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A Broadhead, Gurney, Sporle & Company Britannia Teapot in the Collection of Charles V. Swain.

See the Article by Donald L. Fennimore on B. G. S. & Co. Britannia Metal Goods Beginning on Page 202.

VOLUME 11 NUMBER 7



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President's Letter

Again, the PCCA gavel has been passed on, and with it the responsibility of the office it symbolizes. I shall endeavor to continue to lead our group in as capable a manner as my predecessors. Assisting me as First Vice-President, Bill Paddock has already begun planning our next Spring meeting in Albany, New York on the weekend of May 15-17, 1998. Please make a note of these dates. While we are on the subject of meetings: the Fall 1997 meeting will be in Flint, Michigan, focussing on the collection of Mel and Bette Wolf. The dates are September 26-28. Don't miss this one! Assisting Bill is Sherwin Herzog, our new Second Vice-President. Sherwin has relinquished the financial responsibilities to our new Treasurer, Terry Ashley. Thank you, Sherwin, for a job well done. Bob Horan continues as our most capable Secretary, the position in which he has served for the past sixteen years. As reported in the last Bulletin, Ellen and Tom O'Flaherty, Editor and Publisher respectively of the Bulletin, will be moving to France early next year. Therefore, this is their last Bulletin issue. Thank you, Ellen and Tom, for an outstanding publication. Garland Pass is our new Bulletin Editor and Publisher. Please send him that article you have been meaning to write. We will miss the wit and creativity of David Kilroy as Editor of our Newsletter. Thank you, David. I am pleased to announce that Bob Cassens has agreed to be our new Newsletter Editor. Please send Bob any and all newsworthy items from your area.

The Spring meeting of the PCCA was held in Washington, DC. Our own Don Fennimore, Curator of Metals at Winterthur, created a special slide presentation and talk on the Henry Will Account Book for our Friday night session. Don pointed out

various notations in the Account Book of pewter forms, made by Will, that have yet to be found. Following Don was a presentation by Barbara Jean and Bob Horan on fake measures. They brought many examples of right measures from their own collection to compare with those measures from the PCCA "study" collection of fakes and forgeries.

On Saturday, we were bussed to the Smithsonian National Museum of American History, where Ms. Rodris Roth, Curator, Domestic Life Collections, brought out the entire Smithsonian Wylie collection of measures and the Kler collection of American pewter. These pieces are not on current display. She provided us with a private room to view and handle what must have been over 400 pieces of pewter. Garland Pass discussed the origins, uses, and methods of capacity standardization of measures represented in the collection.

The evening session began with the Annual Business Meeting. The first order of business was to announce the unanimous decision of the Board of Governors to bestow Honorary Membership upon Dr. Donald Herr in recognition of his many contributions to the PCCA over the years. Congratulations, Don. A second important announcement was that at the recommendation of the Grants-in-Aid Committee, chaired by Jack Schneider, two new research grants have been awarded by the Board of Governors. One is to David Goss, Director of the Beverly Historical Society and Museum, to research the growth and evolution of the pewter-making industry in Beverly, Massachusetts. This work will lead to the creation of a permanent exhibition at the Museum and a catalog for the exhibit. The other grant goes to Patricia M.

Grove, also of Beverly, Massachusetts, to research pewter makers in China producing objects specifically for the export market.

Following the election of officers, the Horans continued their presentation of fakes from Friday's session. This time the focus was on fake porringers and beakers. Note: It is my intention to include a session on fakes at each national meeting. I am not alone in the feeling that it is important for all of us to be able to recognize a fake and, if possible, to remove it from circulation. Contributions of these items to the PCCA "study" collection are requested (and tax deductible). David Kilroy concluded the evening by leading us through the popular "Show and Tell" part of the program. On Sunday morning, Bob and Marilee Asher hosted us at their beautiful home in Washington. Not only was there more



Figure 1. Dr. Donald M. Herr is awarded Honorary Membership in the PCCA by President Barbara Jean Horan at the Spring, 1997 meeting in Washington, DC.

Photographs by Robert G. Cassens.

fine pewter to examine, but also wonderful audible sculpture created by Marilee. Thank you for this great conclusion to a busy, productive and entertaining weekend. And, thank you to all presenters, contributors and participants.

Finally, it is with sadness that we note the passing of two long-time members. Eric de Jonge became an Honorary Member just last October. I last saw Eric at the Mid-Atlantic meeting in November. He told us all how much it meant to him to be an Honorary Member. Vince Davies, creator of the Pewtering Workshops sponsored by the PCCA, was last able to attend a national meeting in the Spring of 1996 at Tarrytown, NY.

