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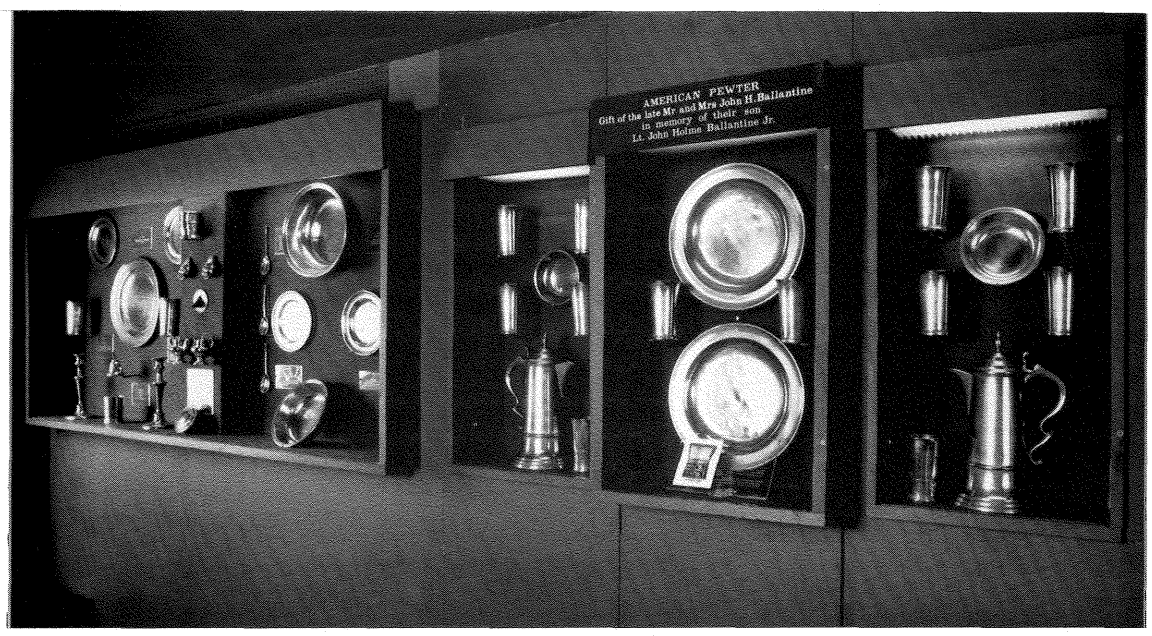

American Pewter in American Museum, Bath, England.

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VOLUME 10
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President's Letter

Our Educational Obligation

The PCCA is chartered in the State of Massachusetts as a non-profit educational corporation. Our constitution states that among our objectives is "...the dissemination of knowledge and information to its members and the general public..." and "...to provide educational, historical and antiquarian information relating thereto..."

How do we meet our eductional obligation? Primarily we do so through the publication of *The PCCA Bulletin* and our participation in public exhibitions of pewter.

The Bulletin is distributed to each club member and to about 50 institutions throughout the country. Among those who know anything about American pewter, its reputation as a source of information is unsurpassed. Every reference book on the subject published within the past 40 years has drawn heavily upon the research reported in its pages. Yet, as influential as it is, fewer than 100 new people a year become aware of its existence, and most of these do so by requesting membership information from the PCAA.

In contrast, a much larger number of people have been introduced to pewter by attendance of pewter exhibitions. During our Fiftieth Anniversary Exhibit in 1984 at the Museum of Our National Heritage in Lexington, Massachusetts, approximately 36,000 people saw the exhibit during the five and one-half month period it was on view.

Smaller but still important exhibitions at regional institutions have also attracted good crowds. The most recent was the "Pewter in European Life" exhibit at the University of California, Riverside where most of the pieces were on loan from members of our Western Region. Approximately 1400 attended the exhibition during its six week term.

During the National Bicentennial observation year of 1976, two other regional groups lent most of the pieces for important exhibitions. In New England an exhibition of 500 pieces of pewter made in Connecticut was held at The Connecticut Historical Society in Hartford. An estimated 1000 people attended the exhibit during the 4 months it was on view.

In the Mid-Atlantic region, an exhibition of American pewter lent by Virginia collectors, most of whom are PCCA members, was held at the Virginia Museum in Richmond. An estimated 5000 people saw the exhibit during the short 6 week period it was displayed.

Each of these exhibits involved the loan of 250 to 500 pieces of pewter and the publication of an important exhibition catalog. Hundreds of hours of work by members of the exhibiting institutions and club members were required. For these reasons it is unlikely that such exhibitions will be undertaken more often than once every 25 years--perhaps once very 50 years for a national exhibit.

Yet, because of the large numbers of people that can be reached via exhibitions, I would encourage each of our regions to organize or help with exhibitions. They do not have to be of the magnitude of those described above. In fact, if they are to be done with any frequency, they should be mini-exhibitions: small displays of 25 or so representative pieces that would introduce the viewer to the range of forms that were made.

Small exhibits have several advantages. They can be drawn from only one or two collections. This will simplify the logistics of assembling the pieces and limit the number of people involved. No published catalog is required: the only description needed is a small card describing each piece that would be displayed with the item. And the limited number of pieces will probably fit into existing display cases or shelves at the institution, eliminating the need for special display units.

Small exhibits also make possible the housing of exhibitions in small buildings that could never accommodate a large display. Possibilities might include local museums, historical societies, historical restorations and public libraries. Some minimum criteria however should be met. The building should be open to the public and currently attracting a good number of visitors. It should have adequate security, both when it is open and after hours. It should also have an insurance policy that will cover the items lent for the exhibit.

The possibilities for such small exhibitions are extensive. The attraction is that, with some good publicity, they will reach more people than the *Bulletin* does in 10 years--actually, many times that number if each regional group will undertake such exhibits on a periodic basis. The costs should be minimal, but should there

be insurance or other costs that exceed the budget of the regional group or the sponsor organization, I am sure the Board of Governors would be receptive to a request for financial support.

So do give this proposal your serious consideration. Look around your community and region for likely organizations and facilities. If initial contact seems promising, ask your regional president for help. I have prepared a list of 25 suggested forms of American pewter that can serve as a guide for selecting the pieces, plus a list of criteria that should be met by the sponsoring organization and its facility. Both are available upon request. I welcome your ideas and comments on this proposal.

Garland Pass

HELP WANTED

A volunteer to prepare the *PCCA Bulletin Index* for Volume 9, (Bulletins Nos. 90-99). An equal opportunity chore. Please contact the Editor.

"Oscars"

by Stevie Young

100 Oscar statues are made each year for the Academy Award ceremony by the R.S. Owens company of Chicago. The 13" statues are hand-poured pewter in a mold and then plated with copper, nickel, silver and finally 24-carat gold. (From the *Poughkeepsie Journal,* March 1990).

Book Review

by Robert E. Asher

Pewter in Brazil: Concientious readers of PCCA publications may remember an article in the March 1987 issue of the *PCCA Newsletter* on the John Somers Pewter Museum in Sao Joao Del Rei, Brazil. It was written by Alex R. Neish and told us just enough about John Somers, the Englishman who settled in Brazil in 1956, and about antique pewter in his museum, to wet our appetites for more details. *Pewter in Brazil, 1600-1900,* the catalog for an exhibition organized by John Somers that opened in Ouro Preto in September 1989 and was subsequently shown in Rio De Janeiro and Sao Paulo, feeds our wetted appetites in highly nourishing fashion.

