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Hamlin's Four Eagle Touch Marks Discussed in the Article on Page 226.





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2502 Grandin Road  
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CHANGE OF ADDRESS and DUES

Bernard B. Hillmann  
740 Highview Drive  
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29 Chesterfield Road  
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Paul R. Glazier  
18 East Hill Road  
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## *President's Letter*

The New England Regional Group could not have picked a nicer weekend to host the Fall National Meeting. The week of October 27 and 28 was the best week of the year and provided New England with one of the longest Indian Summers in memory. Fall foliage colors were past their peak in Manchester, New Hampshire but were bright enough to show members from other regions why Fall is the favorite season of most New Englanders.

Activities began Friday evening with a social hour and dinner at the Gateway of Manchester, a new restaurant overlooking the Merrimack River and within walking distance of our headquarters hotel at The Center of New Hampshire. Following dinner, Melvin Watts, former curator of the Currier Gallery of Art, gave a brief introduction to the institution illustrated with slides of many of the best pieces that form its collection. The evening concluded with Mel Wolf leading a show-and-tell discussion of pewter pieces brought to the meeting by the members.

Saturday morning gave us an opportunity to visit the Currier Gallery and see its fine collection. The gallery is not large but the quality of its collection is very high. It is especially strong in New England paintings and furniture. A good representative pewter collection includes pieces by William and John Will, Nathaniel Austin and most of our better known pewterers.

Following lunch at the Cafe at the Atrium, both the National and New England group held brief business meetings. It was announced that our new Research Grants Committee has been appointed with its chairman, Mel Wolf, and members David Mallory and Donald Fenimore. Watch for an announcement of the program in antiques and museum publications. Bob Asher, fresh from a visit to England, brought us greetings from the British Pewter Society. He had good things to say about the current pewter exhibit in London (see his review elsewhere in this issue) and described his visit to the American Museum in Bath which houses a non-inconsequential collection of American pewter.

Our original schedule had called for a period of free time on Saturday afternoon. But at the Board of Governor's meeting on Friday the majority expressed the view that more time should be devoted to educational activities. It was also felt that it would be especially beneficial if, following a museum visit, a discussion could be held to talk about what was seen. This led to a two hour discussion on Saturday afternoon, chaired by John Carl Thomas, on pewter we had viewed at the Cur-

rier Gallery that morning. Everyone agreed that the discussion made the museum visit more meaningful. Museum visits at future meetings will be followed by similar discussions.

After dinner at our headquarter's hotel on Saturday night, we inspected the many spoon and button molds (plus a rare plate mold from Barbara Strode) brought by Ron Chambers and several other members. Ron, a major mold collector, brought his casting equipment and pewter ingots and, to the delight of his audience, proceeded to cast a variety of spoons and buttons from the molds at hand. This activity brought forth many technical questions which were expertly fielded by Ron. I know that everyone felt they had learned more about the casting of pewter from this demonstration than from anything that they might have read in reference books. Thank you Ron, for an enlightening and enjoyable presentation.

I want to conclude this letter by stating that we intend to pattern future meetings on this one and increase the educational activities. We believe this is what most members want and we know how beneficial it is to our newer members. You can help by bringing pieces to the meetings for show-and-tell sessions and for the featured form sessions. They do not have to be spectacular pieces. New members will learn more by examining pieces they are likely to encounter in the marketplace than in a great museum rarity. So please share your collection.

Garland Pass

## *Book Review*

*by Robert E. Asher*

**Pewter: A celebration of the craft, 1200-1700**, is much more than a handsomely illustrated catalog for an outstanding exhibition featuring pewter made in London during the years indicated. It will be an enduring contribution to the literature on antique pewter. As stated in the Introduction, the catalog "examines in some detail the history of the Worshipful Company of Pewterers, the way pewter was produced, how it was marketed and how it was used. Its contents shed new light upon aspects of medieval and later pewter and it includes recent discoveries as well as further documentary evidence concerning the origins of the craft in London." The "new light" results not only from the authors' expertise in the field of pewter and pewter production, but also to their ability to provide relevant economic and social history as background for their comments.



Chapters by Ronald F. Homer, Peter R.G. Hornsby and Rosemary Weinstein that are readable, erudite, well illustrated and informative for both novice and aficionado occupy about two-fifths of the 112-page document. Dr. Homer, Archivist of the Worshipful Company, introduces the reader masterfully to "The Pewterers of London." Peter Hornsby follows with two lively chapters on "Pewter Manufacture" and "Buying and Selling Pewter" during the era covered by the exhibit. (He also provides two useful pages on "Dating Pewter.") Mrs. Rosemary Weinstein, "Keeper" of the Museum of London's Tudor and Stuart Department, contributes an authoritative piece entitled "Pewter: its development and use." All three principal authors, and Vanessa Brett, who helped compile the catalog, are active members of the British Pewter Society.

The catalog proper - the guide to the 150 items in the exhibition at the Museum of London - is beautifully illustrated and the illustrations are in each case accompanied by information and measurements, provenance and history of the piece as well as references to it in other publications. All in all, **Pewter: A celebration of the craft**, is a model of what a catalog for a fine exhibition of pewter can and should be. The exhibition itself opened in May 1989 and will close in May 1990.

**Pewter: A celebration of the craft, 1200-1700**, is a 1989 publication of the Museum of London. As stated in the **PCCA Newsletter**, copies may be ordered from the Museum of London Shop, London Wall, London EC2 for £4.95 plus £1.25 for postage and packing. Payment in American dollars will not be acceptable, but Visa or Mastercharge orders with the cardholder's name and address, card number, expiry date, and cardholder's signature are acceptable.

## *More Foreign Books on Pewter*

*by Albert J. Phiebig*

There are only a few French books on pewter currently in print. The 1957 standard work on French pewter by Tardy is being revised and expected to come off the press later this year. It is the foremost source for French touchmarks...

### INTERNATIONAL IN SCOPE

Boucaud, Philippe & Claude Fregniac:  
LES ETAINS DES ORIGINES AU  
DEBUT DU 19e SIECLE. 125.00  
339 pages, profusely illustrated. Office du  
Livre 1978. Bound Swissfr. 300.00

Since an American edition of Nadolski, Dieter: **OLD HOUSEHOLD PEWTERWARE**. 1987 is available, the French translation **LES ETAINS ANCIENS USUELS** 336 pages, Nouvelles Editions Latines 1986, bound is of limited interest. Frenchfr. 55.00

For students of regional pewter the following titles are available:

Commenchal, Jean-Claude: **LES ETAINS NORMANDS, HISTOIRE, TYPOLOGIE, PRODUCTION DES ORIGINES AU 19e siecle**. 248 pp. Arts & Metiers 1981 soft cover 420.00

Naef, Ernest: **L'ETAIN ET LE LIVRE DES POTIERS D'ETAIN GENEVOIS** 291pp. Slatkine 1973 reprint of 1920 edition. bound Swiss Francs 250.00

Petit, Karl: **LES ETAINS DU HAINAUT** 68 pages, Hainaut-Tourisme soft cover 75.00

Four unpretentious volumes, published by Massin are quite helpful on account of their good illustrations:

Douroff, B.A.: **LES ETAINS FRANCAIS**. 36 pages. 1958. bound 56.00

Bidault, Paul & Jean Lepart: **ETAINS MEDICAUX & PHARMACEUTIQUES**. 88 pages. 1972 bound 55.00

Fochier-Henrion Annette: **LES ETAINS POPULAIRES**. 36 pages. 1968 bound  
Bidault, Paul: **ETAINS RELIGIEUX** 17e, 18e & 19e siecle. 1971. bound 55.00

In view of the frequent changes in exchange rates prices are cited in francs.

## *Burrage Yale: Another Letter*

*by Robert G. Smith*

A letter purported to be written by Burrage Yale on February 14, 1832 was reproduced in the January 1959 *Bulletin* No. 40 for the benefit of PCCA members. The accompanying article admitted that the letter added "little if anything to the knowledge we already have concerning the activities of Burrage Yale ..." It was reproduced, however, to add "the dimension of personality to a subject we had known previously only in the characterless definitions of chronology and locale."

Now, more than thirty years later, another Burrage Yale letter has surfaced. With permission of its owner, Allen Weathers of Meriden, Conn., the city of Yale's birth, this piece of correspondence



will also be shared with PCCA members.

Written on March 9, 1839 to Luther Boardman, then living in Meriden, the letter contains information concerning the activities of both men. Yale's letter is reproduced here and, for ease of reading, is also printed as follows:

So Reading, Mar. 9, 1839

Mr. Luther Boardman,

Dear Sir,

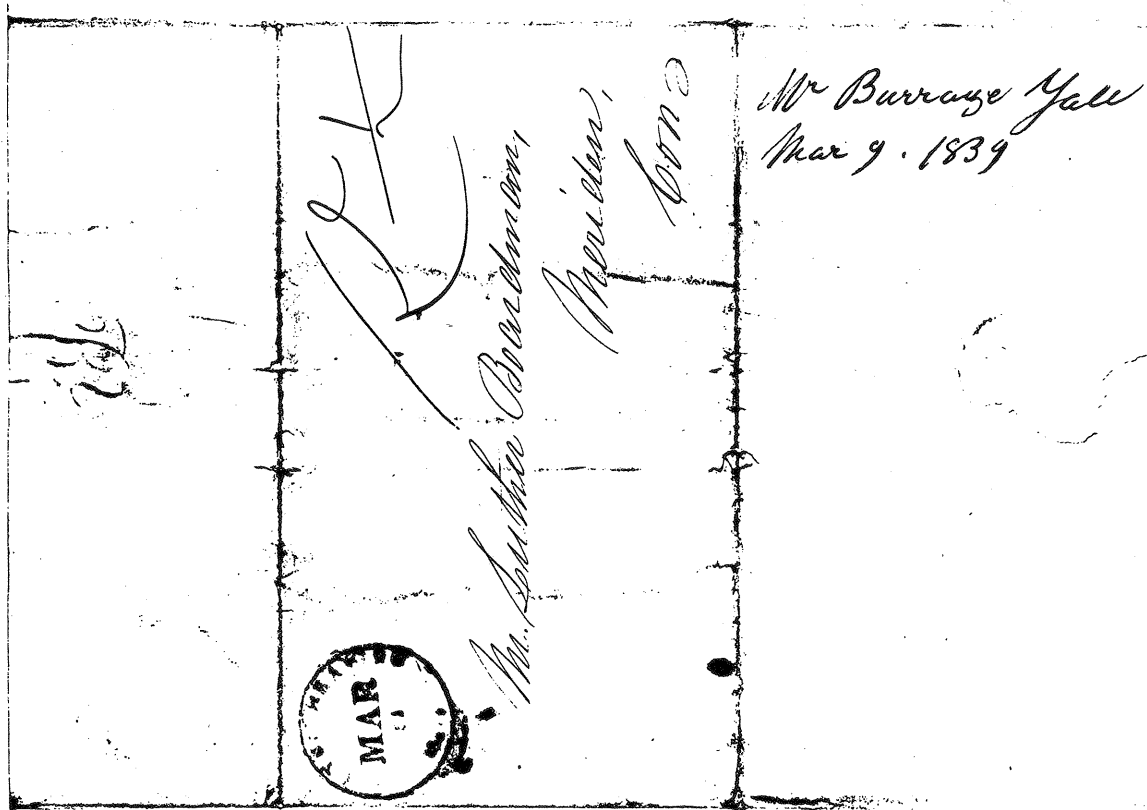
Yours of the 5th ulto was duly rec'd -- The whole of your property remains unsold, and as far as I know, in the state you left it, and probably will, till you come and take it away, which I wish to have you do as soon as possible, for I want to make use of the buildings and room where it is, but after all, I am clearly of opinion, you cannot do better, than settle in Mass -- I therefore think you had better come prepared to make a profitable arrangement for staying -- I am confident you might do it -- Before leaving home I wish you to see, what a good, steady, temperate, capable block tin worker can be had for, by the year -- or that is capable of learning from you, in a year or two, to take the care of a manufactory, also to inquire for a good trusty spoon maker, and get a refusal of their service, so that if you could sell your molds & c or make

