Restaurant, Pound Ridge, New York. The meeting was followed with an exhibit of ecclesiastical pewter and a tour of the historic John Jay Homestead. Attendance at the meeting was a record-breaker, with forty people present.

The meeting was opened by George Heussner, Chairman, who welcomed all members and guests. The minutes of the previous meeting, prepared by Bob Curtis, Secretary, were read and accepted.

It was announced that two of the Region Group Members have recently passed away. They were Mr. George Alk and Mr. Charles Edgecombe. Mr. Edgecombe was a former president of both the Regional Group and the National Pewter Collectors Club of America.

Mr. Stanley Paddock, Treasurer, reported on the favorable financial condition of the New York Region Group. Mr. Bernard Esner was thanked for the selection of the meeting location and appointed to do the same for the next meeting.



No. 3. A display of chalices, including a Peter Young one from the collection of Peter Alderwick.



No. 4. A group of church beakers and communion cups. Front row, an individual communion service as illustrated in Mr. Ledlie Laughlin's "Pewter in America", Plate XXXV.

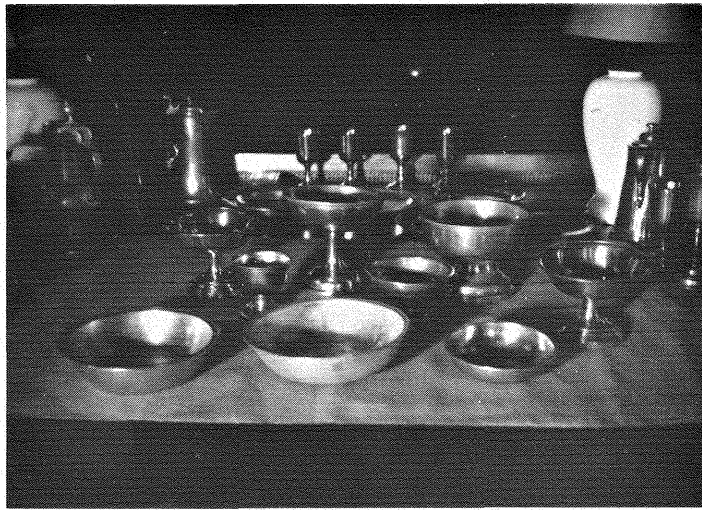
Mr. Lewis Rubenstein, Curator, John Jay Homestead, gave a talk illustrated with slides on the background and the restoration of the John Jay Homestead. All in attendance agreed it was extremely interesting and informative.

After luncheon the ecclesiastical pewter was displayed in the Portrait Room of the John Jay Homestead. Approximately 150 pieces of pewter were on

exhibit. All members are to be thanked for affording those in attendance the opportunity to see and examine so many fine examples of American, English and Continental pewter.

Mr. Lewis Rubenstein and his associates are due our congratulations and appreciation of the excellent tour that brought the meeting to a close.

George T. Heussner



No. 5. A group of baptismal bowls.



No. 6. More communion flacons.

Old Scottish Liquid Measure Sizes (Part III)

by Ronald F. Michaelis

The previous instalment of this review was concluded with a list of the normal Scottish measures, based on the Stirling Pint (or "Stoup"), which is commonly calculated at 104.02 cu. ins. (or 60 fl. ozs.) P. Kelly, in his "Metrology, or an Exposition of Weights & Measures, 1816" gives an equivalent of 103.404 cu. ins. for the Stirling Stoup, although this does not seem to be borne out by other writers. It would, in any case, make only slight differences in the

larger sizes, representing less than a 1% tolerance and would, therefore, be practically unnoticeable in the smaller capacities.

In addition to the "normal" sizes of Scottish measures (and certainly prior to 1835) there was a "Reputed Quart" (known as the Whiskey Bottle or Large Mutchkin) which contained 5 gills Imperial, and the "Half Whiskey Bottle" or Small Mutchkin, of 2½ gills Imperial. Actual specimens in pewter, of the Tapit-hen shape, of 5 gills Imperial and of a quarter of this capacity (1¼ gills), are known. By inference one may assume

that a 2½ gill Imperial was also made in pewter.