There is no other literature on pewter in Brazil. John Somers' catalog is consequently a pioneering effort and an impressive one. It presents evidence that pewter was not only heavily used in Brazil, it was also manufactured there. Both sand molds and metal molds appear to have been used for casting. Whereas tin, the raw material for pewter, was relatively expensive in Europe, it was readily accessible and very cheap in Brazil. Nevertheless, most of the pewter made in Brazil on the whole follows Portuguese forms. Identifying unsigned pewter is difficult, but the catalog's author believes that certain of the elaborate altar candlesticks in pewter, so similar to prevailing styles in silver, were made in Brazil by silversmiths in the period 1766-1815, when working in gold and silver was prohibited in the colony.

By comparison with most European exhibitions, the one in Brazil was much stronger in pewter found in churches and weaker in pewter for household use. Among the reasons advanced by the author for the relative plethora of ecclasiastical pewter: "There was never any situation in Europe remotely like the surge in population growth that occurred in Minas Gerais during the gold rush of the XVIIIth Century, with its concomitant need for new churches. Most churches in Europe had been there for centuries. Thousands of new churches were consecrated in Brazil in the XVIIIth Century ... This called for an immediate increase in numbers of clergy, and or course, the tools of their trade. It was both faster and cheaper to make these of pewter." (p.17)

Some of the finest pewter in the exhibition was salvaged from sunken ships, especially the Utrecht, a Dutch frigate sunk off the Brazilian coast during a battle with the Portuguese in 1648. That cache included the ominous-looking pewterware used by ship's surgeons in those days, as well as a Jan Steen flagon, an inkwell which is the earliest known example of the familiar shape still produced in England in the 1930s, and numerous utensils used at table and elsewhere by ship's officers.

The catalog describes briefly each of the approximately 150 pieces of pewter in the exhibition and illustrates nearly 40 of them, includ-

ing a handsome pair of 36cm.-high, painted altar candlesticks and a 110cm. altar crucifix believed to have been made in Brazil. Each category of pewter exhibited-ewers and basins, tableware, pewter from the Utrecht, altar cruets and chrismatories, altar candlesticks and other candlesticks, medical pewter, etc. - is preceded by a brief informative essay concerning that category. Most of the pewter in the exhibit was loaned by the John Somers Museum, but Alex Neish, the Brazilian Naval Museum and others were also lenders.

I regret not having seen the show, but I give the 80-page catalog high marks for:

The quality of the research that went into the preparation of the Portuguese/English texts.
The clarity of the photographs used as illustrations.
The caliber of the hypotheses about aspects of the production and use of pewter in Brazil for which there is as yet no firm factual foundation; and
The warmth and sincerity of the invitations to readers to provide information that will beef up the present somewhat slender foundation of facts regarding pewterers and pewter production in Brazil during the years 1600-1900.

Pewter in Brazil was printed in Belo Horizonte, Brazil in 1989, but contains no information concerning the price of copies. John Somer's address is:

Av. Leite de Castro 1.150
36300 Sao Joao del Rei
Minas Gerais, Brazil
Telex 322329 JSMG BR. Fax (032) 3714449

Pewter in Bath, England

by Robert E. Asher

A first-class collection of 18th and early 19th century American pewter can be seen in Bath, England, as well as some fascinating pewter from the period of the Roman occupation of England (43 to 410AD). Therefore, after attending the excellent October 14-15 meeting of the British Pewter Society in Leamington Spa, I spent two days in Bath. My original objective was primarily to see the Roman Baths Museum there, but a cherished friend at the Pewter Society meeting, Dr. Ronald F. Homer, urged me to visit also the American Museum in Britain housed in the beautifully situated Claverton Manor on the outskirts of Bath. Both Museums are major tourist attractions for reasons other than the pewter they exhibit, but the *PCCA Bulletin* is not the most appropriate forum for comments on those additional treasures.

The American Museum contains 101 pieces of pewter, all but one of which were donated by Mr. and Mrs. John H. Ballantine. The exception is a flagon by Oliver Trask donated by Benjamin Hartshorn Trask. Most of the pewter is handsomely displayed in glass-enclosed cases in the Museum's Pewter Gallery. [Figures 1,2] The balance is in the area of the Museum known as Conkey's Tavern, where it "rests on a table and dresser behind the bar, as it would have done in colonial and early federal days, giving a mellow gleam in the subdued light."[1]

Together, the Pewter Gallery and Conkey's Tavern contain fine pieces by almost all of the leading American makers. The Danforth-Boardman family is represented by an early 19th century communion set consisting of a pair of handsome spouted flagons with finials, twelve beakers, two basins and two 13-inch plates, together with their original compartimentalized pine storage box. The set is reported to have come from the First Congregational Church in Sturbridge, MA. In addition, the collection includes pewter by Nathaniel Austin, Frederick Bassett, Parks Boyd, Willam Calder, Roswell Gleason, Samuel Hamlin, Henry Hopper, Gershom Jones, Richard Lee, David Melville, Robert Palethorp, and others.

Of particular interest to me at the Roman Baths Museum was the Romans' use of pewter for cursing one's enemies. "Very often ... [the goddess Sulis Minerva] was called upon to bring retribution on an enemy. If your horse or your cloak had been stolen, for example, you would compose a message to the goddess with the help of the temple scribe. It would run something like this: "May he who stole my horse, whether he be man or woman, boy or girl, freedman or slave, become impotent and die. It may have been ..." and here would follow a list of suspects ...

The message, when ready, would be inscribed on a sheet of pewter and thrown into the spring. The curses found in the Sacred Spring reveal some of the petty irritations

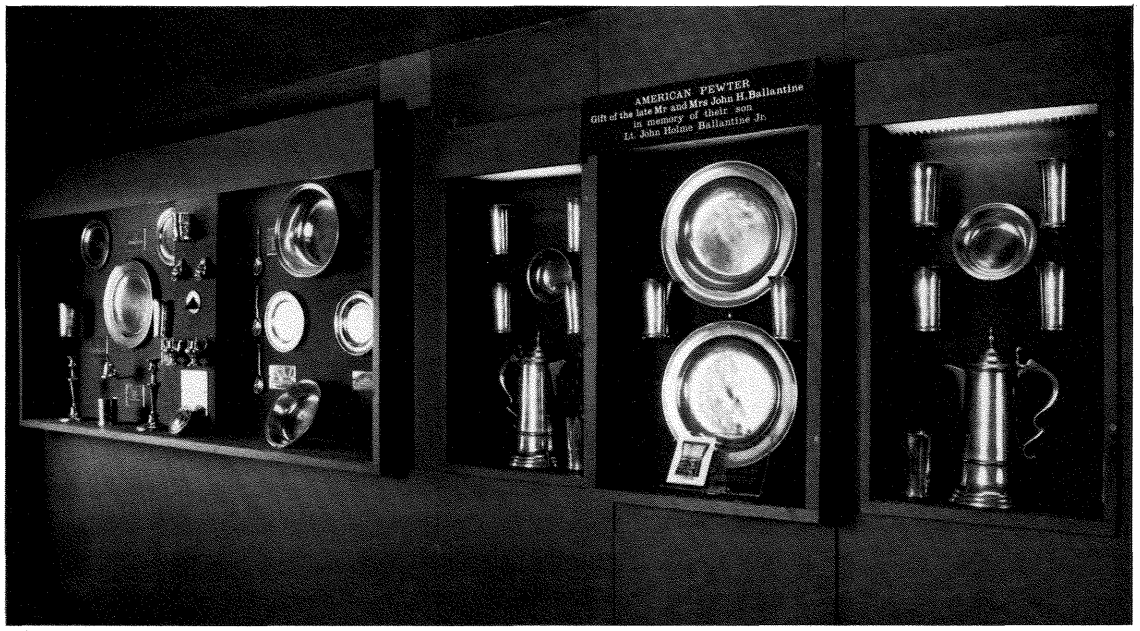

Fig. 1. Some of the American Pewter displayed at the American Museum in Bath, England.