arrangements to suit yourself, and help should be wanted, that it could be had -- You had better repair here as soon as may be, and without any incumbrance on yourself, so that you can do as may appear best, when you arrive here -- There is no one here at present, that will purchase your hard coal -- there will not be much variation in the price of the article this season, and it will sell as well at one time as another -- let me hear from you soon -- Banca tin is high, say 22 cts -- I have Spanish tin of the best quality imported for sale, the price has been 17 cts. but is advancing, some holders ask 18 cts. and do not care to sell at that rate.

Respectfully Your's (sic)  
Burrage Yale

A comparison of the signature and text of the 1839 note will immediately reveal that the entire two pages were written by one hand. (Note the similarities in the upper case "B" and "Y" of Yale's closing signature, and the upper case "B" of "Banca tin" and "Y" in "Yours of the 5th ulto".) We have no reason to doubt the author and signator to be Mr. Burrage Yale.

Comparing the formation of letters in the text and signature of the 1832 letter reveals two distinctly different styles. The Yale signatures of both



To Reading, Mar. 9. 1839-

Mr. Luther Boardman,

Dear Sir,

Yours of the 5<sup>th</sup> ulto was duly recd. — The whole of your property remains unsold, and as far as I know, in the state you left it, and probably will, till you come and take it away, which I wish to have you do as soon as possible, for I want to make use of the buildings and room where it is, but after all, I am clearly of opinion, you cannot do better, than to settle in Mass. I therefore think you had better come prepared to make a profitable arrangement for staying. I am confident you might do it. Before leaving home, I wish you to see, what a good, steady, temperate, capable block tin worker can be had for, by the year — one that is capable of learning from you, in a year or two, to take the care of a manufactory, also, to inquire for a good trusty spoon maker, and get a refusal of their service, so, that if you could sell your molds &c or make arrangements to suit yourself and help should be wanted, that it could be had. You had better repair here as soon as may be, and without any incumbrance on yourself, so that you can do as may appear best, when you arrive here. There is no one here at present, that will purchase your hard coal. There will not be much variation in the price of this article this season, and it will sell as well at one time as another — let me hear from you soon. — Banca tin is high, say 22 cts. I have Spanish tin of the best quality imported for sale, the price has <sup>been</sup> 17 cts, but is advancing, some holders ask 18 cts, and do not care to sell at that rate.

Respectfully Yours  
Burrage Talcott



letters, however, are the same, and presumably authentic.

Who then wrote the text of the 1832 letter? An examination of the upper case "B" in "Block tin" (third line) will show it to be the same as the "B" found in the signature of Mr. William Billay(?), located in the lower left corner of the letter. Likewise, the unusual final downward curve in the "Y" of the "Billay" is echoed in the "satisfactory" recommendation of Mr. Hall as well as the "Respectfully" of the closing. Other comparisons will reinforce the conclusion that the unknown Mr. Billay penned this letter in 1832, and Mr. Yale signed it.

Above and beyond analyzing the physical writing of the letter, we have its content to explore -- as an individual piece of correspondence from Yale to Boardman, as well as, within the greater context of prior business transactions conducted between these two men.

According to Richard L. Bowen, Jr. (PCCA *Bulletin* Vol. 9, 12/88, p 177), Luther Boardman was probably in partnership with Burrage Yale and purchased Yale's stock on October 14, 1836. Since Boardman moved back to Meriden on October 13, 1837, exactly one year later, Mr. Bowen concludes that the sales agreement likely stipulated that

Boardman continue to work in South Reading for an additional year.

A year and one-half after Boardman's departure, Yale writes to Boardman regarding a substantial amount of property, including Boardman's molds, that was left in Yale's building. He pressures Boardman to either sell the property, or return to South Reading and open his own business. In Yale's judgment, the second alternative is clearly the wiser one.

At this time, Burrage Yale was an active businessman approaching his 58th birthday, anxious to use his buildings and in possession of Spanish tin ready for sale. The fact that Luther Boardman's line of work consumed a great deal of tin gives reason to question the objectivity of Yale's opinion expressed to Boardman that "you cannot do better than to settle in Mass."

Yale's prodding may have speeded a decision from Boardman, for less than four months later "Luther Boardman & Co." was formed in Chester, Conn.

The newly discussed letter of Burrage Yale opens the door to the past a little further, giving us a slightly clearer picture of these two men who are so closely associated with the britannia industry.

## The Chronology of Hamlin's Eagle Marks

by Richard L. Bowen, Jr.

Samuel Hamlin and his son, Samuel Eli, had four small circular touches with eagles (two were almost identical). Based on the stars shown in the designs Laughlin suggested that one mark was dated about 1790, that another was about 1795 and that the other two were made after the elder Hamlin died in 1801 (Fig. 1).<sup>1</sup> A careful analysis of the designs indicates that, while the 1795 date is correct, the other two are transposed. That is, his earliest date is actually the latest, while his latest date turns out to be the earliest design.



Fig. 1. Three Hamlin eagle marks. Left, the thirteen-star eagle (L334, J161) which Laughlin dated to 1790. Center, the fifteen-star eagle (L336, J162) which Laughlin dated to 1795. Right, the eagle/anchor mark (L337, J163) which Laughlin dated after 1801. Full size. (After Jacobs.)

The history of the American eagle starts on July 4, 1776 with the signing of the Declaration of Independence. After this momentous event the Continental Congress "Resolved, That Dr. Franklin, Mr. J. Adams and Mr. Jefferson be a committee to bring in a device for a seal of the United States of America".<sup>2</sup> Three committees worked on designs from 1776 to 1782, and on June 20, 1782 the final design was submitted to the Continental Congress and approved. This was eight months after the British army surrendered at Yorktown on October 19, 1781. However, a peace treaty was not signed until September 3, 1783.

In accepting the design of the Great Seal Congress actually approved the blazon (written heraldic description) of the obverse and reverse of the device. While a drawing of the designs probably accompanied the blazon, it is not preserved. The text for the obverse follows with the meanings of the heraldic terms inserted:

### Arms

Paleways [vertical stripes] of thirteen pieces [parts] Argent [silver] and Gules [red]: a Chief [upper part of the shield], Azure [blue]. The



Escutcheon [shield] on the breast of the American bald eagle displayed [wings and legs spread on each side of the body], proper [in natural colors], holding in his dexter [left to viewer] talon an Olive branch, and in his sinister [right to viewer] a bundle of thirteen arrows, all proper, & in his beak a scroll, inscribed with this Motto: "E pluribus unum".

**For the crest**

Over the head of the Eagle which appears above the Escutcheon, a Glory [issuing rays], Or [gold], breaking through a cloud, proper, & surrounding thirteen stars forming a Constellation [grouping of stars], Argent, on an Azure field.

The reverse, consisting of an unfinished pyramid, was never used on an actual seal. However, it has been shown on the United States dollar bill since 1935, and is also seen in bronze reliefs on the facades of many post offices (both in conjunction with the obverse).

A 2 5/16" diameter brass die of the obverse of the seal was engraved and first used on September 16, 1782 on an order authorizing George Washington to negotiate with the British for the exchange of prisoners of war.<sup>3</sup> The August 1776 report of the first committee working on the seal design stated that "The great Seal should on one side have the Arms of the United States of America".<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the arms have always been synonymous with the face of the seal. In 1783 Benjamin Franklin printed two pamphlets, one on the peace treaty with Great Britain and the other on the constitutions of the thirteen states.<sup>5</sup> On the title page of both he used a reduced facsimile of an impression of the Great Seal (Fig. 2). This is strange, as it is definitely a "seal" with the seal paper or wafer showing around the periphery as a serrated border.

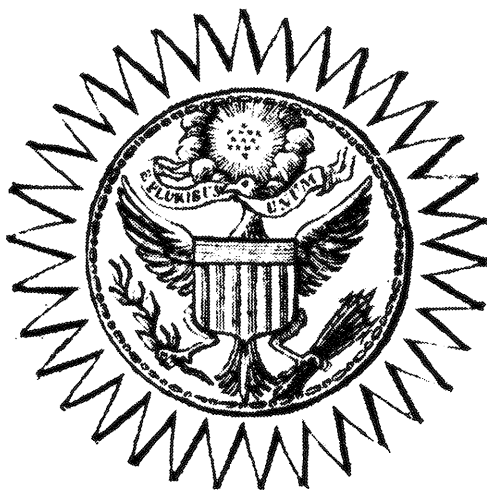


Fig. 2. Great Seal of the United States used by Benjamin Franklin in 1783 on the title pages of two pamphlets. (After Patterson and Dougall.)

The design should have been used without the surrounding serrations and the circular enclosure to represent the arms of the United States. While the Continental Congress sent descriptions of the Great Seal (and thus the *arms* of the United States) to the individual states the device was limited to use as an official seal for quite a few years on treaties, commissions, proclamations, letters of credence, sea letters, and ceremonial letters.<sup>6</sup> However, starting in 1786 the popular use of the arms of the United States started to snowball.

**EARLY USE OF THE ARMS OF THE UNITED STATES**

All authorities have taken the full page engraving of the arms of the United States by James Trenchard published in the *Columbian Magazine* for September 1786 as the earliest popular representation of these arms (Fig. 3).<sup>7</sup> This is not correct: an earlier representation comes from Rhode Island. The *United States Chronicle* was published by Bennett Wheeler in Providence for two years from 1784 to 1786 with a masthead composed of letters set in type. Then with the issue of January 5, 1786 the *Chronicle* masthead was shown resplendent



Fig. 3. Trenchard engraving of the arms of the United States published in the September 1786 *Columbian Magazine*. (After Patterson and Dougall.)





with the arms of the United States at the left and the arms of Rhode Island at the right (Fig. 4). The *Chronicle* design is eight months earlier than the *Columbian* representation, and was published at least 35 times before the September issue of the magazine came out. Undoubtedly the *Chronicle* found its way into many of the other states.