There was, so far as is known, no official blessing for measures of these particular capacities, although the wine and spirit trade throughout the civilized world had long been accustomed to sell its wares in bottles which held a quantity slightly in excess of 5 gills Imperial. The capacities of bottles varied somewhat in different localities, and this was a source of much dissatisfaction on the part of buyers. The "bottle" most favoured by wine and spirit dealers of the late eighteenth century and after, had a content of approximately 46.24 cu. ins., whereas the Scots measure of 5 gills Imperial contained only about 43.33 cu. ins.¹

Whatever its origin, or whatever its capacity at any given time, the fact remained that "from time immemorial" a "bottle quart" had been in use. Attempts were made in 1841² to get it legalised at ¼th of the gallon Imperial, but without success. It was, in fact, the Commission on Standards (in its 5th Report, submitted in 1868) which successfully recommended a "Wine Bottle" measure of ⅙th Imperial gallon and a "Half Bottle" of ⅓th Imperial gallon. Eventually, in March 1871, this was legalized but lasted only until the Weights and Measures Act of 1878.

It may be of interest to readers to know that the obsolete standards of ⅙th and ⅓th Imperial gallon used in Glasgow (marked "bottle measure" and "half bottle" respectively) were in 1952, still extant in the Weights and Measures Department of that city.³

The "bottle" of ⅙th gallon contains 5 and ⅓ gills and the "half-bottle" of ⅓th gallon 2 and ⅔ gills. These were slightly more than the old Scots "5-giller" and "2½ giller" measures respectively, and it is reasonable to assume that the canny Scots were loath to accept the new measure but were compelled to do so in 1871. It would, it is thought, be difficult to find enough specimens of the "5-giller" and "2½ giller" measures to be able to test whether any large number were nearer the known 5-gill size or to the (1871) 5-⅓ gill "bottle" measure. The one specimen already mentioned, of tappit-hen shape and of date c. 1800, when submitted to the Glasgow Weights & Measures Department in 1957, was found to contain 5 gills and one-half fluid ounce. It may be taken for granted that this was, in fact, the "5 giller" of pre-1871 (with a small tolerance), and not the legalised (1871-1878) ⅙th

Imperial gallon.

Thus we may add to the purely Scottish range of measures (of pre-1871) the rare sizes: —

	Imperial Measure	cu. ins.	fl. ozs.
Large Mutchkin (Whiskey Bottle and also known as the "5 giller")	5 gills	43.33	25.00
Small Mutchkin ("Half Bottle" and also known as the "2½ giller")	2½ gills	21.66	12.50
"Quarter Whiskey Bottle" and from 1871-1878—to the Imperial range:—	1¼ gills	10.83	6.25

1/6 gallon, Imperial 5 ⅓ gills 46.25 26.66
1/12th gallon, Imperial 2 ⅔ gills 23.12 13.33

NOTE: The first and third sizes have been found in the Tappit-hen shape, but there seems no reason to doubt that all five of these sizes might also be found, perhaps in other, and later shapes, in pewter.

Extract from the "Scottish Licensing Laws" by the late James Purves, Solicitor to the Supreme Court, published by W. Green & Son. Ltd., Edinburgh.

There are some measures, other than Imperial, in use in various parts of Scotland from almost time immemorial.

So long as the purchaser and seller understood that they are transacting by such measures and without fraud, no offence is committed.

As regards beer, these are: — the "Schooner" (used in Riddell v Neilson, 1903, 5F(J)57), and known also in Wales as the "blue", containing 2-⅔ths Imperial gills; the "glass" (or tumbler), containing about 1⅔ths Imperial gills; and the "pony" or (pennyworth), containing ⅓ths of an Imperial gill.

As regards spirits, the measures are: — the "big gill", containing 1½ Imperial gills; the "wee gill", containing ¾ Imperial gill; the "wee half gill", of ⅜ Imperial gill; and the "nip", containing ¼ Imperial gill. These measures are of use and wont in the trade. They are less than a pint, but they have no standard or definition any more than a "cup" of tea, a "tumbler" of milk, or a "glass" (as it varies) of whiskey, or claret, or beer. There the eye is one's merchant."

In the writer's possession is a pewter tappit-hen shaped measure (not bearing any verification stamp) of the rare, and unofficial "pony" capacity mentioned above, containing 4.50 fl. oz., and which appears to date c. 1800.

REFERENCES:

1. B. E. Moody, "The Origin of the reputed Quart. . . ."
2. First Report of Commission on Standards, 1841, p. 19.
3. Letter from J. W. Robertson, Chief Inspector, Glasgow Weights & Measures Dept., 16th September, 1952.