Fig. 2. The Danforth-Boardman Communion Set at the American Museum in Bath, England.

of everyday Roman life and provide long lists of Roman Bath inhabitants and details of their familes and social status."[2]

REFERENCES

1. From Doreen M. Hockedy, "The Lion and the Eagle," in *America in Britain*, Volume VII, 1969, Number 1, p.18.

2. *City of Bath, The Roman City of Aquae Sulis*, Pitkin Pictorials, 1988, p.2.

Queen Anne Pewter Teapots of the Northeast

by Oliver W. Deming

In our early collecting days when I was advertising for pewter, I received a letter from a woman who offered an unmarked Queen Anne teapot which, as far as she could determine, was made by William Kirby. She had undoubtedly seen the one picured in Ledlie Laughlin's book.

After buying the teapot and when in New York, I compared it with the one shown in *Pewter in America* (Vol. I, Pl. 28, Fig. 188), that had since been acquired by the Metropolitan Museum. They had replaced the handle with a proper wood one. After a thorough examination, even using calipers to ascertain that it was identical, I was satisfied that we owned a Kirby teapot.

Shortly afterwards, I was able to compare it with an identical teapot having Thomas Danforth II touch marks.

I am sure that we will never know whether William Kirby or Thomas Danforth owned the molds for the teapot. One could have loaned the molds to the other, or sold the finished product to the other. As it is now, there is no way of telling which pewterer made an unmarked example.

It is interesting to know how rare New England and New York 18th century Queen Anne teapots are. In our long time experience in collecting, we know of only two made in New England. The one made by Thomas Danforth and I have heard of one made by Joseph Danforth.

In New York, there are William Kirby, Frederick Bassett, and Peter Young teapots. There seems to be some confusion as to the known Frederick Bassett teapots. We acquired ours not far from Hartford so it is very possible that Bassett made it in Hartford where he had moved to (1781-1786) when the British took over New York during the Revolution. Shortly afterward, I had occasion to inform Charles Montgomery that I had acquired a Bassett teapot and he said there were two other examples. The other known marked examples are owned by the New Haven Colony Historical Society and Bud Swain. Bud believes that his teapot is one of the two Montgomery knew about. There is also the unmarked one in the Wolf collection which was previously owned by Bud Swain before he acquired his marked example.

This adds up to three marked and one unmarked examples, a situation that has been true for some time.

Are there any others in these areas?

Let's Hear It For The Bellied Measure

by Bob Touzalin

At one time I owned quite a few pieces of American pewter. As my interest broadened, I acquired some good British dishes, tankards and flagons. Though I usually knew the names of the makers, I rarely knew anything about the history of those pieces and this, to me, was disappointing. Where had my pewter lived? Who had previously owned it? Who else had had contact with it?

Sometime in the process of widening the scope of my collection and reading books about the pewter, I woke up to the fact that the kind of background information I was seeking could more readily be obtained for pewter of that plebeian 19th century form, the bulbous, or bellied, measure. This evolving interest in bulbous measures has been gratifying.

The history of the bulbous measure has been touched on in several books and articles, but a short review is in order to set the stage for this discussion. Christopher Peal, in his book *British Pewter and Britannia Metal for Pleasure and Investment*, points out that the production of baluster measures, the standards of measure for centuries, ceased circa 1820. About this time or possibly earlier, the bulbous measure made its debut. Some few were produced to the Old English Wine Standard (O.E.W.S.), but principally the bulbous measure came into its own when Britain legalized the Imperial Standard in 1824, and made it mandatory in 1826.

At this time, the use of verification stamps on bulbous measures was initiated to confirm the fact that the capacity of the vessels met the new standard. The first stamps used were the so-called "portcullis" 1826 stamp and GIV

(George the Fourth) and WIV (William the Fourth) stamps. The "portcullis" stamp is in fact a City of Westminster stamp, which was first used in the 1750s and amended in 1826 by the addition of the date. The GIV and WIV stamps were used during the reigns of these monarchs. George IV ruled from 1821 to 1830, and William IV ruled from 1830 to 1837. Almost simultaneously, countries, boroughs and cities started to apply their individual verification stamps on most measures. The practice of using local area stamps continued for about 50 years, until government control and standardization of verification stamps was imposed in 1879. Chris Peal used the wording "more or less imposed", and it appears that this control was somewhat loose, as many unstamped measures have survived.

The verification stamp usually makes it possible to indentify the general locale of the pub or inn where a measure spent its useful life. In Peal's book mentioned earlier, on pages 70 through 75, he presents a tabulation of official numbered stamps and their points of issue. Sometime a multitude of stamps on a measure paints a picture of an active career. The city borough or county of use can be identified, and sometimes the engraving on the body names the tavern or the owner or both. A collector with a good imagination can transport himself to the appropriate 19th century pub, and may even measure out some brew to complete the nostalgic vision.

Several good articles on bulbous measures have been written through the years, and some collectors have made a much more complete study of these measures than I have, but there are two or three facts to which I would like to call atttention.

Fact No. 1

Although the conformation of handle terminals and location of body rings on measures have been recommended as the clues to dating bulbous measures, general rules cannot always be followed. Handle shapes may be years out of order. Peal's book presents. on pages 138 and 139, a guide to the dating of bulbous measures. William O. Blaney, in an article on pages 114 to 118 of *P.C.C.A. Bulletin,* No. 64, August, 1971, confirmed and elaborated on Peal's dating guide. These guides can usually be followed, but I have found that exceptions occur quite frequently. Not only did styles vary locally, but molds remained in use for long periods. Figure 1 shows six bulbous measures varying in capacity from 1/2 gallon to 1/2 gill. All of these measures have George IV stamps, and therefore were manufactured prior to 1831. Numbered from the left, Nos. 2, 4 and 6 have handle terminals identified as appropriate for 1824 to 1830 measures. No.1, the 1/2 gallon measure, has a handle terminal supposedly dated 1850 onwards. Nos. 3 and 5 have handles somewhat similar to the 1850 onwards handles, but the terminals are proportionally longer than any shown on the dating sketches. On the other

Fig. 1. Six Bellied Measures of the Georgian period.

hand, some makers used the 1824 to 1830 "standard" handle terminal after 1850. Measure No.2 above is interesting in that it started life prior to 1826 conforming to the O.E.W.S., and has been enlarged to Imperial Standard. The added lip has a GIV stamp with the date 1824, the year that the new Imperial Standard was legalized.

Fact No. 2

Early sets of measures generally included sizes from 1 quart to 1/4 gill. Measures of smaller capacitites, down to 1/32 pint or even smaller are now commonly found, but I believe that these are of late 19th century or 20th century manufacture. Many are still being made. Few of the smaller measures that I have seen have any verification stamps indicating that they were in use at an early date. Of course, they may have been used in private homes rather than in pubs or taverns and thus escaped verification. Nevertheless, I think virtually all of the very small bulbous measures are post 1875.