Thomas A. Madsen

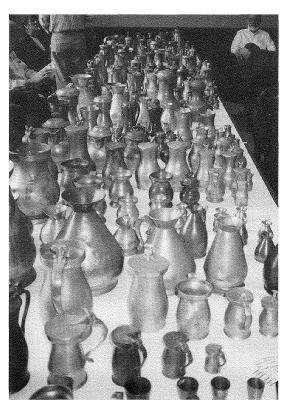


Figure 2. The Wylie and Kler collections of pewter at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History.

Comment on "Three Tankards . . . One Set of Molds"

by John F. Richardson

I refer to the article in PCCA Bulletin Vol.11, No.6, by Wayne Hilt, about three tankards from one set of molds. A known link exists between two of the three pewterers involved.

In the London trade directories^{1,2} from 1738 until 1760, Richard King is listed as being 'in Gracechurch Street, near the church.' His trade cards, illustrated in Cotterell,³ confirm the address as Gracechurch Street. From 1761 onwards, the directories include George Grenfell as being 'in Gracechurch Street, near the church.' From the dates and the same address, it may be assumed with reasonable assurance that Grenfell took over King's premises, possibly with his stock and molds. It provides reasonable grounds for the existence of tankards numbers two and three.

The label sometimes seen with King's touchmark, giving the address as Gracious Street rather than Gracechurch Street, is probably the result of the local dialect; no

Gracious Street can be found on maps of the time.

No link between Charlesley and the other two has yet been found. The Worshipful Company's records for the mideighteenth century, which would have provided addresses, are missing and presumed lost. Charlesley was apprenticed to William Eddon on 14th April, 1722, becoming free in 1729. He was Master of the Company in 1764 and died in 1770.

References

- 1. *The Complete Guide to London*, issued each year.
- 2. *Kent's London Directory*, issued each year.
- 3. H. H. Cotterell, *Pewter: Its Makers & Its Marks*, Batsford, 1929.

A Change in the Editorship of the Bulletin

This edition of the *Bulletin* is the last issue we will edit and publish. Henceforth, the responsibility for editing the *Bulletin* is that of the new editor, J. Garland Pass, Jr.

The first issue of the *Bulletin* for which we were responsible was Volume 10, Number 7, Spring 1993. Since that time, there have been eight additional issues of the *Bulletin*.

The editor of the *Bulletin* is dependent upon the members of the PCCA for nearly all of the material which is published. We are extremely grateful to all of you who submitted articles, letters and comments to us during our tenure as editor and publisher of the *Bulletin*. We hope that you will continue to support the *Bulletin* by supplying Garland with similar material.

Ellen and Tom O'Flaherty

Broadhead, Gurney, Sporle & Company Britannia Manufacturers

by Donald L. Fennimore

Among the extensive holdings of the Peabody-Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts, are over one hundred English and American metal manufacturers' trade catalogues that date from the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century. The Peabody-Essex Museum was formed in 1992 when the Essex Institute and the Peabody Museum consolidated. The Essex Institute, which had previously owned the trade catalogues, was formed in 1848, but had been collecting local material since 1821. The trade catalogues in question are believed to have entered the Essex Institute's collection before 1900.

That such a large collection of trade catalogues should have come into the possession of the Peabody-Essex Museum is not surprising, given the extensive maritime and mercantile history of Salem. Throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, Salem was one of this country's most active Atlantic seaports, with numerous merchant-adventurers plying the sea to Europe, the West Indies, and the Orient. Among the better known of them were generations of the Crowninshield, Derby, Pickman, Cabot, and Gardner families. Trade catalogues were a basic tool of these merchant-entrepreneurs, through which they transferred goods from manufacturers to consumers. In fact, a few of the catalogues in this collection have pen and ink inscriptions inside their covers, placed there by their original owners, Samuel Curwen and Robert Peele, Salem hardware merchants, during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The trade catalogues in the Peabody-Essex Museum depict a broad range of utensils, from brass stop-cocks, pump valves and house bells to iron anchors, ploughs, and chisels. Also included are myriad artifacts, from silver plated snuff boxes, candlesticks, and cruet frames to brass clock ornaments, picture frames, and chandeliers.

Of particular interest to pewter enthusiasts are three catalogues in this collection that depict britannia metal goods. Interestingly, although the vast majority of metal trade catalogues are anonymous, these three identify the firm that issued them. It was Broadhead, Gurney, Sporle and Company, which was active in Sheffield, England, from 1792 to 1800. Its identifying mark, "B. G. S. & Co.," appears in script letters on a number of pages in each catalogue.¹

As outlined by Stevie Young on pages 93 through 95 in the March 1981 issue of the PCCA *Bulletin*, a number of examples of this firm's work have survived in several American collections. Her article was supplemented by Robert Dalluge on page 176 of the March 1982 PCCA *Bulletin*. Between these two articles, it is abundantly apparent that the quality of the firm's work was of the highest order in design, construction and execution.