The *Chronicle* design shows the escutcheon on the eagle's breast in the form of a Norman shield as opposed to the blunt rectangular shield found on the first representation of the Great Seal (and preserved to this day on the Seal). As a Norman shield had been used from 1782 to 1851 for the seal of the State of Rhode Island,<sup>8</sup> Rhode Island has obvious priority on the use of the Norman shield in governmental heraldry. The *Chronicle* design probably led Trenchard to use a Norman shield in his design. It has been stated that Trenchard's engraving influenced popular designs for decades.<sup>9</sup> In view of the prior *Chronicle* design this no longer holds. Trenchard followed the original seal design with eagle's wing raised. The *Chronicle* design shows the wings down, an orientation followed by many others. This design with the wings down was undoubtedly inspired by the emblem of the Society of the Cincinnati to be discussed below (Fig. 14).

The masthead of the 1786 *Chronicle* was run until February 21, 1793 when a new masthead appeared. At that time the letters in "*United States Chronicle*" were changed from block to gothic. The design of the eagle and anchor were unchanged, but the beaded oval enclosures of both the arms were changed to double lines. The only significant change in the U.S. arms was from thir-

teen stars over the eagle to fifteen (Fig. 5). Vermont had become the fourteenth state in 1791 and Kentucky the fifteenth in June 1792; the *Chronicle* recognized the latter eight months later. This masthead design was used until January 7, 1796 when a new masthead appeared, still with both of the arms. The enclosures of the two were changed back to beaded ovals. The main change was in the eagle, which was made more realistic and full-bodied with longer wings, replacing the scrawny "sparrow" eagle used for exactly ten years. There were still fifteen stars, but they were shown in a cluster rather than in a row. Although Tennessee joined the union as the sixteenth state in June 1796 and Ohio as the seventeenth state in March 1803, the *Chronicle* remained unchanged with the last fifteen-star eagle until it ceased publication with the issue of May 17, 1804. Bennett Wheeler had kept the arms of both the United States and Rhode Island in front of the people in Rhode Island in his *Chronicle* continually for almost twenty years.

The *United States Chronicle* was not the only medium which provided public exposure to the arms of the United States in Rhode Island. Between 1789 and 1803 a number of Rhode Island almanacs showed the arms of the United States on their covers. In 1780 Bennett Wheeler brought out *Wheeler's North American Calendar and R.I. Almanack*. In 1789, possibly in recognition of the inauguration of George Washington as the first President, he used the cut of the United States arms from the *Chronicle* masthead on the almanac cover. He also used the cuts of his various *Chronicle* eagles on the 1793, 1797 and 1798 almanacs (1798 was the last issue). In 1793 *Phillip's United*

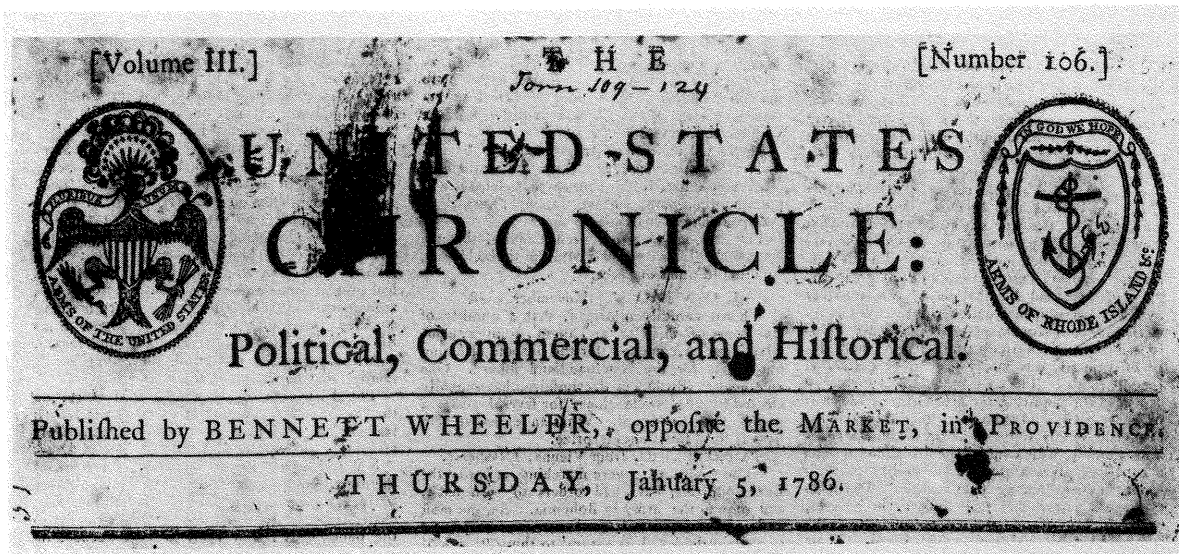


Fig. 4. Masthead of the *United States Chronicle* first used on January 5, 1786. Reduced 28%. (Courtesy, Rhode Island Historical Society.)





Fig. 5. Arms of the United States from the February 21, 1793 *United States Chronicle* showing a fifteen-star eagle. Enlarged about 2 times. (Courtesy, Rhode Island Historical Society.)

*States Diary or Almanack*, published in Warren, Rhode Island, had the Rhode Island arms and the arms of the United States with thirteen stars on the cover which differed from all Rhode Island eagle designs: it had the eagle's wings raised. But the issues from 1794 to 1798 had copies of the *Chronicle* arms of Rhode Island and the United States (eagle's wings down) reduced one third with the oval enclosures removed. The eagles had thirteen stars. The *Rhode Island Almanac*, published from 1801 to 1803 in Newport, had a copy of the last *Chronicle* eagle (without the oval enclosure) enlarged about two times; but it had sixteen stars. One way or another the eagle emblem of the United States arms was constantly before the people of Rhode Island in the early Federal period.

On September 15, 1789 Congress approved an act which changed the name of the Department of Foreign Affairs to the Department of State, and authorized the Secretary of State to have a seal made for the Department "of such device as the President of the United States shall approve".<sup>10</sup> The Seal was first used on May 28, 1790, and the die had been cut in New York City, where the seat of the Federal Government was then located. The seal was 1 7/16" in diameter and carried the device of the Great Seal with one heraldic difference according to Patterson and Dougall: the eagle was "displayed with wings inverted" instead of "dis-

played". That is, the wing tips were pointed downward instead of upward, as with the *Chronicle* eagles. They imply that inverted wings were not a proper representation of "displayed", and that the inverted wings on the State Department seal were a mistake made by the engraver. As authorities for "displayed with wings inverted" they cite two modern works.<sup>11</sup> However, it would be the contemporary sources which are actually relevant.

William Barton, who was a consultant for the third committee (1782), and responsible for the final design, was familiar with J. Guillim, *Display of Heraldry* (London, 1724), 6th ed. and M. A. Porny (Antoine du Martre), *Elements of Heraldry* (London, 1765).<sup>12</sup> Porny has a "Dictionary" section at the end.<sup>13</sup> Here we find:

"DISPLAYED. This word is said of a bird, &c. whose wings are spread and expanded".

"INVERTED. This word is applied to any Bearing turned the wrong way. Wings are said to be inverted when the points of them are downwards".

J. Edmondson states essentially the same in 1780 where we find the following.<sup>14</sup>

"DISPLAYED, an heraldic term, used to express the position of the wings of eagles, and all other birds, when they are expanded. See P1.XII."

"INVERTED, turned upside-down, as in P1. XIV, a dexter hand couped and inverted."

While wings are not mentioned or illustrated under "inverted", two consecutive definitions under eagles have illustrations.

"EAGLE DISPLAYED, is when the wings and legs are extended on each side of the body."

"EAGLE DISPLAYED with the wings inverted. N.B. This form seldom occurs in the blazon of armorial bearings, but by mistake of Painters and Engravers."

Edmondson says in essence that the displayed eagle with inverted wings was not used in heraldry, and was only found in renditions of blazons by non-heralds. This implies a contemporary lay usage of eagles with displayed but inverted wings. The illustrations leave no question as to the configuration. Edmondson's definition of "Eagle Displayed" is important as it also specifies that the legs are extended to each side. This detail distinguishes the displayed eagle from a rising eagle with its feet on the ground ready to fly.

The contemporary sources do indeed show that technically an eagle "displayed" should not have had inverted wings. The State Department seal was undoubtedly influenced by the *United States Chronicle* design, and it was probably approved by the President because of the similarity to the emblem of the Society of the Cincinnati. Another important difference between the first State



Department seal and the Great Seal of the United States is the fact that on the former a well balanced Norman shield was used rather than the blunt rectangular one of the latter. This detail also shows the influence of the *Chronicle* and the *Columbian* designs. While the original Great Seal showed a correctly drawn displayed eagle, the pure design rapidly degenerated to a displayed eagle with inverted wings through non-herald designers, just as Edmondson had noted. While not heraldically correct, there was an obvious preference among lay artists for inverted wings. They made a more graceful and natural rendition of the eagle and fitted into a circular enclosure more easily than an eagle with raised wings.

## EAGLES ON EARLY COINS

On October 17, 1786 the Massachusetts General Court passed an "Act for establishing a mint for the coinage of gold, silver and copper". The next year it was directed that the design should incorporate "The figure of an Indian with a bow and arrow and a star at one side, with the word 'Commonwealth'; the reverse, a spread eagle with the words 'Massachusetts A. D. 1787' ".<sup>15</sup> Copper cents and half cents were minted in 1787 and 1788 (Fig. 6). The influence of the *United States Chronicle* on the design of the eagle is obvious. All of the early state mints were abandoned with the ratification of the Constitution in 1788, so there are no 1789 dates of these coins. These Massachusetts coppers were obviously in circulation in Providence at the time since the Seekonk River to the east of the town was the Massachusetts border.



Fig. 6. Arms of the United States shown on the Massachusetts cent in 1787 and 1788. Enlarged about 50%. (After Prime.)

George Washington was inaugurated in 1789 as the first President. Congress passed a resolution in March 1791 that a mint be established, and in April 1792 a bill provided that the money of the

United States should be expressed in dollars and decimal fractions. The first coins struck were the silver half disme (dime) and disme in 1792, with Liberty on the obverse and a flying eagle on the reverse. Regular coinage started with copper half cents and cents in 1793, silver half dimes, half dollars and dollars in 1794, and silver dimes and quarter dollars in 1796. From 1794 to 1797 all silver coins had a Liberty head on the obverse and graceful rising eagles facing right on the reverse (Fig. 7).



Fig. 7. Silver dollar of 1794 with the graceful rising eagle shown on the reverse of silver coins from 1794 to 1797. Enlarged 25%. (After Prime.)