Teapots

by Agnes Hayes Post



FIG. 1. "Skittle Ball" 18th Century teapot

After collecting American teapots over a number of years and usually finding the same general forms among the various makers, it is exciting to find a few that are different. The photographs show four that I believe to be unique as to form or rarity of maker, so thought they might be of interest to the members of the Pewter Club.

The small 'Skittle Ball' teapot, Fig. 1, is a very early style that precedes the 18th century pear shaped form, and presents a challenge as to its origin whether American or English or possibly Continental. It has only the secondary X and coronet marks sometimes found in items by Peter Young, the Wills and others, sometimes in conjunction with their names or initial marks and sometimes alone. Mr. Carl Jacobs believes this is an American teapot.

I sent a photograph to Mr. Laughlin thinking it might be of interest for his forthcoming book and he commented as follows:

"I have never seen in pewter anything closely resembling your 'skittle ball' teapot. However, in Bigelows Historic Sil-

ver of the Colonies several of the same general pattern are shown one of which is dated 1766. I could not possibly guess whether the pot is American or English. In fact, the placing of the quality marks on the bottom in the form of a triad is typical of German methods but I haven't the slightest idea whether teapots of this shape were made on the Continent. No other American teapot of which I have any knowledge has the reinforced ribbing at both the base and the top of the spout. It might be noted too, that the hinge of the lid is of a type found on Continental vessels. Regardless of the country of origin this is an interesting early teapot which I would hope to illus-

The Federal style teapot by the important maker George Coldwell of New York City, Fig. 2, is of interest because of the scarcity of his work, little of which has survived. Mr. Laughlin at the time he wrote his book said that just seven examples of his craftsmanship were known. At the present time Mr. Carl Jacobs knows of one other teapot. It would be interesting to learn if any more



FIG. 2. *George Coldwell, New York City, 1787-1811.*

of his work has appeared during the past twenty-five years.

The globe shaped 1750 form, Fig. 3, is by E Capen. Ephraim Capen was a working pewterer at Brook Farm, the experiment in Communal living at West Roxbury, Mass. around 1840. Later he entered a partnership with George Molineux in N. Y. City from 1848-1850. This teapot is made from inverted bowls and is a most satisfying shape with pleasing curve of handle and spout and is one of my favorites. It is marked E Capen on the base in large letters. In my quest for teapots I have never seen one like it but in the Bulletin for Sept. 1960 (Vol. 4 p 65) Mr. Reginald French writes "I have just finished cleaning a fairly round early 18th century shaped teapot but BIG how BIG which I judge is 1840-1850 marked E Capen."

The tall fluted teapot in the Continental 18th century style, Fig. 4, is an unrecorded form by the Taunton Britannia Manufacturing Co. and is marked T.B.M. Mr. Laughlin, in commenting upon the photograph, said "I particularly like the T.B.M. pot. I think the design amazingly good for the period. In fact for my money Reed and Barton and all the other successors of Babbit and

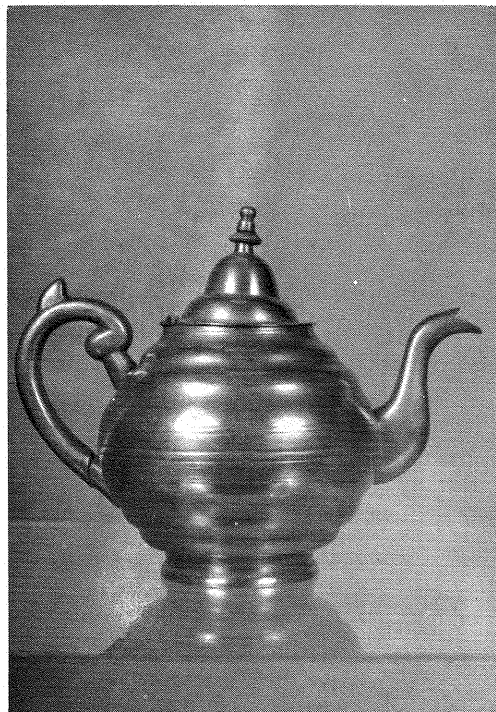


FIG. 3. *Ephraim Capen, Dorchester, Mass., and New York City, 1844-1854.*



FIG. 4. Taunton Britannia Manufacturing Co., Taunton, Mass., 1830-1835.