Fact No. 3

Not all verification stamps can be identified. As mentioned earlier, however, a large proportion of stamps define the areas in which the measures were used. Checking on the existence of homing information on the measures of 1/4 gill capacity and over, in my collection, I found that over 85% had verification stamps. Over 75% of these had numbers which could be identified as to location, or had identifiable county, borough or city stamps. However, a large group of unknown stamps remains to be identified. British collectors are working on the collection and identification of verification stamps, but to my knowledge this information is not yet available.

In summary, the bulbous measure has generally been held in little esteem by serious collectors. The factors mentioned above point out features that should increase the attractiveness of a basically graceful pewter form. Add to these features the fact that bulbous measures are still available at a reasonable price, and we have a good excuse for revising our opinion of this form.

A Samuel Danforth Chalice?

by Melvin D. Wolf, M.D.

I recently had the opportunity to examine the chalice photographed in Figure 1. The chalice stands 7 1/2" tall and has a typical Thomas Boardman shaft and base. When comparing the chalice with the typical 7" Boardman chalice, Figure 2, one can immediately see the similarity in the base and shaft. The significant difference is in the cup itself. The cup is somewhat wider and is approximately 1/2" taller than the Boardman chalice as well as being thistle shaped. Figure 3 illustrates all the known chalices to this date that have been attributed to the Boardmans excluding the largest chalice. The second chalice is 7", the third and fourth 5 1/4" and the fifth 4 3/4" tall. Comparing all 5 chalices there are certainly strong resemblances. The cups of the Boardman ones are obviously all the same as well as the bases of the shorter chalices.

Fig. 1. Samuel Danforth chalice ?, 7 1/2" H. (McConnell Collection).

Fig. 2. Samuel Danforth ? and Boardman chalice, 7 1/2", H 7".

The tall chalice has only been found occassionally. It has been suggested that it only appears accompanied by Samuel Danforth communion flagons. It is certainly likely that Samuel Danforth did produce chalices to go along with his flagons. It would be also in keeping with the fact that earlier chalices tended to be taller rather than shorter and that a chalice approaching 8" would be appropriate for a turn of the century flagon.

It is not unequivocal that this chalice is a Samuel Danforth chalice, but there is certainly suggestive evidence that it is a chalice that he might have made. The shaft and base may have eventually found their way to the Boardmans as did the flagon that he originally made. The baptismal bowls that were made by Samuel Danforth also found their way to Thomas Boardman. It would certainly seem, therefore, that there is reasonable possibility that this chalice was indeed made by Samuel Danforth and eventually the mold found its way to the Boardman's who modified the cup and kept the shaft intact.

I hope the membership finds this material of interest. Comments are always welcome.

Fig. 3. Samuel Danforth ? and Boardman chalices, 7 1/2", 7", 5 1/4", 5 1/4", 4 3/4".

Samuel Hamlin's Early Marks

by Richard L. Bowen, Jr.

Often in America after an apprentice reached his majority at age 21 and started making pewter on his own he used a set of marks which were derived from his master's. No better example can be found than Gershom Jones (b.1752) who was apprenticed to John Danforth (b.1741) of Norwich, Connecticut from 1768 to 1773.[1] Gershom Jones copied three of Danforth's marks, simply changing the name and initials (Fig. 1).[2] In fact, the marks are so similar to each other in style and execution that it may be supposed that Jones had the dies made by the same die sinker who made Danforth's.

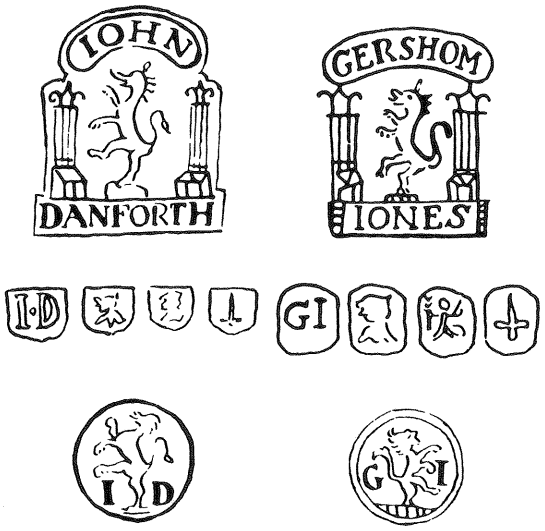

Fig. 1. Marks of John Danforth of Norwich, Connecticut and Gershom Jones of Providence, Rhode Island. Natural size. *(After Jacobs).*

Samuel Hamlin was born in Middletown, Connecticut, in 1746. While there is no proof, it must be supposed that he served his apprenticeship in Middletown under Thomas Danforth II (b.1731) or Jacob Whitmore (b.1736) or possibly both if they were in a partnership at that time. Hamlin would have finished his apprenticeship in 1767, six years before Gershom Jones. However, Hamlin's early marks bear no resemblance to those of Thomas Danforth II. It has been stated that Hamlin's early marks resemble those of Jacob Whitmore (Fig.2).[3] Actually there is a resemblance only in the circular rose with initials between the two, but the initials are located differently and the designs are different. Moreover, Whitmore had only two marks while Hamlin had five early marks.

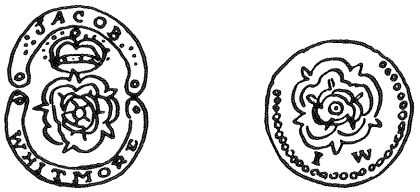

Fig. 2. Marks of Jacob Whitmore of Middletown, Connecticut. Natural size. *(After Jacobs).*

On the other hand, one cannot help but note the remarkable general similarity between the marks of Hamlin and Samuel Ellis (Fig.3)[4] Ellis had five marks, all of which are represented by Hamlin marks, although the function of Hamlin's marks was changed. Ellis had a main oval touch mark with Samuel Ellis around the outside and a hanging lamb (golden fleece) as the central design (he also had a similar cirular one). Hamlin copied this as a quality mark with HARD METTAL instead of a name. Hamlin's main touch was a label with SAMUEL HAMLIN over a scroll. This was similar to Ellis' name/town lable mark, but was probably based on Thomas Danforth's MIDDLETOWN cartouche. Ellis had a rose and crown quality mark with LONDON at the top. Hamlin also had a rose and crown mark in a waisted oval, although this would appear to have been copied after the no-name rose and crown marks used by a number of Bristol makers from 1740-1795.[5] Samuel Ellis had a seated Britannia as the first hallmark after the SE mark (going from right to left), then a lion's head with the hanging lamb as the last mark. Hamlin also had a seated Britannia as the second mark and a hanging lamb as the last mark. However, Ellis' lion's head was replaced with a sword by Hamlin. The sword is an indication that Hamlin undoubtedly trained under Thomas Danforth II, as almost all of the Danforths had a sword as their last hallmark (Fig.1). This was Hamlin's recognition of his master.