The arms of the United States, complete with arrows and an olive branch in the talons, motto, thirteen stars and clouds, appeared on the reverse of the gold quarter eagle in 1796, the eagle in 1797, and the dime and silver dollar in 1798 (Fig. 8). The wings are raised as in the Great Seal, but the arrows and olive branch are transposed and there is a Norman shield instead of the rectangular shield of the original Seal. In 1792 a circular diplomatic medal was designed by the French sculptor and engraver Augustin Dupré, who also made the dies. It has been suggested that the use



Fig. 8. Reverse of the silver dollar of 1798 showing the arms of the United States. Enlarged 20%. (After Prime.)



of the arms of the United States on the reverse of this circular medal established a theme for United States coinage from 1798 onward.<sup>16</sup> However, since only ten of the medals were struck and given to foreign diplomats, their influence could not have been great. The theme of the displayed eagle probably came from the Washington “pieces” of 1791 and 1792 which often had the arms of the United States on the reverse with the wings both raised and inverted (Fig. 9).



Fig. 9. Reverse of the Washington silver half dollar of 1792 showing the arms of the United States. Enlarged 33%. (After Prime.)

In 1807 the U.S. half dollar appeared with a graceful neoclassic eagle on the reverse (Fig. 10). It appeared on the dime in 1809 and the quarter in 1815 and was very popular for many decades. The dies were engraved by John Reich of the Mint from Italian designs.<sup>17</sup> The design was used on quarter and half dollars until 1891. This was intended as a stylistic representation of the arms of the United States, as the eagle has the escutcheon on its breast, and olive branch and arrows in the talons. However, the motto E. PLURIBUS UNUM and the thirteen stars are missing, while the eagle is not displayed but rising (feet on the ground). This eagle was widely used for a number of decades as a model for many eagle designs, very often with the escutcheon discarded.



Fig. 10. Reverse of the half dollar of 1838 showing the Reich neoclassic eagle introduced in 1807. (After Prime.)

## NUMBER OF STARS

Laughlin considered the number of stars associated with eagle designs significant, saying that, just as an American flag can be dated by the number of stars, so can we determine the approximate date of the first use of almost every eagle touch which includes thirteen or more stars.<sup>18</sup> Actually this determination is much less accurate than Laughlin supposed. The states admitted to the Union up to 1803 are indicated as follows:

Date Admitted to the Union		
14.	Vermont	March 4, 1791
15.	Kentucky	June 1, 1792
16.	Tennessee	June 1, 1796
17.	Ohio	March 1, 1803

The first *Chronicle* eagle appearing in January 1786 had thirteen stars. This design was used until February 1793 when fifteen stars were used. Fifteen stars appeared with the *Chronicle* eagle up to 1804 when it ceased publication, at which time there should have been seventeen. On the other hand, the *Rhode Island Almanac* was published in 1801 with a copy of the last *Chronicle* eagle on the cover, but with sixteen stars instead of fifteen.

There was actually a legal basis for the number of stars in the flag. On June 14, 1777 the Continental Congress adopted a design for the national flag, by “Resolving That: The flag of the United States shall be thirteen stripes, alternated red and white, with a union of thirteen stars of white on a blue field, representing a new constellation”.<sup>19</sup> There was no change in the number of either the stars or the strips until January 13, 1794 when Congress, in recognition of the admission of Vermont and Kentucky, voted to add two stripes and two stars, to take effect in May 1795. This design remained unchanged until 1818 when there were twenty states in the Union, with prospects of more. As it was evident that the number of stripes could not be continually increased without becoming indistinct, Congress voted in 1818 that the flag should contain thirteen stripes for the original thirteen states, and that a star should be added for each new state on the July 4th following its admission. Therefore, from 1795 to 1818 only fifteen stars were legal.

While there was a legal basis for increasing the number of stars on the flag, such was not the case for the Great Seal. The original blazon specified thirteen stars and was never changed. Therefore, the use of more than thirteen stars in the arms of the United States violated the blazon. However, it became common practice to use more than thirteen stars with representations of the arms of the United



States. The *Chronicle* eagle of February 1793 had fifteen stars, almost a year before Congress changed the number of stars on the flag to fifteen. By maintaining fifteen stars through 1804 the *Chronicle* was adhering to the law (for flags) which had not changed from fifteen stars.

After the inauguration of George Washington in 1789 the Federal Government began to present Indian peace medals, usually engraved from sheet silver by silversmiths. Those executed during Washington's administration portrayed an Indian chief and either a female figure representing America (earliest medals) or Washington himself (later examples). The reverse showed the arms of the United States, usually modeled after the Trenchard engraving of 1786. Patterson and Dougall show four dated examples of these with varying numbers of stars:<sup>20</sup>

Date	Stars	States
1789	13	13
1792	14	14/15
1793	14	15
1795	15	15

Therefore, in the early Federal Period it was common practice to show more than thirteen stars in the arms of the United States. However, this can only be used to very roughly date the eagle as many representations still had only fifteen stars when there were seventeen or more states.

The early coinage of the United States reflects varying numbers of stars. The regular silver coinage from 1794 to 1797 has a Liberty head on the obverse and a rising eagle on the reverse. Around the Liberty head may be found 13, 14, 15 or 16 stars; after 1798 there are only thirteen stars. There are usually no stars with the arms of the United States on the reverse, as they would be redundant.

## DATING HAMLIN'S TWO EAGLE MARKS

We are now in a position to date two of Hamlin's eagle marks (both about  $2\frac{1}{32}$ " in diameter). First we will take the displayed eagle (L336). This is obviously a representation of the arms of the United States, and is complete with a motto indicated in the beak, arrows and an olive branch in the talons (Fig. 11, left). There are fifteen stars above the eagle. The eagle's wings are down with a Norman shield and the design appears to be very similar to the *Chronicle* eagle which appeared in February 1793 with fifteen stars (Fig. 5). It differs from the *Chronicle* eagle only in having the head facing to the right. Laughlin suggested that this eagle was first used in 1794 or 1795.<sup>21</sup> If copied

from the *Chronicle* it could have been cut as early as 1793; Laughlin's earlier date, 1794, will arbitrarily be taken for the introduction of this design.

The second Hamlin eagle to consider is the one in a rising position with arrows and an olive branch in its talons and thirteen stars above (Fig. 11, right). Laughlin suggested that the thirteen stars dated it to 1790 (L334). The 1790 is apparently based on the date when Rhode Island joined the Union as the last state to ratify the Constitution. However, the form of the eagle in this touch is without question copied from the graceful neo-classic eagle of John Reich first appearing on the 1807 half dollar (Fig. 10). The introduction of this touch by Hamlin may be dated in round numbers as 1810. As the elder Hamlin died in 1801 this touch is the only one used solely by his son Samuel E. Hamlin (b. 1772).

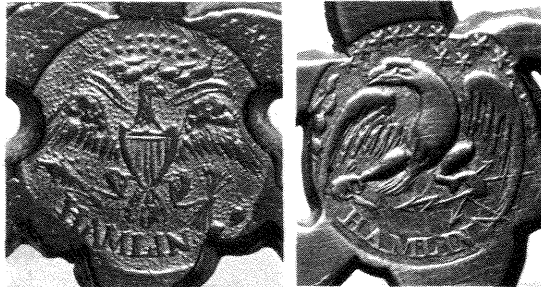


Fig. 11. Hamlin's two late eagle marks. Left, fifteen-star eagle copied from the *United States Chronicle* about 1794. Right, thirteen-star eagle copied from Reich's eagle which first appeared on the half dollar in 1807. Enlarged about 2 times.

Confirming the late date of this latter eagle is the almost identical touch of William Calder, who did not start working until about 1817. Calder was apprenticed to Samuel E. Hamlin so the similarity of his touch to Hamlin's is not surprising, since many apprentices copied their master's touches when they started on their own. Calder added "PROVID" at the bottom. The Reich eagle was extremely popular with a number of other pewterers from 1810-1830. Many earlier pewterers who had used a displayed heraldic eagle like Hamlin's 1794 design changed to Reich's eagle early in the nineteenth century. This is shown by the various eagles of Thomas Danforth III, Samuel Danforth and Thomas Danforth Boardman. Wares with the two different eagle designs may therefore be dated either pre-1810 or post-1810.



## HAMLIN'S EAGLE/ANCHOR MARKS

The last two Hamlin eagle marks to consider are essentially one as they are almost the same size and have the same composition: a graceful rising eagle supporting an oval shield with a Rhode Island anchor, with the words HAMLIN above and PROVIDENCE below (Fig. 12). Both marks are about  $\frac{23}{32}$ " in diameter (the rare example is  $\frac{1}{64}$ " larger in diameter). The two marks can be told apart easily by the position of the eagle's head; on the common variety (L337) the head points at "A" in HAMLIN, while in the rare mark (L338) it points at "H". Further, the wing at the left is larger in the common variety and passes outside the "P" in PROVIDENCE, while the same wing in the rare one is smaller and points at the "R" in PROVIDENCE.<sup>22</sup>



Fig. 12. Hamlin's two eagle/anchor marks. Left, the common mark, L337. Right the rare mark, L338. Enlarged 1.77 times.

Comparative material exists for the Colonial and early post-Revolutionary use of an anchor on an oval shield in Rhode Island. On Rhode Island paper currency from 1776 to 1786 the arms of the State appear as an anchor in a simple circle, or sometime slight ovals, instead of the elaborate shield designs of earlier issues.<sup>23</sup> An anchor appears in an oval between the letters G and R (for Georgius Rex, George III) on a brass staff head of Rhode Island origin.<sup>24</sup> There was also a strong tradition for oval shields in early governmental heraldry as many copper coins of Connecticut, Vermont and New York minted in 1786 and 1787 showed them (Fig. 13).<sup>25</sup>

A more exact model for Hamlin's eagle/anchor touches is provided by the emblem or insignia of the Society of the Cincinnati (Fig. 14). The Society was formed in May 1783 by officers of the Revolutionary army under the immediate command of General Washington. In June 1783 Pierre Charles L'Enfant, a French subject who had fought in the Continental Army, suggested as an emblem for the Society an eagle carrying on its breast an oval representing the Cincinnatus legend. A dis-



Fig. 13. Reverse of New York copper penny of 1787 showing the arms of New York with an oval shield. Enlarged 1.8 times. (After Prime.)



Fig. 14. Emblem of the Society of the Cincinnati as painted on a Chinese export porcelain plate, c. 1790. (Modified from Antiques.)

played eagle with inverted wings was used. While the very general "blazon" did not specify "displayed", if a spread eagle were used it should not have had inverted wings. It was implied that the wings should have been raised. The position of the wings on the Cincinnati emblem undoubtedly led to the inverted wings in the *Chronicle* design of the United States arms in 1786 (Fig. 4).