Crossman never again produced as successful designs as did T.B.M. Co." Perhaps in the collections of some of our members there may be a similar one or possibly a cream jug and sugar bowl in the same design for I think this looks like a teapot that belonged to a teaset.

Another American Shaker

A follow-up on the article on American shakers in the last issue of the Bulletin affords me the opportunity of telling you about a most interesting shaker. The shaker is in the collection of P.C.C.A. member Stan Norris, Billings, New York.

The American shaker pictured was examined by members of the Club at the New York Regional Group Spring meeting. No one present could recall seeing a shaker quite like this one. It is *not* pear-shaped, as are most of the American shakers. It has the typical top, or dome, and the beading around the top that is found on Danforth shakers. This style



beading is sometimes referred to as "Philadelphia" beading. The base is similar to those found on most American pear-shaped shakers. However, what is in between the dome and the base is the big difference. The body is cylindrical in shape. It is typical of the cylindrical body used on many American whale oil lamps. As the shaker is made in four castings, undoubtedly a mold used for making the body of a whale oil lamp was used for the body casting of the shaker. The metal in the shaker is of a very good grade.

Dimensions of the shaker

Height — 4"

Diameter of base — 2½"

Diameter of waist — 1½"

If any member of the Club has a similar shaker or a different type of American shaker, I would appreciate hearing from them as I plan an article for the next Bulletin on another different shaker in my collection.

George T. Heussner

Measures In Pewter—V

By William O. Blaney



FIG. 1. Italian Metric Measures of (l. to r.)
Decilitro, Doppio Decilitro, Mezzo Litro and
Litro capacities.

V. ITALIAN METRIC MEASURES, LIDLESS, WITHOUT HANDLES

These are the only Italian pewter measures we have ever seen, and to have a set, or even a partial set, is a bit on the extraordinary side. Possibly it is the only set of Italian measures in this country. Like most other Continental measures, they are in cylindrical form. We were fortunate to be able to obtain them last Fall from a professor who had purchased them in Italy while on his Sabbatical.

Due to their lack of lids and handles, they could well be Government measures, similar in many respects to the French Government cylindrical measures shown in W. Gill Wylie's *Pewter, Measure for Measure*. Like the French measures, they nest one within another for ease in carrying from place to place.

All are on the heavy side, indicating a high lead content, and all bear evidence of heavy and hard usage, so much so that their capacities today are not as accurate as true metric measurements would want them to be. Repairs have been numerous, but despite all they have been through, they still retain a rather wonderfully soft patina.

The largest of the four shown above is of one litre capacity. It is marked on the body, just below the upper of three bandings, with an incised "LITRO" followed by a small circular stamp within which is a Crown over "11," both in relief. Next are the incised letters "C C." The normal reaction is to interpret the "C C" as meaning "Cubic Centimetres," but possibly they could be the mark of, or a reference to, some particular locality or political division of one of the Italian states prior to the 1861 formation of present-day Italy. The last stamp on this line is a small, oval, intaglio mark within which is a small head entwined in laurel — undoubtedly the bust of the king or political leader of the country or subdivision thereof that authorized the marking of these measures. Above the upper banding, and below the pronounced lip, are three rectangular marks enclosing, in relief, the numbers "57-58," "59-60" and "61-62." A fourth similar mark is too lightly struck to be legible. We take these numbers to refer to the years 1857 to 1862, respectively. If our assumption is correct, the large measure pre-dates the 1861 formation of Italy as it is known to

us today, and it could have been made in one of the numerous states of the Italian political patchwork laid out by the Congress of Vienna in 1815 after the fall of Napoleon the year before. This reasoning makes some sense because government measures would not normally be stamped with "excise" or "year" marks to attest their true capacities. Such marks might well have been imprinted by authorities of the government which succeeded that of the state in which the measure was made. Sardinia could have been this succeeding government because, in 1855-1857, she was one of the great European powers and was considered by all minor Italian states as their leader. Also, Sardinia's King Victor Emmanuel II assumed the title of King of Italy in 1861. The *International Critical Tables* published by the National Research Council of the United States in 1926 tells us that the Metric System was adopted in Lombardy (in northern Italy) in 1803, by various other Italian states between 1830 and 1855, and by the new Italian Government in 1861, thereby making all the above more meaningful.