One might wonder why Samuel Hamlin would generally copy the marks used by Samuel Ellis. Actually, a very logical explanation can be offered. Samuel Ellis had been in business for a long time; he was granted freedom or

yoemanry in the London Company in 1721. A letter written by London pewterers Robert and Thomas Porteus in 1765 to some Boston merchants stated that "Mr. Ellis the Pewterer has left off Business, and is going to retire in ye Country, he has been famous for many years in the Article of Pewter, and I dont doubt you have heard of him."[6] Indeed a survey of English pewter imported into America indicated that the pewter of Samuel Ellis was among the commonest.[7] The retirement is confirmed by the London pewterers' records where Thomas Swanson was given the right to strike Mr. Samuel Ellis' touch in 1765.[8]

Fig. 3. Marks of Samuel Ellis of London. *(Modified from Cotterell.)* Right: Early marks of Samuel Hamlin of Hartford and Providence. *(Modified from Jacobs.)* All natural size. The METAL in Hamlin's quality mark should read METTAL.

Samuel Hamlin had completed his apprenticeship in 1767. Samuel Ellis had retired a few years earlier, and the news was apparently well known in the trade in America shortly afterwards, possibly because his pewter stopped being imported. Samuel Hamlin took as his marks ones generally similar to Ellis', possibly in hopes that buyers would think his pewter was English. However, when these marks had been struck any specific similarity to Ellis stopped. This is due mainly to the dissimilarity of their main touch marks. The usual English manner for Ellis would have been to strike his hanging lamb mark at the top left, the rose and crown quality mark at the top right, the name/town cartouche in the middle, with the hallmarks below and upside down. There is one Hamlin plate (8 1/8") in the collection of Webster Goodwin with a somewhat similar orientation: the SAMUEL HAMLIN cartouche is at the top right, the rose and crown at the top left with the hallmarks below.[9] Another plate of the same size formerly in the collection of Dr. Madelain Brown and now in the Rhode Island Historical Society has two of Hamlin's no-name rose and crown marks at the top with his hallmarks below.[10] This is exactly the way many of the Bristol pewterers struck their no-name rose and crown marks with either a London label or hallmarks below.[11] These two plates are the only flatware known with Hamlin's rose and crown mark and are presumably pre-Revolutionary. In most of the surviving Hamlin flatware the Hamlin name cartouche is struck singly over the hallmarks. Occasionally wares are found with the HARD METTAL mark struck between the two, as on 9 1/4" smooth brim plates and 13 1/2" dishes. I have seen a Samuel Ellis 9 1/2" smooth brim plate with the hanging lamb touch at the top, the name/town cartouche in the middle and the upside down hallmarks below. The marks on Hamlin's 9 1/4" smooth brim HARD METTAL plate give the same general impression as Ellis' 9 1/2" smooth brim plate.

Hamlin's general form of marks was obviously influenced by Ellis'. Specifically, the hanging lamb in the HARD METTAL mark and the hallmarks derived from Ellis. Samuel Ellis was the first pewterer in Britian to use the hanging lamb in his touchmark, which he had leave to strike in 1721. Three pewterers from York in northern England apparently copied Ellis' hanging lamb touch mark about 1730 (C987, C4402, and C4179) and one copied the hanging lamb in both his touch mark and hallmarks about 1770 (C5988).[12] The only London hallmarks with a hanging lamb are those of Samuel Ellis and his successors Thomas Swanson (C4593) and Fasson and Sons (C1640), both of whom used Ellis' hallmarks. Two pewterers in Cork, Ireland (C3748 and C4197) and one in York (C5988) had a hanging lamb in their hallmarks. On the other hand, Hamlin's circular rose mark was probably in-

fluenced by Whitmore's, while his name touch was undoubtedly based on Thomas Danforth's MIDDLETOWN cartouche. His no-name rose and crown mark was derived from similar marks used by Bristol pewterers.

The early marks of Samuel Hamlin and Gershom Jones give an indication of the innovation and creative imagination of these two men at age 21 when they had to choose designs for their pewter marks. Hamlin chose a series of marks which were not identical to anyone else's, but have elements borrowed from Middletown, London and Bristol pewterers. Jones, on the other hand, was completely tradition-directed, showing absolutely no imagination: he simply copied his master's three main marks exactly.

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More Meriden Britannia Candlesticks

by Richard L. Bowen, Jr.

In a recent article in the *Bulletin* on some new designs of britannia gadrooned candlesticks I included some general comparative background material on the Meriden Britannia Company.[1] I suggested that prior to the 1852 formation of Meriden Britannia the gadrooned candlesticks shown in the Meriden Britannia Company catalogs were probably manufactured by Isaac C. Lewis. Before the article was published Bernice D. Roberts wrote to say that she had a Meriden Britannia candlestick which had an extra knop in the lower spool not evident in previous known examples.

Her candlestick is a No. 5, but is 11 3/16" tall in contrast to the 10 1/2" height of the average No. 5 (Fig.1). As shown by the center candlestick there is indeed a pronounced ringed element or knop added to the center of the lower spool which is 5/8" longer than the lower spool on the left candlestick. The bobeche socket at the top of the Roberts' candlestick is also 1/16" longer than the one at the left making the Roberts' candlestick theoretically 11/16" taller (the base of the candlestick at the left has been compressed 1/8", it was orignially 10 1/2").

The Meriden Britannia Company was organized in December 1852 by seven partners, all of whom were britannia manufacturers.[2] In January 1853 it published its first price list (unillustrated). It issued illustrated catalogs in 1855, 1861, 1867, and 1872, all containing sections on britannia ware; no britannia ware was cataloged after 1872. The heights of some of the candlesticks varied over the years enabling one to date them roughly. This is shown in the following table, and examples of Style Nos. 2 to 5 are shown in Fig. 2.

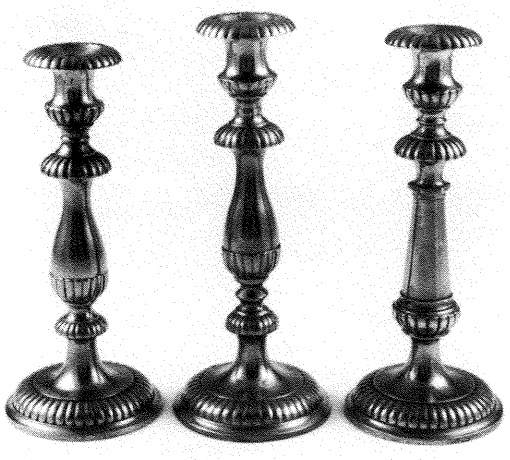

Fig. 1. Brittania gadrooned candlesticks listed in the Meriden Britannia catalogs. At the left is a 10 3/8" tall (originally 10 1/2") No. 5 which was listed in 1853. In the center is an 11 3/16" tall No. 5 which is presumably the 11" model from 1855 to 1872. At the right is a 10 7/8" No.6 which was only listed in 1853 and never illustrated. *(The center and the right candlesticks are in the collection of Bernice D. Roberts.*

STYLE NUMBER	CATALOG YEAR 1853	1855, 1861, 1867	1872
No. 6	11"	deleted	11"
No. 5	10 1/2"	11"	11"
No. 4	10 1/4"	10"	10"
No. 3	9 1/2"	9 1/2"	9 1/2"
No. 2	9 1/2"	9 1/4"	9 1/2"

It may be assumed that the 11 3/16" high No.5 candlestick is the 11" one shown in the catalogs. Actually, the 11" design was made 1/8" too long since the lower spool should only have been made 1/2" longer (rather than 5/8") to convert a 10 1/2" model to an 11" one. The illustration of the 11" No. 5 in 1855 does not show the ringed knop added to the lower spool, so the drawing was made from an older 10 1/2" example. Indeed, this is indicated by the proportions of the drawings where Nos. 4 and 5 are much closer to the 1853 sizes than the 1855 sizes.[3]