The Cincinnati emblem probably inspired Hamlin's eagle/anchor design. A more realistic



rising eagle was used by Hamlin following the graceful ones often appearing as finials on Chipendale mirrors, which had replaced the English phoenix; an anchor for the State of Rhode Island replaced the Cincinnatus figures. Hamlin's design was undoubtedly composed before January 1786 when the *United States Chronicle* started to publish the state's arms on a bold Norman shield (Fig. 4). Hamlin possibly devised the design in 1784 or 1785; we will arbitrarily take 1785 as the date. If the design were made after January 1786 it would undoubtedly have had a Norman rather than an oval shield because of the Rhode Island arms shown on the masthead of the *Chronicle*. And if it had been after 1786 the design would probably have been the Federal spread eagle which Gershom Jones had copied from the *Chronicle* about 1786,<sup>26</sup> and which Hamlin himself copied later in 1794.

There is further evidence to indicate that Hamlin's eagle/anchor design was not made after 1800. The Providence Marine Society was founded in 1798 and the certificate for the society was engraved by William Hamlin (b. 1774), younger brother of Samuel E. Hamlin (b. 1772). Presumably it was engraved in 1798 when William Hamlin was only 24. There are six pictorial details on the certificate, one with an eagle with the escutcheon of the arms of the United States and a fowl anchor of the Rhode Island arms over it, apparently symbolizing the conjoined arms of Rhode Island and the United States (Fig. 15). The shield is the typical Norman shield universally used after this design appeared in the *U.S. Chroni-*



Fig. 15. One of six pictorial details from the certificate of the Providence Marine Society founded in 1798 showing an anchor for Rhode Island on the arms of the United States. Reduced 8%.

*cle* masthead in 1786. Oval shields simply were not used at this time in Rhode Island. Actually, Samuel Hamlin's eagle/anchor touch may have suggested the anchor on the Federal shield to his brother William.

There is somewhat later pictorial evidence leading to the same conclusion. On October 3, 1801 Oliver Farnsworth brought out the first issue of the newspaper, the *Rhode Island Republican*, at Newport. The masthead consisted of type-set words until the issue of February 13, 1802 when the masthead appeared with an eagle holding a shield with a fowl anchor and the motto "IN GOD WE HOPE" (Fig. 16). The fowl anchor on a shield with the motto represent the arms of Rhode Island while the eagle with a constellation of 16 stars and trumpet represent the United States. The total design represents the State of Rhode Island (from her arms) conjoined with a symbol of the United States and represents Rhode Island as a member of the Union. This is indeed indicated by the legend under the design: "AN INDISSOLUBLE UNION OF THE STATES IS ESSENTIAL TO THEIR LIBERTY AND EXISTENCE. - WASHINGTON."



Fig. 16. Eagle emblem from the masthead of the February 13, 1802 *Rhode Island Republican*. Reduced 20%. (From the Collection of the Newport Historical Society.)

The design was probably taken from a popularized representation of the arms of the United States where the shield (based on the original rectangular shield of the Great Seal) originally had a chief and thirteen vertical stripes and the motto was originally E. PLURIBUS UNUM. The trumpet is probably symbolic of the original thirteen arrows (for war) and therefore one of the accouterments of battle (the trumpet for the cry to battle), thus signifying the armed might of the United States. The design was carried on the masthead until 1805 and was used as a model for identical designs appearing on Chinese export porcelain.<sup>27</sup> An oval shield would have been completely out of style here.

There should actually be little objection in dating Hamlin's eagle/anchor as the earliest designs. Kerfoot originally observed that in some areas the British rose-and-crowns and rampant lions gave



way to the states' arms, and these were later in turn replaced by the arms of the United States represented by the heraldic eagles.<sup>28</sup> Laughlin actually reversed this with Hamlin and had the United States arms replaced by the Rhode Island arms, which is highly improbable. Laughlin reached this untenable position by failing to recognize that the eagle with thirteen stars (L334) was a copy of the neoclassic Reich design first appearing on the half dollar in 1807. Having dated the Reich eagle to 1790, he did not feel that any eagle could date earlier than this, and therefore placed the eagle with the anchor of the State of Rhode Island after 1800. If the thirteen-star eagle dates after 1807 then the eagle/anchor obviously cannot come after this. Further, if the earliest Hamlin eagle was cut about 1794 this would mean that the S H rose touch was used up to this time. However, wares with the S H rose mark are extremely rare: possibly only half a dozen or so porringers exist with this mark. If it were used up to 1794 it should be much more common; porringers with the S H rose mark should certainly be as common as those of David Melville who died in 1793. This problem is alleviated with Hamlin's use of the eagle/anchor touch from 1785-1794.

One of the eagle/anchor dies was probably lost or broken and replaced by the other. The two may be arranged chronologically by the fact that the common variety appears on the bottom of a britanica teapot which probably is not earlier than 1820.<sup>29</sup> The scarcity of the rare eagle/anchor mark would seem to indicate that the die was lost relatively soon after it was cut (possibly before 1794) and therefore wares with this mark are undoubtedly eighteenth century. The rare eagle/anchor mark is even scarcer than the S H rose mark. It is seen only on four porringers (a 3 3/4" example, a handle from a 4" one and two 5" range examples) and four basins (2 13/16", 3 11/16", 6" and 8"). However, it is quite possible that other examples of the mark have not been recognized as such. Laughlin's illustration of the common variety (L337) is natural size, but the illustration of the rare mark (L338) is shown 9% larger than natural size. Jacobs shows the rare mark 38% larger than the common mark. This led many to believe that the rare mark is larger. Actually, both are almost the same size. Laughlin showed the two small Hamlin basins with the common eagle/anchor mark (L337).<sup>30</sup> However, it turns out that they both have the rare mark (L338).<sup>31</sup>

## USE OF HAMLIN'S VARIOUS EAGLE TOUCHES

The second (later) eagle/anchor die (L337) was probably used contemporaneously with the two other eagles because it had the word PROVIDENCE on it; the other two eagle marks simply had HAMLIN. Hamlin's competitor in Providence, Gershom Jones, had several larger touches with PROVIDENCE on them, and it was probably fashionable to show the town name at this time, after 1794, in the early Federal period. On the other hand, seven of the eight impressions of the rare eagle/anchor touch (L338) are struck with the die tipped backwards so that only the top half of the impression with a strong HAMLIN occurs. Only in the example on the inside of the 3 11/16" basin is the complete left side of the mark shown, but the right bottom is still missing.<sup>32</sup> The elimination of PROVIDENCE in the majority of the examples of L338 was probably intentional because of the political conditions in Rhode Island during the period prior to Rhode Island's ratification of the Constitution.<sup>33</sup>

After the peace was signed with Britain in 1783 the colonies drifted along. Rhode Island wanted to continue with local self-government and laissez faire enterprise under the loose union provided by the Articles of Confederation. However, many other states wanted stronger central control, and this led to the Philadelphia Convention in 1787. Rhode Island was the only state to boycott the proceedings. The Convention produced a draft of the Constitution in 1787 and sent it to the states for ratification. The Rhode Island legislature on thirteen different occasions between 1787 and 1790 refused to hold ratifying conventions. The Country Party had come to power in Rhode Island in 1786 and represented the agrarians, states righters and paper money men.

The Antifederalist feelings of the Country Party against the new Constitution were so strong that when Providence attempted to celebrate the ratification of the Constitution by the nine requisite states along with American Independence on July 4, 1788 hundreds of armed men from the "country" rural areas surrounding Providence prevented it. When the first eagle/anchor die was cut around 1785 it would have been quite acceptable for the word PROVIDENCE to be in Hamlin's touch. However, during the period from 1787 to 1790 it would have been completely unacceptable to the people in the farm areas surrounding Providence. Then PROVIDENCE would have signified the Federalists. It would have been during this period that Hamlin eliminated PROVIDENCE by tilting the die. In the early Federal period Hamlin appar-





ently wanted PROVIDENCE in a touch and used the second eagle/anchor die along with the other two eagles.

The chronology of the design and use of Hamlin's small circular touches found predominantly on porringers may be outlined.

Touch	Date Designed	Date Used
1. S H rose (L332)	1767	1767-1785
2. Eagle/anchor (L338)	1785	1785-1790 (?)
3. Eagle/anchor (L337)	1785	1790(?) - 1820
4. 15-star eagle (L336)	1794	1794-1810
5. Reich eagle (L334)	1810	1810-1820

Porrings with No. 1 are rare (about half a dozen exist). This means that probably all of the pre-Revolutionary examples have disappeared and only a few of the examples made from 1776 to 1785 exist. Only four examples of No. 2 exist. No. 3 is the commonest, but it should be if it was used for 30 years or so. Nos. 4 and 5 are fairly common with No. 4 possibly being a little more common than No. 5. However, the two together do not equal the number of porringers with No. 3. As the elder Hamlin died in 1801 only No. 5 was used exclusively by his son, Samuel E. Hamlin. This is the important conclusion of this article, for Laughlin held that only Nos. 2 and 3 were used exclusively by the younger Hamlin, which would mean that he made the majority of the surviving Hamlin porringers. On the other hand, the rare eagle/anchor No. 2 must have been used solely by the older Hamlin following the discontinuance of the S H rose touch. Laughlin suggested that No. 2 was Hamlin's last and latest eagle touch.

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## Suppository Molds of Pewter

by Stevie Young

Medical items of pewter have always been of interest to us for scant information has been available. This summer a suppository mold was advertised to be sold at a local show and described as constructed of tin and pewter. Although we made an effort to be one of the first entrants, expecting to see and study its construction, it had been sold previously.



The history of development of suppositories (or "bougies") is interesting:<sup>1</sup> At first, suppositories were made by hand, later in paper cones, or plaster of Paris molds. The first metallic molds were introduced about 1860. They were tin boxes with holes in the top to support individual metal molds, holding liquid cocoa butter (a yellowish fat prepared from cocoa seeds). The filled molds were suspended in icy water in the box to solidify the suppositories. Both holders have holes for 12 pewter (white metal) molds, and Fig. 1 also is equipped with the necessary funnel for filling.



Fig. 1. An early suppository mold of tin and pewter with filling funnel

Fig. 1 illustrates an early suppository maker of tin and pewter, complete with filling funnel. Closed at the bottom and equipped with funnel. The inserts (suppository molds) are of "white metal".

Fig. 2 illustrates a similar tin box and two "white metal" molds, the slim one for rectum and larger one for vaginal use.

Photographs and additional information courtesy of Barbara M. Fogler.

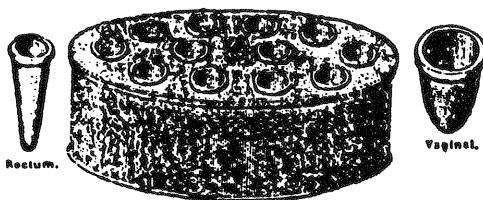


Fig. 2. A similar mold taken from an advertisement

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## A Continental Spoon Holder

by Webster Goodwin

Included in a small lot of pewter which I recently purchased was this odd heart-shaped piece with a decorative design around it and pierced with twelve round openings. It has a rather short "handle" to which an iron ring is attached on the back for hanging. (Fig. 1).