The next to largest measure is of one-half litre capacity. The markings on the body are placed quite similarly to those on the litre measure. Below the upper banding are, in left to right order, (1) the incised letters "MEZZO LITRO" with the "M" stamped over the "E," (2) a Crown, in relief, within a circular stamp, (3) the incised letters "C C," and (4) a small, intaglio, laurel-enwreathed head within an oval stamp. The rectangular year marks, stamped on or above the upper banding and below the lip are the same "57-58," "59-60" and "61-62" plus another illegible one.

The double decilitre measure has but one banding around, and slightly more than halfway up, the body. Just under the lip are the incised letters "DOPPIO DECILITRO" with the "D" in "DOPPIO" stamped on upside down and backwards. Below this capacity stamp is a mark that looks like a Crown over a Shield, with a number on either side of the shield, the left one looking like a "9" and the right one a bit illegible. Year marks — some rectangular, some square — contain the numbers "81," "82," "90," "91-92" and "93-94." One or two other similar marks are totally

indecipherable. What are probably the maker's initials — "GBT" — are stamped on the bottom of the measure within a sort of oval-rectangular mark and above another partially struck, indistinguishable stamp. Also on the bottom is another rectangular mark containing, as nearly as we can determine, the letters "ISPCO."

As for the smallest measure, it is of decilitre capacity and probably more dented and worn than the other three — a fact possibly due to its being the "inside" of the "nest" for such a long time. This also has a single banding around the body. What undoubtedly is the remains of an incised "DECILITRO" is barely visible (in part) around the upper portion of the body, but very worn by usage. There are perhaps five year marks around or on the lip and upper part of the body. Two can be identified as "55-56" and "57-58." Another could be "53-54," but this cannot be guaranteed. The other two, while almost definitely year marks, are so worn and poorly struck as to be unidentifiable.

As a set, or partial set, it is our belief that all but the double decilitre were made by the same maker for the original set. The double decilitre was either made as a substitute for the original, or was a replacement from another broken set, as it is obviously, by weight and touch, a so-called "foreigner" to the other three, even though the entire four line up as a most attractive group.

Judging by the year marks on these measures, if they are actual "year" marks, we estimate this type was made from approximately the early 1850's to possibly 1900 — or, more generally, during the last half of the 19th century.

As for their range in sizes, our litre measure has such a pronounced lip, and so little wear on its outer edge (that would be there if it had been frequently placed within a larger vessel), that it would seem to be the largest size made. It is possible the smallest size might have been of centilitre capacity, thereby making the range seven in number — litre, demilitre, double decilitre, decilitre, demidecilitre, double centilitre and centilitre.

They are a most interesting type of measure, and we would like to know more of their history and background.

On the Collecting of Teapots

(Part II)



FIG. 1. Francis Bassett I, New York City,
1718-1758. Collection of the late John F.
Ruckman.

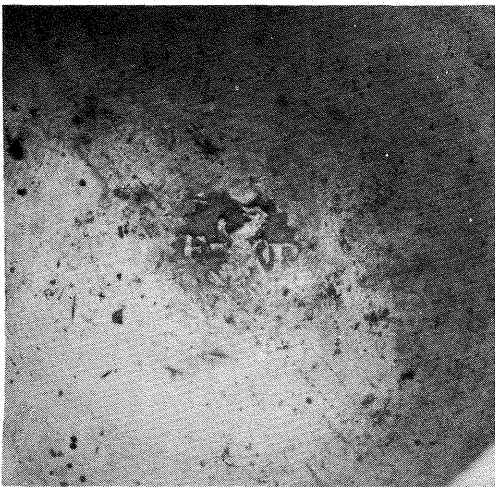


FIG. 2. Touch of Francis Bassett I in above
teapot.

The teapots illustrated with these notes should have been included in "On the Collecting of Teapots" which appeared in Bulletin #53. They are herewith presented in order to give a more complete picture of the range of 18th century American and English teapot forms.

The earliest known American example can be seen in Fig. 1. It is by Francis Bassett I (1718-1758) and is decorated on both body and cover with bandings of incised tooling similar to those which appear on his sweetmeat dish which can be seen in Jacobs "Guide to American Pewter," Fig. 1. The touch (Fig. 2) appears on the inside bottom and consists of a rampant lion and FB within a serrated circle. This mark was once thought to be that of Francis Bassett II but now the consensus of opinion among most collectors is that it should be assigned to Francis Bassett I.