In the case at hand we have a number of 10 1/2" No. 5s and a single 11" (11 3/16") example. Since the majority of the No. 5s found are 10 1/2" high, they were made prior to 1855. Inasmuch as this would allow only two years for manufacture under Meriden Britannia, the bulk of these must have been made prior to the

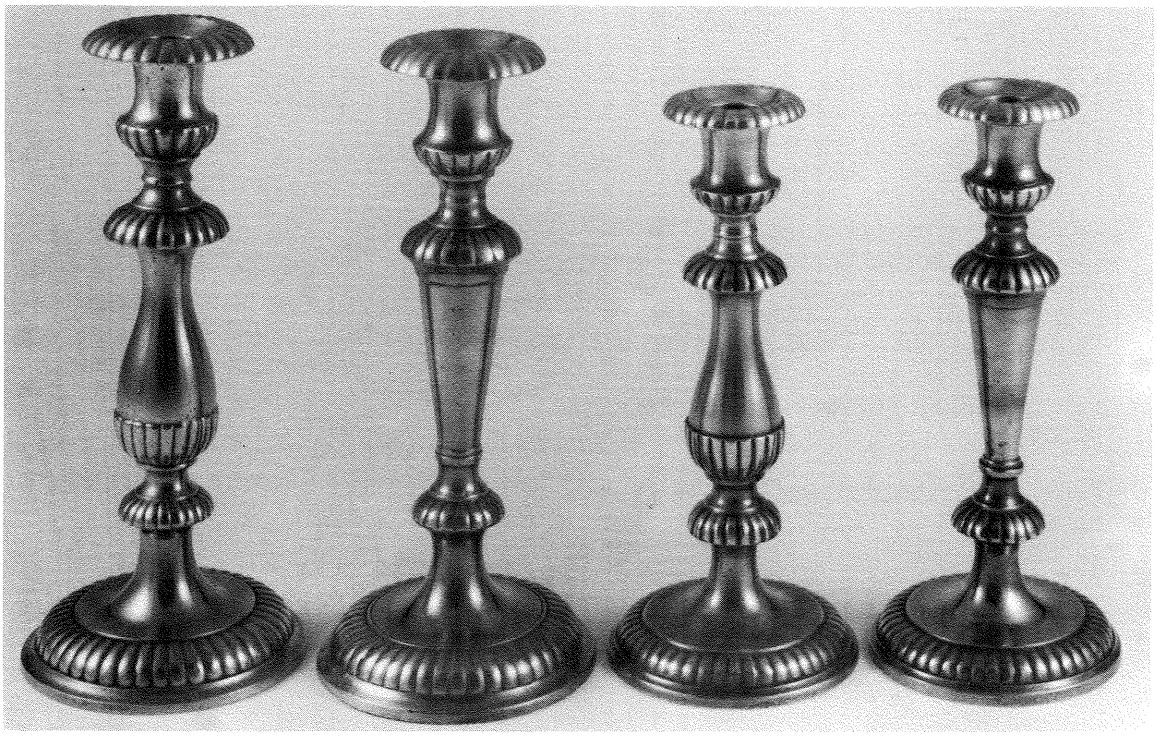

Fig. 2. Gadrooned candlesticks illustrated in the 1855-1872 Meriden Britannia catalogs, but with the heights listed only in 1853. From left to right are No. 5 (10 3/8", but originally 10 1/2"), No. 4 (10 1/4"), No. 3 (9 1/2") and No. 2 (9 1/2").

formation of Meriden Britannia, probably by Isaac C. Lewis, who was predominantly a britannia lamp and candlestick maker. Conversely, the one 11″ No. 5 existing shows that very few examples by Meriden Britannia survive from the period from 1855 to 1872.

The same situation exists with the vase-shaped No. 4. I have a pair which are 10 1/4″ high, the height indicated in the above table for 1853. Other surviving examples are also about 10 1/4″ high. Since the height from 1855 to 1872 was 10″ many of the surviving examples must have been made before the founding of Meriden Britannia, probably by I.C. Lewis. The same conclusion probably applies to examples of No. 3 which were all 9 1/2″ from 1853 to 1872. In a case where all of the candlesticks were the same height throughout the whole 20 years one would have felt safe statistically in assigning the majority of the candlesticks to the 1855 to 1872 period. However, the differences in heights of Nos. 4 and 5 show the fallacy of statistics in this particular case.

There was an 11″ No. 6 candlestick listed in the unillustrated 1853 catalog and discontinued before the 1855 illustrated catalog was published. Examples of this are probably seen in some 10 7/8″ candlesticks with a tapered stem which apparently was not popular (Fig. 1). The base, top spool, bobeche socket and bobeche of this candlestick are all identical to those of the other candlesticks shown in Fig. 1. Again, since it is doubtful that the surviving examples were all made between 1853 and 1854, many of these were probably made by I.C. Lewis.

The discovery of the single 11 3/16″ No. 5 has made attribution of these gadrooned candlesticks more difficult. No longer can they all be attributed to Meriden Britannia. It was only through the Meriden Britannia catalogs that this group of gadrooned candlesticks was positively identified, and taken away from Cincinnati, Ohio. However, it now appears that the majority of the surviving examples are found in sizes which could have been made by Meriden Britannia only in 1853 and 1854. Therefore, the bulk of these must have been made by the organizer who introduced the line to Meriden Britannia-in all probability Isaac C. Lewis & Company operating from 1839 to 1852.

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William Pelton, Britannia Candlestick Maker

by Richard L. Bowen, Jr.

In an article on some new britannia gadrooned candlesticks in a recent *Bulletin*, I reasoned that the candlesticks were made by a small Connecticut maker working for a few years in the 1850s (Fig.1).[1] The *Bulletin* had been set in galleys and returned to the printer when I discovered the possible maker of the candlesticks while looking for something else in Laughlin's Volume 3. It is very possibly William Pelton of Portland, Connecticut (less than a mile east of Middletown).[2] In 1850, Pelton's sole annual production was estimated at 1,200 dozen candlesticks valued at $3,000 ($2.50 per dozen).[3] He used 7,000 lbs. of tin and employed three men in a shop run by horse power to accomplish this. In 1850, Isaac C. Lewis manufactured 3,400 dozen candlesticks valued at $8,500 ($2.50 per dozen), which only represented 17% of Lewis' sales. I suggested that the Lewis candlesticks included the gadrooned candlesticks later manufactured by Meriden Britannia Company. Pelton's production was only 35% of Lewis' candlestick production, and it must be supposed that Pelton made specialty candlesticks of some sort. It would seem that the new gadrooned candlesticks may reasonably be attribued to Pelton.