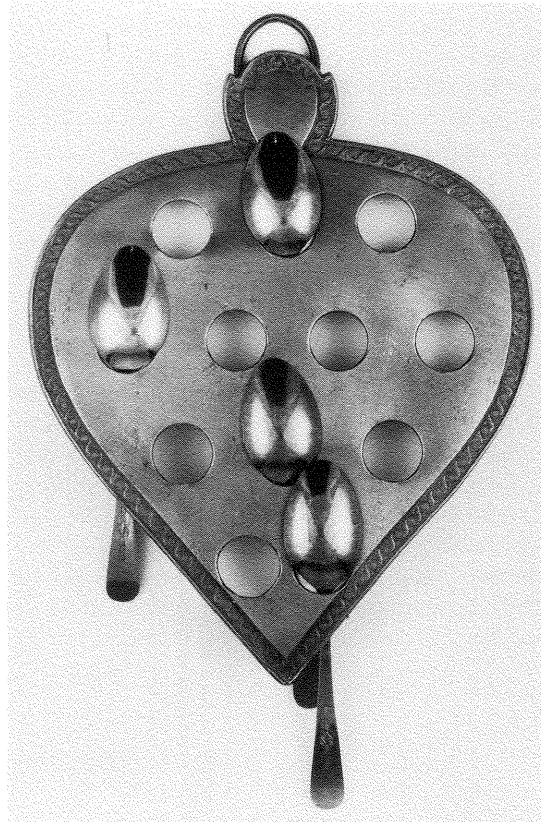


Fig. 1. Continental spoon holder. Length  $10 \frac{9}{16}$ ", width  $8 \frac{7}{16}$ ", dia. of holes  $\frac{15}{16}$ "

A real "whatsit". Anyway a search of the books finally identified it as a spoon holder. *National Types of Old Pewter* revised edition by Cotterell, Riff and Vetter - page 107, Fig. 209 shows similar smaller German types but the perimeter design on this would indicate Swiss or French origin rather than German.

Unfortunately it is not marked - anyway a fun piece.



# *The Tender Art of Dating*

by Peter Hornsby

At the recent Society meeting in Leamington Spa the old question of how to date pewter and other antiques arose during a discussion on Domed Tankards.

One view expressed at the Society meeting was that it would be possible to date the mass of Domed Tankards on display and place them in a rough chronological order. The contrary view was that such dating is unreliable and that there would have been several parallel lines of development.

Two views clearly existed. The one, held by many of the earlier writers on pewter and much favoured by dealers because of its precision, holds that items can be closely dated by style. The contrary view is that it is very difficult to ascribe an exact period to objects on style alone and that any attempts to do so must be treated with great caution.

This is not an academic matter but one which affects all collectors. Apart from the evidence of maker's and ownership marks, how else can we date our objects if not by style? Surely style must help us? Superficially the answer is "yes". Changes of style act as watersheds and draw our attention to manufacturing changes but when it comes to close dating individual objects there is much less certainty than is often supposed.

In a sense this is the old argument from natural history, all over again. The battle of creation as against evolution. To put it in other terms, the gradual evolution of styles which often run parallel with other similar changes or the "stop and start" theory which believed that each style was created and went out of fashion in a neatly consecutive fashion.

It really is time that the "creation" or "stop and start" theory was abandoned for it encouraged us to be far too unquestioning and far too dogmatic in our dating of antique objects and it is so clearly contrary to what actually occurs.

To see how style changes take place let us examine for a moment some of the factors that influence sudden shifts in design.

Essentially these are commercial. Makers of pewter and other objects are anxious to maintain or increase their sales in the face of competition. As a consequence the more active and original of them were always seeking ways of catching their client's eye. The influences on the pewterers came from many fields. The impact of silver styles was immense. The influence of European developments was also often considerable. For

example the introduction of wavy edged plates in the eighteenth century clearly followed their popularity in France. There is also a general stylistic influence from other art forms including architecture. It was to architecture that silver and pewter craftsmen looked for the Corinthian and other "column" candlesticks.

But fundamentally makers made stylistic changes to sell more pewter.

How would this have come about?

Let us take an imaginary pewterer, "A" working around 1680. Being a young, active and competitive maker he noticed that tankards were perhaps selling less well than before, and based on a new silver style perhaps, decided to change the lids of his tankards and make them domed. Other features he probably kept much as before, for as with most craftsmen there was a strong conservative streak in him to combat his revolutionary spirit and in any case every change added to his costs. So came about the double domed tankard. Other makers will have noticed the new style, perhaps alerted by customers asking for them and one by one they will have gradually adopted the new form. In turn they too will have sought to distinguish their products from those of other makers and so began the slow change from the "rams horn" thumbpiece, "flat based" lid and "spade terminal" into the many new features adopted on domed tankards. After perhaps 20 years or so many different examples would have existed, made both in London, and more slowly adopted too in the provinces.

By 1710-15 the one, original, change has spawned many others. The original development may indeed have occurred at the same time in more than one workshop, for however unlikely it is we must not forget the parallel researches that occur so regularly in science in our day.

It is likely that our maker "A", more resistant to change in his middle age, will still be making his domed form with a rams horn thumbpiece or spade terminal in spite of the changes other people have introduced. Thus if you date by style, these later works of his will be put before all the other domed tankards made from 1700 onwards, whereas they ought to be dated after them. Likewise at the end of the life of domed tankards some makers will still be producing examples long out of date amongst more progressive pewterers.

Moulds were expensive and pewterers very conservative men. Changes tended to come only when commercial necessity dictated them. It is true that objects can only be as old as the newest feature within their design or style but they may not be as old as the newest feature implies.

Any feature can be used many years after its



introduction.

The "evolutionary" theory recognizes this parallel development whilst the "stop and start" theory tends to ignore these considerations.

More than half of all examples of any style will probably have been made several years after its introduction. The period of maximum diversity in forms is probably found around the middle years of the life of a new style.

Some stylistic changes come suddenly and are quickly adopted. Others end, for one reason or another, equally swiftly, while some changes slowly taper out.

In dating it is necessary to decide what pattern any particular stylistic change took so as to establish, as far as possible, the outer limits of its manufacture. The story of the adoption of any new style or form can usually be portrayed graphically.

Most of these production patterns take the shape of a bell curve, so common in most branches of science.

Fewer examples are made at the start of a new object or style. When it catches on production rises to a peak, with a gradual falling off towards the end of an object's or style's popularity, Graph A.

On some occasions a new style may be adopted much quicker than usual and produce a steeper curve. The James I flagon, is probably an example of such a sudden change. Introduced into churches after 1602 it was quickly taken up all across the country. Its production curve might look like that shown in Graph B.

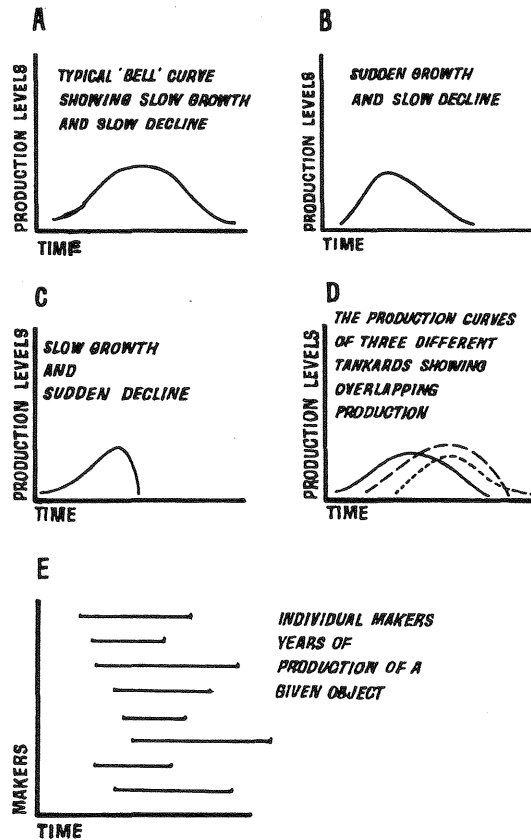
Generally objects would continue to be made in gradually declining numbers but every so often some factor would lead to a style's instant abandonment. The death of the puritan spoon may be explained in religious and political terms, whilst the sudden disappearance of pewter candlesticks can best be explained by the widespread popularity of brass examples. The production curves of both forms would perhaps have looked like Graph C.

When dating examples by style it is probably statistically safer to place them in the middle years of production rather than at the start of a style.

The dating of a group of objects can be displayed graphically, with production curves, showing that the several forms were in manufacture at the same time. See Graph D.

In dating pewter it is best therefore to first establish a general idea of when a style may have started and finished and to estimate just how many different forms survive. Important too is how many examples are known.

If there are only one or two objects that have survived then the resulting graph will be very hypothetical. Who knows if we are looking at one of the first examples or the last or one of the last



examples of the first batch? But the more we know the more certain we can be about our curve.

There is a natural tendency to want to establish the exact date when an object was made. Sometimes the existence of other evidence does enable us to do that. But in our desires to lay down a firm date we often try to establish exact rules and create a classification of stylistic features on which we create a dating structure. But it is we who do this, and we who then place the pewter in the classification that we have created. The maker of the object was bound by none of our restraints.

Observations about a group of objects are helpful, indeed they remain the basis of all dating but we must be cautious when we turn these hypotheses into firm rules. So often our knowledge is imperfect and we can make major misjudgments as a consequence.

To take but four examples. Until recently it was thought that all British broad rimmed plates dated from the first quarter of the seventeenth century at the earliest but now we know that this form was in use in the sixteenth century. How many Tudor broad rims have either been dismissed as "contingental" or given a seventeenth century date?

Likewise we have tended to date all ball knob candlesticks in the last twenty years of the seventeenth century whereas Ken Gordon has now shown that this form existed at least sixty years



earlier. Do we still maintain that all examples are from 1680 onwards?

It is my conviction too that many James I flagons were in domestic use prior to 1602 and this form was adopted so quickly and so universally simply because it was already in widespread manufacture.

There is a growing belief too, that many of the examples of "European" medieval pewter that are found in this country may well have been made here and are simply not recognized because there are so few examples.

It may be possible, by detailed observation, to set the earliest and latest dates at which an object was probably made. Within these outer limits dating is much more speculative unless we are helped with other evidence.

**Ed. Note:** The preceding article was originally published in *The Journal of the Pewter Society*, Spring 1984, and is reprinted with the kind permission of the Society and Peter Hornsby.

## *On The Merits of Never Dating Things Too Closely*

by Peter Hornsby

I find myself returning again and again to the theme that it is unwise, in the light of our ever changing knowledge, to date objects with too great precision. While researching for the Catalogue of the current Museum of London Pewter Exhibition I came across a pamphlet entitled *Philocohonista or the Drunkard* published in 1635, which illustrates a group of beasts drinking to excess round a table and using various pewter or silver cups and beakers. (Fig. 1). Copies of the catalogue are available from the British Pewter Society and it is worth getting a copy.