Broadhead, Gurney, Sporle and Company, as well as many of their competitors, sought as wide a market for their wares as possible. Consequently, they, like the merchant-entrepreneurs with whom they col-

laborated, realized the utility of trade catalogues in allowing them to let as many potential customers as possible know about their products.

Consumers in America were recognized as an important market by English metal manufacturers at an early date. This is well stated by one of the most preeminent of their number, Matthew Boulton, who wrote to a friend in 1772 that, "it is not necessary to attend to elegance in such articles of my manufacture as are destined for Siberia or America." But he quickly qualified his disparaging opinion, by acknowledging that it was "of far more consequence to supply the people [of America and elsewhere] than the nobility only; and though [we] speak contemptuously of [them] we must own that we think they will do more toward supporting [my] great manufactory than all the Lords in the Nation."2 He astutely realized that many customers with modest means had greater and more reliable purchasing power than a few with great means, and trade catalogues were an excellent way to solicit their business.

Another historically important metal-worker on this side of the Atlantic concurred. It was none other than Paul Revere, who, upon receiving an English trade catalogue in 1784, wrote to his contact in England that he had received the "book with drawings which is a very good direction for one to write by. I should be very glad if you would send me eight pair of plated branches, four of No. 103 and four of No. 178 as marked in said book. If they have drawings different from the book I received [I] should be glad if they would send me one more book."³

The B. G. S. & Co. trade catalogues are undated. One contains 36 pages, another 40 pages, and the third has 37 pages, all of

which are unnumbered. Each page contains engraved images of household artifacts, including inkpots, standishes, salts, snuff boxes, hot water urns, teapots, coffee pots, sugar basins, cream pots, tea caddies and caddy spoons, mustard pots, bottle coasters, bottle tickets, beakers, and two-handled cups. Also pictured are tankards, mugs, salvers, candlesticks, snuffers and snuffer trays, spoons, ladles and forks. Each image is identified with an accompanying printed number, which would have been used exactly as we use similar numbers to order goods in present-day sale catalogues.

Some of the images have inked numbers, as well. These denote the price per object or per group of objects; *i.e.*, per dozen. As expected for a catalogue issued in Sheffield, the prices are quoted in English pounds sterling. They are wholesale prices, since, unlike the sale catalogues with which we are familiar today, these were intended for use by merchants to stock their shops.

Such catalogues would have been issued periodically, perhaps seasonally or annually, and almost certainly on an as requested basis. As new objects began to be manufactured, their images would appear in conjunction with older objects that continued to be saleable. Consequently, there is significant duplication of the images in the three B. G. S. & Co. catalogues.

With a view to advising readers about the existence of these catalogues and wishing to provide a sense of their appearance, I have selected several pages from them for presentation in the *Bulletin*. Fortunately, as mentioned previously, marked B. G. S. & Co. pewter exists in a few collections, so we can compare images of teapots, beakers and snuff boxes on trade catalogue pages with their marked counterparts (Figures la-

4b). (Two of the B. G. & S Co. marks on these examples are illustrated in Figures 11 and 12). As expected, the engraved images faithfully recreate the objects, giving the prospective purchaser an accurate sense of what he or she is contemplating buying. Conversely, objects like the two-handled cups in Figure 4c, though unmarked, can be comfortably determined to have emanated from Broadhead, Gurney, Sporle and Company's manufactory, when compared with their printed counterparts (Figure 4a).

As circumstances would have it, most of the images on the pages of these catalogues have no actual counterparts that have been associated with B. G. S. & Co. In

Notes and References

- 1. The firm of Broadhead, Gurney, Sporle and Company listed itself as "fine scissorsmiths, and manufacturers of silver and plated goods" on page 49 of A Directory of Sheffield, published by John Robertson in 1797. The principals may have been Samuel Broadhead, Edmund Gurney and Edmund Sporle, all of whom were listed separately in the metal trades in the Sheffield General Directory, published by W. Brownell in 1817. Positive identity of the latter two remains to be determined through further research. The identification numbers for these three books are 739.2 S19, Volume 1, Volume 2, and Volume 3.
- 2. Eric Robinson, "Eighteenth-Century Commerce and Fashion: Matthew

truth, we might be hard pressed to associate plain unmarked utilitarian objects like the tankard and mug in Figure 5 with the firm. However, should we encounter an unmarked coffeepot like that illustrated in Figure 6, or unmarked candlesticks like those in Figure 7, we might more reasonably presume B. G. S. & Co. to have been the maker.⁴ Indeed, using these catalogues, we might gainfully associate and attribute unmarked objects in our collections (Figures 8-10). As such, the catalogues are more than just historically interesting. Clearly, they provide us with an insight into a marketing device that got English pewter into the hands of American consumers. Additionally, they are also a useful resource that could allow us to associate extant unmarked pewter with a specific manufacturer through attribution.