William Clark Pelton was born in Portland Connecticut, in 1817, making him five years younger than I.C. Lewis. He could have worked for Lewis prior to starting on his own. Certainly the mastery of a few candlestick moulds would not require much effort. In 1843, he married Hannah E. Hopkins and moved to Middletown about 1852. He later moved to Wallingford and remained there until 1870 when he eventually moved to Iowa.[4]

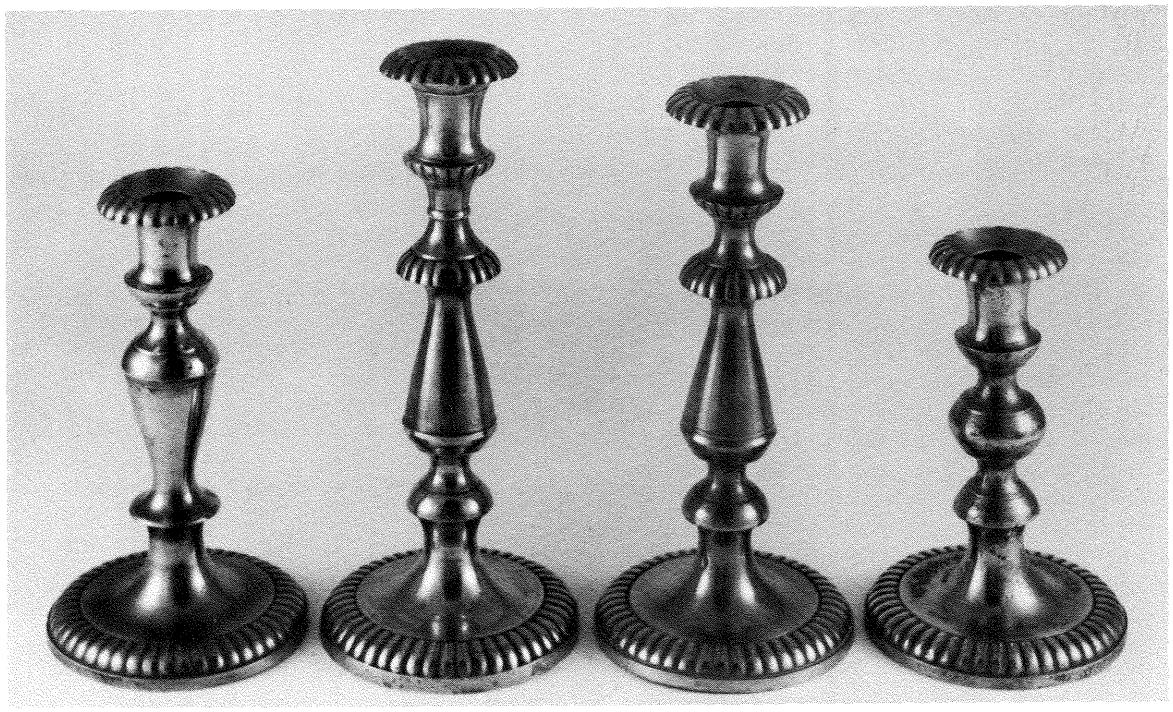

Fig. 1. Series of Brittania gadrooned candlesticks by the same maker, possibly William Pelton. These differ from the candlesticks by Meriden Brittania Company and Flagg and Homan in having a plain spool without gadrooning in each size. The heights from left to right are 8″, 10 1/4″, 9 3/4″, and 7″.

In my article I pointed out that there were a number of other possible combinations of the stem and three spools of the new candlesticks. Indeed, before the article was published, I located a fifth combination of the basic parts (Fig. 2). It has the same parts as the tallest one (10 1/4″) made from the same parts with the stem turned upside down so that it is a vase rather than a baluster. There are still other combinations possible which may well turn up.

There was also a partnership in Middletown of F.W. and O.Z. Pelton, who in 1860 made $15,000 worth of britannia ware (tea sets, pitchers, castors and lamps) and $2,500 worth of silver-plated wares.[5] This concern was made up of Frederic Wetmore Pelton (b. 1822) and Oliver Zebulon Pelton (b. 1829), sons of William Pelton's older brother Ebenezer Brown Pelton (b.1802).[6] Both were born in Portland and possibly worked for their uncle William, who was only a little older than they. The Pelton genealogy indicates that both were in St. Louis, Missouri from 1880 to 1888 where they were listed as manufacturers of silver-plated wares. This is another example of Connecticut britannia makers spreading into the West.

Fig. 2. Two candlesticks of the same height (10 1/4″) previously illustrated (Fig.1), with the central section in one turned upside down, so that one has a baluster column while the other is a vase-shaped column.

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Some Memorable Candlesticks

by Alex Neish

Amongst the glories of English pewter, candlesticks stand proud. But being essentially utilitarian objects, their ranks have been thinned by neglect and indifference. After three hundred years or more, few remain. Some of those that do are shown in Figure 1 to emphasise the rich variety that has been lost.

First from the left is an extremely rare Stuart candlestick with a knopped stem rising from the octagonal gadrooned base. In height it is 5 3/4 inches and carries in the base the touchmark of Hugh Quick who was given leave to strike it in 1674.

From the same period also come the 7 inches high pair of candlesticks, one of which is next in line. From the octagonal base there rise cylindrical columns whose narrow ribbed bandings are entwined above the octagonal drip tray. On the underside of one brim, there is an indistinct touch of what appears to be an "I" in a diamond.

When originally bought this pair was missing the octagonal foot rim. At some point rarity had come second to the convenience of leaving the candlesticks on a hot plate with disastrous results that have now been corrected by an outstanding piece of restoration.

Third from the left is a William and Mary candlestick of around 1690. Formerly in the Peal Collection, it has a cylindrical stem towards the top of which there is a narrow fillet. Towards the base there is a ball knop with diagonally gadrooned moulding, all rising from a circular foot sink to receive the grease that might escape. This in turn has a border of vertical gadrooning.

Fine and rare though it is, this piece is dwarfed by the neighbouring bell bottomed candlestick which survives to pay a silent tribute to the craftsmen of around 1550-1600. Its height of 9 inches rises over the circular drip tray in a baluster shaped knopped stem. Formerly in the Mundey Collection, it will never tell us the secrets of its 400 years of life which saw pewter rise to all time heights before virtually disappearing. Tantalisingly it offers the initials S.I. as a link with its first owner. In

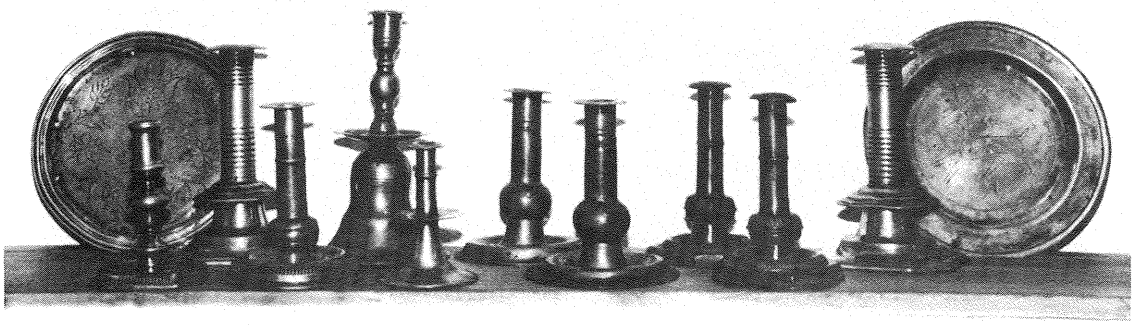

Fig. 1. 17th Century English candlesticks. Neish Collection. *Photograph by Sean Neish.*

the base there is a touchmark of a harp flanked by the initials H.N. When one holds it, an understanding comes of a collector who once wrote me that he was weeding out his collection. "It can now fit in a carrier bag. It is enough." In other words, the solitary masterpiece can replace a museum.