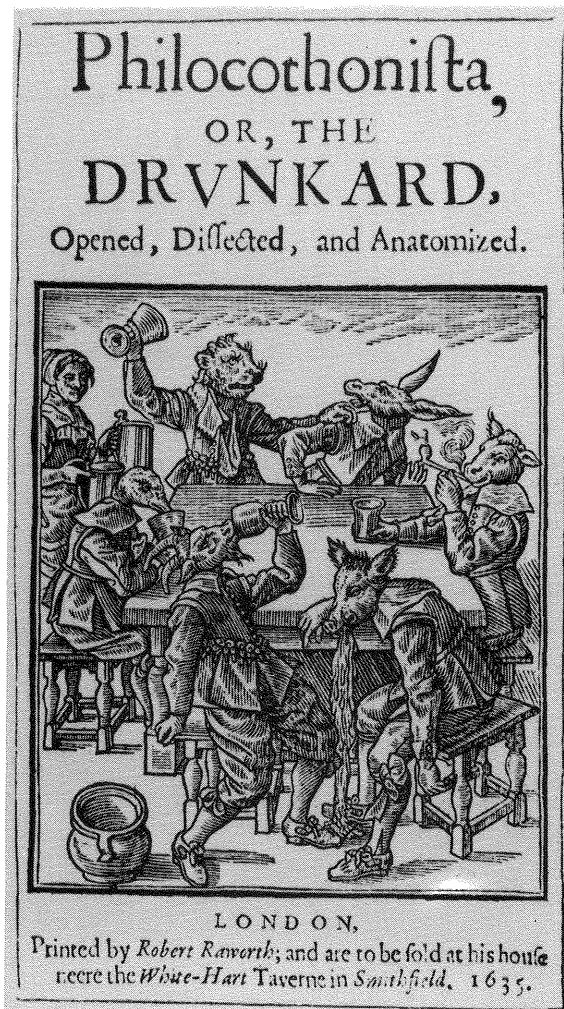
What is of special interest are the three classes of vessels on display and in use. I accept that they just might be of silver and not pewter, although for a broadsheet aimed at the ordinary man in the street this is very unlikely. But even if it was so, then the message would still come loud and clear that all three objects in use can now be dated earlier than we have though previously, whether in silver or pewter.

The pamphlet shows two beasts drinking from wine cups, one deep bowled and the other "V" shaped. Although we have suspected for some time that not all "chalices" are ecclesiastical, if you see what I mean, it is good to have positive proof of this view. I think that we would have been

tempted to date both examples to the 1650's at the earliest and possible as late as 1680. We now know better!

One sheep is drinking from a squat beaker which I would previously have dated to circa 1680-1700 but which we can bring back considerably in time.

Perhaps the most interesting development is the illustration of two flat lidded tankards with what looks like twin cusp thumbpieces. In *Pewter of the Western World* I did date one flat lid of a rare style to 1600-30 but I doubt if we would have dated similar tankards before to 1650 and most are normally dated after the 1660's. Other writers have taken a similar view but all our efforts are as the dust as can now all see.



# Scottish Pewter

by Alex Neish

Cannibalism and calvinism - these were the forces that destroyed so much of Scottish pewter. Indifference took care of most of the rest. Of that which survived some found its way into museums. The major part, however, drifted down to the London salesrooms to be carried away overseas on a tide that would never return. The craft of the Hammermen had begun in the 16th century. It died in the 19th, assassinated by substitutes of lower cost.

The cannibalism was inevitable. The major pewter ingredient of tin was foreign to Scotland and therefore had to be imported. By 1661 the price of pewter north of the border was practically double that in London and Charles II banned the

export of "broken pewter" in an attempt to overcome the shortage of tin. The older pieces were melted down by the craftsmen and the tinkers to become the raw material for another generation.

Calvinism did its part. As the national religious struggles ebbed and flowed, the pewter services that had graced the celebration of communion were destroyed or stolen - like the important pair of candlesticks which St. Giles in Edinburgh had boasted in 1559. Much of that which still survives today is - like that of the Capitol's covenanting churches - stuffed ingloriously into cardboard boxes in a dusty cellar, forgotten like the faith of those who had used it.

Both factors joined to create another of those minor tragedies that run interminably through Scottish history - the almost total disappearance of examples of a craft that pre-dated even the founding of the Edinburgh Incorporation of Hammermen in 1493. Similar incorporations were to fol-



Fig. 1. One of the engraved shields on the Dundee Pirlie Pig made c 1602. Courtesy Museum and Art Galleries, Dundee.



low in Perth, Dundee, Aberdeen, St. Andrews, Glasgow and Stirling, joining together the freemen of the Royal Burghs, those early trading centres of an emerging nation. The burghesses were the first members of a commercial middle class who occupied the ground between a corrupt and warring aristocracy and a working class that lived in filth, despair and poverty. Their Incorporations were designed to defend the standards of their craft against the inroads of gypsies and non-freemen.

The tragedy is based on the fact that the surviving examples suggest that Scottish pewter as an art form reached its apex around 1600, the best part of a century before the glories of William and Mary in England. Almost certainly this reflected the influence of the foreign craftsmen that James V was importing from France and Holland in 1539 because the styles of Scottish pewter were until the

middle of the 18th century clearly to reflect those of the Continent. From the pot-bellied measures to the tappit hen to the beaker chalices the impact of Holland and France is apparent.

Two outstanding pieces, however, broke free to become the masterpieces of the Scottish pewterers. One is Dundee's unique "Pirlie Pig", salvaged from a scrap heap in 1839 and now on permanent display in the city's McManus Galleries. The other is a pair of dishes by Richard Weir of Edinburgh around 1605, one in a private collection and the other in Scotland's National Museum of Antiquities.

The Pirlie Pig is a collection box for the fines levied on absent town council members that was bought by the Council in 1602 when Sir James Skrimzeour was provost. Some 6 inches long and 3 inches high, its melon like shape is covered by



Fig. 2. Another of the engraved shields on the Pirlie Pig. Courtesy of Museum and Art Galleries, Dundee.



extraordinary pseudo-Celtic engraving and four shields. The shields bear the legends "Feare God and Obay the King" with the royal banner of Scotland and the inscription J 6 R for James the First and Sixth; an invitation "Lord blesse the Prowest, Baillzies and Counsell of Dundi"; the city's coat of arms; and the initials of the "Baillzies". (Figures 1 and 2).

No touchmark exists to identify the maker. This is a mystery in itself because one set of initials almost certainly belongs to William Hill who was appointed to the council in 1599 to represent the crafts. In this function he would not have countenanced non-guild work. This tends to suggest that the pig was ornamented by one hand - a silver or goldsmith - but the pewter made by another. At this time the only possible hammermen were Martein or Patrick Gray.

The Weir dishes (Fig. 3) are the earliest marked pieces of Scottish pewter, veritable masterpieces that fall gracefully and uniquely in wide tiers to a central well where a copper and enamel boss flouts the Stuart arms of James the VI and 1st. They are thought to be rosewater dishes in which the nobles washed their hands at the table. A much smaller example by Veitch of Edinburgh in Glasgow's

Burrell Collection suggests they are part of a larger garnish long since lost.

After these flowerings the style is more prosaic. Designs appear that were to last for close on 200 years, reflecting both a classic simplicity that could not be bettered and the high cost of the metal and moulds. The tappit hen - of which so many fakes exist - became the epitomy of Scottish pewter. It survived in several capacities till 1800 when the craft was moribund, done down by white metal and china. Practically no new apprentices were being recruited by the turn of the 19th century but the last of Hammermen fought on to produce glorious and unique baluster measures in Glasgow and Edinburgh. The thistle measure appeared around 1850, only to be ordered to be destroyed because its bulge tended to retain part of the whisky. Tavern pots were made in the intriguing "bottle" capacity, the Galbraith family produced their unmistakable jugs in Glasgow. The third member of the Scott family flared briefly across Edinburgh and Moyes worked there till 1880. An old curmudgeon called Peter Durie was making snuff mulls out of deer feet at the turn of the last century when both pewter and snuff were out of fashion. It was all dead but he would not admit it.

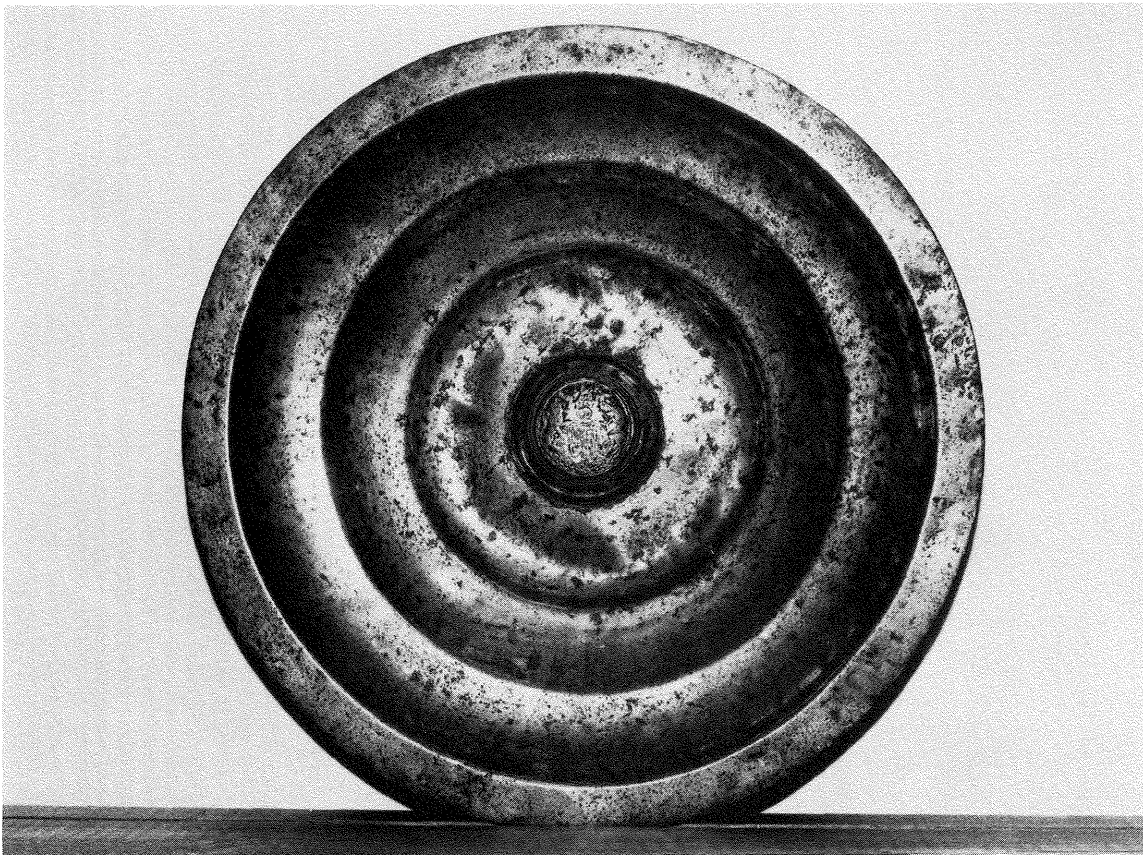


Fig. 3. One of the 17 1/2" tiered Weir rosewater dishes c 1605, with the inset boss bearing the enamelled royal coat of arms. (Neish Collection).