FIG. 3 Unmarked teapot, attributed to Frederick Bassett New York City and Hartford, Connecticut, 1761-1800. *Ruckman collection.*

The body of the second teapot (Fig. 3) is from the same mould and probably also a Bassett product, perhaps by Frederick. The design of the finial would suggest that it was made at a later date since this type was used on the lids of

flagons and tankards by Samuel Danforth. It is possible that Frederick Bassett was influenced by the work of the Danforths during the years 1775-1785, when he lived in Hartford.



FIG. 4a Unmarked 18th century teapot—
Ruckman collection.

FIG. 4b Unmarked 18th century teapot—
Ruckman collection.

The teapot in Fig. 4-a was once in the collection of Louis Guerineau Myers and illustrated in his book "Some Notes on American Pewter." Mr. Myers described it as "an unmarked teapot of the kind that the earlier pewterers made." There is said to be an identical one in the collection of Mr. Charles K. Davis, but with a handle made of wood.

The small unmarked teapot pictured in Fig. 4-b is endowed with much charm and is made of excellent metal but its provenance is inclined to be problematical. Some collectors think that it could be Continental. Mr. John F. Ruckman was inclined to feel that it was American. Could it possibly be one of the "3 Round Teapotts" mentioned in a Frederick Bassett invoice dated 1773?

Charles V. Swain

EDGECOMB

(Continued from Page 102)

Charles Freeman Edgecomb was born July 6, 1896 at South Limington, Maine. He was graduated from Limington Academy and Bates College and attended Columbia University in New York City. He was Headmaster at Boys High, Brooklyn, N. Y., principal at Kents Hill Academy, Kents Hill and later became a professor at New York University.

Mr. Edgecomb was also active in speech guidance for the blind and deaf, was a member of Actors Equity and was associated with several summer theatres, including the Gloucester Stock Company.

C. V. S.



Tappit Hen Shaped Measures (Pewter)

Sizes of actual specimens known to the author. Capacities have been taken to the "plowk" where this appears, otherwise (mainly the smaller sizes below the Chopin), to the brim. There are some fluctuations from "Nearest regular capacity" but these are so small that they would come well within the permitted tolerances.

SCOTTISH SCALE (based on the Stirling Stoup of 104.02 cu. ins.)

	<i>Imperial Equivalent</i>	<i>Nearest regular Capacity</i>
14 Gill	3½ pints	70 fl. oz.
Tappit Hen	3 pints	60 fl. oz.
Chopin	1½ pints	30 fl. oz.
Mutchkin (Muckle Gill or 4 Scots Gills)	¾ pint	15 fl. oz.
Half Mutchkin (2 Scots Gills)	⅜ pint	7½ fl. oz.
Scots Gill (or "Wee Gill")	3/16 pint	3¾ fl. oz.
Scots Half Gill (or "Wee half gill")	3/32	1⅞ fl. oz.
IMPERIAL SCALE (based on 277.421 cu. ins. to the gallon).		
Half Gallon	4 pints	80 fl. oz.
Quart	2 pints	40 fl. oz.
Pint	4 gills	20 fl. oz.
Half Pint	2 gills	10 fl. oz.
Quarter Pint (Gill)	1 gill	5 fl. oz.
"Pony" (unofficial) (R. F. Michaelis collection)	9/10 gill	4½ fl. oz.
"5-Giller" (unofficial: the "Reputed Quart" or "Whiskey Bottle". F. Slater collection).		
	5 gills	25 fl. oz.
2½ Giller (by inference)		
	2½ gills	12½ fl. oz.
"1¼ Giller (unofficial)" (P. Hagen collection)		
	1½ gills	6¾ fl. oz.
QUEEN ANNE WINE STANDARD (1707) (based on the gallon of 231 cu. ins. or 133.54 fl. oz.)		
	Half Wine Pint (actual capacity 8.1 fl. oz. R. Munday collection)	8.34 fl. oz.

It is reasonable to suppose that all sizes, from at least the Wine Quart downwards, were made in pewter in the tappit-hen shape, but these would be extremely rare. Various sizes, attributed to Scotland, in Queen Anne Wine Standard measure, have been found in the old "baluster" shape, however.

Ronald F. Michaelis