The bell bottomed candlestick also dwarfs a trumpet base one which is only 4 3/4 inches high and dates from around 1690. It is extremely rare and bears no touch. At some point it has been over-agressively cleaned.

This leaves on the right of the photograph two really outstanding pairs of candlesticks which could perhaps complete satisfactorily the contents of the carrier bag.

First come a pair of Charles 1st candlesticks from around 1640. Standing 6 1/8 inches high, they have column stems with a band of moulding beneath the top. The stems fall to bulbous ball knops before sinking to rest in round indented feet with a 5 inch diameter. On the top of one sconce there is an unidentified touch. The type is extremely rare. There have been articles written suggesting that these are the earliest-known ball-knopped pewter candlesticks.

Even so, the last pair on the right is not to be outdone. Dating from the reign of William III around 1695, their height is 6 1/4 inches over a base with a diameter of 4 1/8 inches. Once again there is no touch mark and these candlesticks have only recently surfaced to remind us that what the Scottish hammermen called "the mystery of pewter" has still not ended.

The column stems, each with a circling fillet, rest on balls that have been divided into two halves by a narrow groove, both of the halves being gadrooned. The bases are octagonal and the sunken centre is surrounded by a circle of gadrooning. Unusually the gadrooning is repeated right at the top of the stem under the sconce.

In summary, a collection of candlesticks that forces us to admire the craftsmanship of their makers. The flame many have guttered and their makers' identities lost, but what has survived these centuries cannot easily be destroyed.

A Possible Boston Plate, C. 1735

by Ian D. Robinson

It is always worthwhile to examine any pewter flatware with "hallmarks" on the front of the rim. For British pewter, as far as I know, all such dishes date earlier than about 1735 when the hallmarks went to the back of the piece.

Recently, I purchased in Essex, Massachusetts, an 8 3/4" single reeded plate with hallmarks on the front. They were not familiar and the touchmark on the back of the plate is no longer visible. After careful checking, including unpublished English marks I have photographed in New England over the years, I found that these hallmarks, (Fig.1) are not recorded. The hallmark devices appear to be: (1) a five petalled flower (a rose?), (2) two swords?, (3) animal head facing left, (4) the letter "S". There appears to be something struck between (2) and (3). The booge appears to be unhammered.

Fig. 1. Hallmarks struck on 8 3/4" plate.

The plate belongs to one of the three following groups:

(1) London, c. 1705-1735 (the single reed began about 1705).

(2) English, country maker, c. 1705-1735.

(3) A Colonial piece.

(It is probably not continental European based on its form, weight and style of marks).

I believe the piece is not from the first group because virtually all of the marks of London makers of this period are known. There are, of course, a few exceptions (chiefly a few export marks). However, the hallmarks are irregularly struck and are right on the edge of the booge. Certainly the London Company of Pewterers would not have tolerated such poor workmanship.

I also believe, with a little less certainty, that the plate is not an English country (i.e., non-London) piece. This is not only because of the poor workmanship cited above, but also because device number three is not recorded on an English piece. While the hallmark is worn and, therefore, I could be wrong, it appears to be a (capped?) animal facing left.

I am therefore left with the likelihood that this piece is a pre-revolutionary piece, made on this side of the Atlantic. Furthermore, the booge is very shallow and the rim only one inch wide. This is very typical of Boston plates. I have an 8 11/16" single reeded plate by Nathaniel Austin of Charlestown. The two plates nest perfectly with each other. 8 3/4" single reeded plates were made on both sides of the Atlantic but English plates usually do not have the shallow Boston booge with a narrow rim.

It is, therefore, reasonable to suggest that the plate is a Boston piece, c. 1735, by a pewterer whose surname begins with the letter S. However, it is possible that the letter S does not represent the pewterer's surname. This is because, in most English hallmarks, when initials of the pewterer are present, both are there. The letter S might represent a place, such as the town of Salem, Massachusetts.

Thomas Simpkins of Boston for whom we have several surviving plates (unhammered) with touches only recorded in Laughlin, will do. He worked 1727 to 1766. Thomas Smith, Boston c. 1700 to 1740 would also fit. While this is highly speculative, an early Boston mark is also an important find. I think the line of reasoning (above) is instructive for beginning collectors. I would like to know if anyone else can shed further light.

Unusual Acquisitions

by H.H. Sandidge, Jr.

Pewter collectors today often find it difficult, if not impossible, to acquire such items as a William Will tankard, an Israel Trask teapot, or a Samuel Hamlin porringer, but there are many things of delightful form, design, and/or embellishment, which are available at reasonable cost. Among these are the teapots, lamps, candlesticks, and caster stand pictured here. The smaller pot (Fig. 1) is unmarked; the larger has the tiny incised mark of "HOMAN & CO., CINCINNATI" and the Roman numerals "IX"; the smaller pot is 6" tall and has a base diameter of 3"; the larger, 9" with a base of 4". There are many similarities of structure and design in both i.e., the raised welt around the body, the hinge construction, the fluted spouts with scrolls at the upper tips, and the lid finials, the details of which are identical, except in size. The decoration on the larger pot equals that on marriage plates, tankards and other items executed centuries earlier, and the skill of the unknown artisan is apparent.

Fig. 1. Two American teapots, one marked Homan.

The candlesticks, (Fig. 2) 6 1/4" tall, bear the incised mark of T.B.M. Co. (Taunton Britannia Manufacturing Co.) and are particularly noteworthy because they are cast, not spun as were most articles of their period (1830-35).

The whale-oil lamps (5 1/2" tall) are unmarked (ca. 1830-40). Similar lamps shown in Hayward's *"Colonial Lighting"* are in the Worcester (MA) Historical Society.

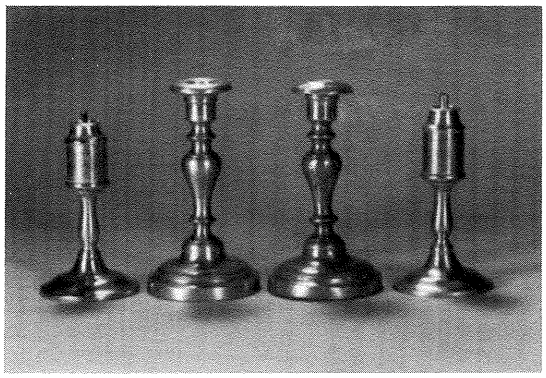

Fig. 2. American candlesticks and lamps.

The caster stand (Fig. 3) bears the tiny incised mark in cartouche of Israel Trask (1807-56). The Gothic pattern pressed glass bottles are of the period, and were selected with care to compliment it.

Fig. 3. Israel Trask caster set.

Now to the stories of their acquisition--the marked Homan pot was found in a used furniture store, very dirty and covered with dust; the smaller was found in a flea market--each was purchased for a nominal sum. The candlesticks were found, separately--one at a summer "antique" shop, where it was the only piece of pewter among indifferent furniture, glass and china, and the other in the home of a neighbor who gave it to me, after I appraised a small group of pewter things for her so that she might divide them equally among her children. The caster stand was seen in the dirty front window of a defunct schoolhouse, beside a country road, surrounded by chipped dishes and glass. It became ours after the thirty minutes it took to determine that there was nothing else of interest on the premises, and the ten year old attendant told us, after pocketing a five dollar bill, that he had found it on the town dump.

So, knowledge and dedication continue to reward collectors, whatever be the state of their budgets.

Good Hunting!