## Scottish Pewter Formats

by Alex Neish

The previous article set the historical background to the craft of the Scottish pewterers. These notes seek to compliment it by illustrating some of the formats created by what they call their "magic". The styles were limited, the craftsmanship superb. Only secular items are touched upon here as the ecclesiastical pewter requires a chapter to itself.

Inevitably the starting point has to be the pair of 17 1/2" diameter rosewater dishes to which reference was made in the previous article. Made by Richard Weir of Edinburgh, who had leave to strike his touch in 1597, they stand as the earliest identifiable pieces of Scottish pewter and amongst the most important in Britain. The Stuart royal connection is important for two reasons. The first is that it substantiates the provenance of what must have been a very expensive item and one whose enamel boss is still a mystery to this day. The second is that it is consistent with the tradition apparently initiated in 1430 when the King of Scotland had eight dozen pewter vessels imported from London. (See *A History of British Pewter* by Thatcher and Barker.)

It is significant that a 9 3/4" dish in the collection of the Worshipful Company of Pewterers in London also bears in its centre an enamelled cop-

per boss. The royal arms in this case are the pre-Stuart ones in use from 1405-1603. The maker's touch is believed to be that of William Curtis who was active in London in the 1560s and 1570s. If later dishes with the enamelled royal arms were to appear in England, the Weir rosewater dishes were, as far as Scotland was concerned, a one off effort that spawned no successors.

The same is true of Dundee's Pirlie Pig fines box also described in the previous article

After this auspicious flowering, nothing else of relevance appears until the pot-bellied measures took their bow in the 17th century only to die out in the 18th. Made in lidded and unlidded versions, they show a clear Dutch influence. It is significant that a pair inscribed 1680, and originally used as church flagons in Brechin Cathedral, has engraving redolent of that country.

Examples of both versions of the pot-bellies are shown in Figures 1 and 2. The range is from the Scots pint to the chopin and the mutchkin. All are unmarked. Their remarkable solidity seems made to endure forever. This and their rarity could suggest that as fashions changed they were melted down to provide the next raw material in a country where all tin was imported.

It is this solidity, and the recurrence of the lidless style developed in the Aberdeen area, that call the attention to the small lidless baluster measure shown in Fig. 3. Originally in the Peal Collection, it has an irregular capacity of around 3 3/4 fluid ounces and was thought to be early 18th century



Fig. 1. Scottish lidded pot-bellied measures of capacities Scots pint, chopin and mutchkin. (Neish Collection)





Fig. 2. Scottish unlined pot-bellied measures of capacities Scots pint, chopin and mutchkin. (Neish Collection)



Fig. 3. Lidless Aberdeen baluster. Early 18th C. (Neish Collection).

Scottish. The lack of similar examples leaves it conjectural if convincing.

After the dour solidity of the pot-bellied measures came the distinguished elegance of the famous tappit hen. In fact, however, the crested variety succeeded the earlier plain-topped and lidless varieties, the earliest example of which is one dated 1669 and located in an Edinburgh excavation. The style was to survive the abolition of the Scottish liquid capacities and to continue to the

middle of the 19th century when the pewter craft itself was moribund. It is a remarkable survival of success that paid the price - inevitably - in countless fakes and reproductions. Fine genuine examples of the lidded, unlined and crested versions are shown in Figures 4, 5 and 6. The standing examples range from the Scots pint (equivalent to 3 imperial pints) down to a quarter of an imperial gill.

Particularly interesting in Fig. 5 is the lidless Aberdeen unit lying on its side. The base is stamped "Imperial Half Gallon" but the non-functional rounded bottom suggests that to meet the new legislation it was extended from a previous Scottish capacity.

A selection of the attractive Edinburgh and Glasgow baluster measures that proliferated from around 1826-1860 is shown in Fig. 7. In Scotland's antique shops 10 years ago these were common trifles. Now again they are very scarce and the one with the double-domed lid on the left a considerable rarity.

In this brief review of Scottish secular pewter, however, two final items are well worth mentioning. In their uniqueness they closed the pages of the book that had been opened with the Weir dishes and the Pirlie Pig - even if, obviously, neither could rise close to the same heights.

First were the jug measures made by Galbraith of Glasgow. Several members of the family - some unrecorded - seem to have used the same moulds to produce measures that are totally



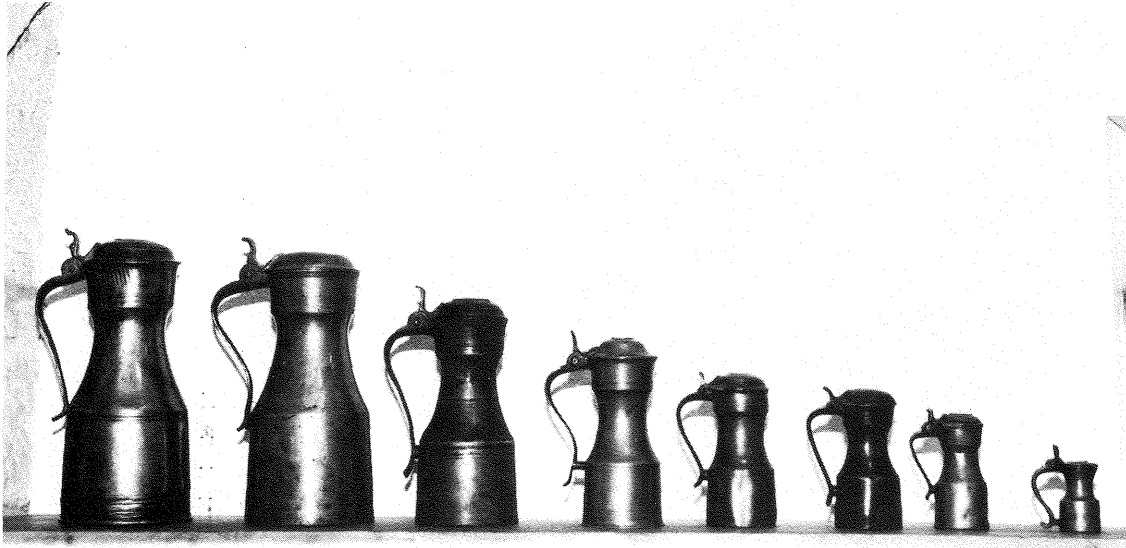


Fig. 4. Range of lidded tappit hens. Scots pint (3 imperial pints) to quarter gill. (Neish Collection)



Fig. 5. Unlidded Aberdeen tappit hens. (Neish Collection)



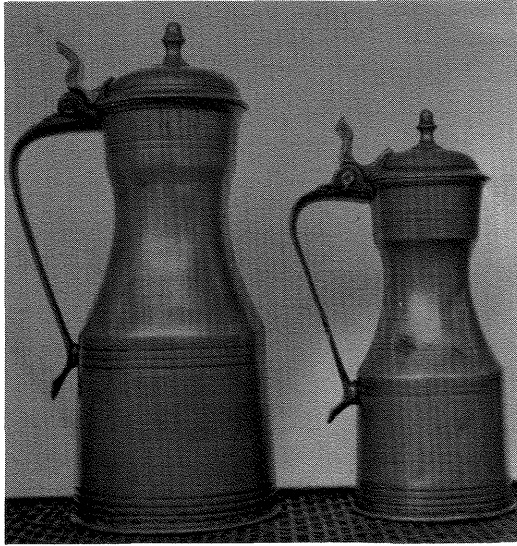


Fig. 6. Crested tappit hens, Scots pint and chopin. The Scots pint showing marriage initials. (Neish Collection)

unmistakable and quite magnificent in the uncluttered purity of their line, (Fig. 8).

The second were the thistle measures which appeared without any great bleating of bagpipes early in the 19th century. In 1907 they were banned, and ordered destroyed when the Weights and Measures regulations condemned measures, like this, which had the canny habit of retaining part of the contents in the accentuated bulbous base. Their loss probably reflects less the law than indifference, but the reality today is that an ambition to own a run from one pint down to a quarter gill is akin to wishing for a Russia without Moscow. Even the Worshipful Company has yet to acquire a single example. Once again fakes abound, and the example is so little known that even the most serious experts fall into the mistake of thinking the illicit angle was the capacity. In fact the capacities of all the genuine thistle measures were verified by officialdom. This is borne out by the examples of Fig. 9 where one measure has lost its filial but all have capacity verifications.



Fig. 7. Range of Glasgow and Edinburgh 19th C lidded baluster measures. (Neish Collection)





Fig. 8. Two 19th C jug measures by the Galbraiths of Glasgow. (Neish Collection)



Fig. 9. Rare 19th C thistle measures. (Neish Collection)



***A New Form  
by Thomas Danforth  
Boardman***

*by Melvyn D. Wolf, M.D.*

A recent acquisition is photographed in Fig. 1. A 2 1/2" marked Boardman and Hart beaker (J-47). The beaker itself is made from a standard 5" Boardman beaker that has been cut off at a point 2 1/2" above the base. Fig. 2 shows the lower portion of the short beaker along side a standard 5" Boardman beaker. There has been slight alteration in the turning of the foot, giving each beaker a slightly different appearance. However, the beakers themselves have the same base diameter. Fig. 3 shows a marked Boardman gill mug on the left and the short Boardman handled beaker on the right. The handles are from the same mold.

This new piece of pewter again demonstrates the forehandedness of the Boardman Group in taking a readily available beaker utilizing a readily available handle and coming up with a new form.



Fig. 2. New Boardman and Hart beaker on the left, standard 5" beaker on the right.

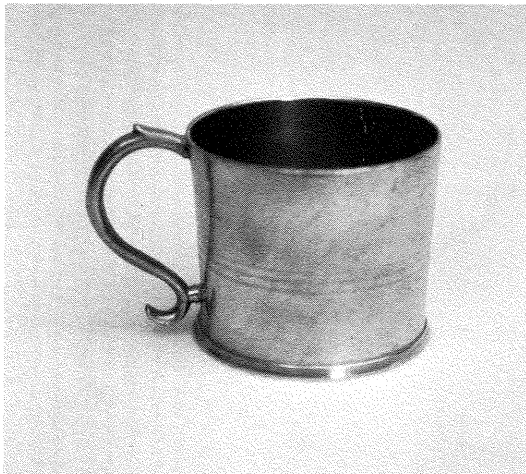


Fig. 1. A 2 1/2" Marked Boardman and Hart beaker



Fig. 3. Gill Boardman mug left, new beaker right