Boulton's Marketing Techniques," *Economic History Review*, 2nd series, 16, no. 1, 1963, pp. 46 and 59.

- 3. Roll 14, Vol. 53, letterbook, 1783-1800, Revere Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
- 4. Of course, this must be done with care, since other manufacturers were producing similar objects in a competitive context. Household britannia that could be easily confused with the work of Broadhead, Gurney and Sporle is illustrated in Jack L. Scott, *Pewter Wares from Sheffield*, pages 100, 101, 102, 103, and 164. Most of these pieces were made by James Vickers.

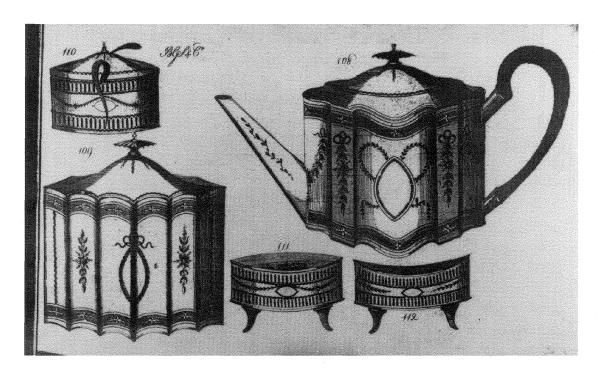


Figure 1a. Page from a B. G. S. & Co. trade catalogue (Volume 1) picturing a teapot similar to the marked B. G. S. & Co. teapot in Figure 1b.



Figure 1b. Marked B. G. S. & Co. teapot similar to that pictured in Figure 1a. Collection of Charles V. Swain.

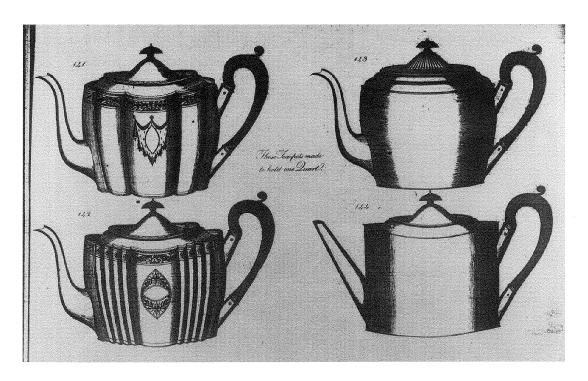


Figure 2a. Page from a B. G. S. & Co. trade catalogue (Volume 1) picturing a teapot similar to the marked B. G. S. & Co. one-quart teapot in Figure 2b.



Figure 2b. Marked B. G. S. & Co. one-quart teapot similar to that pictured in Figure 2a. Collection of Charles V. Swain.

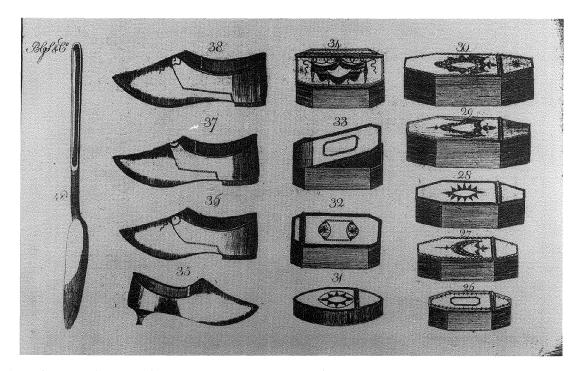


Figure 3a. Page from a B. G. S. & Co. trade catalogue (Volume 1) picturing snuff boxes similar to the two marked B. G. S. & Co. snuff boxes in Figure 3b.

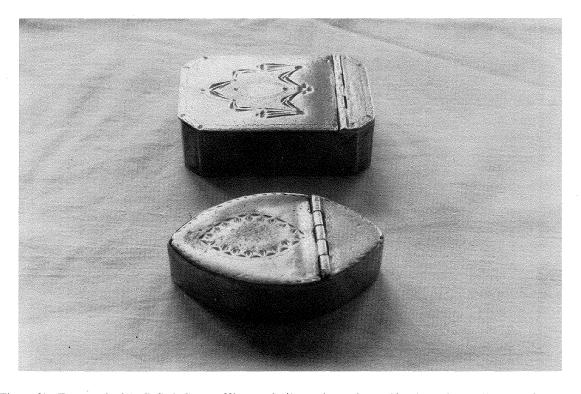


Figure 3b. Two marked B. G. S. & Co. snuff boxes similar to those pictured in Figure 3a. Collection of Charles V. Swain.

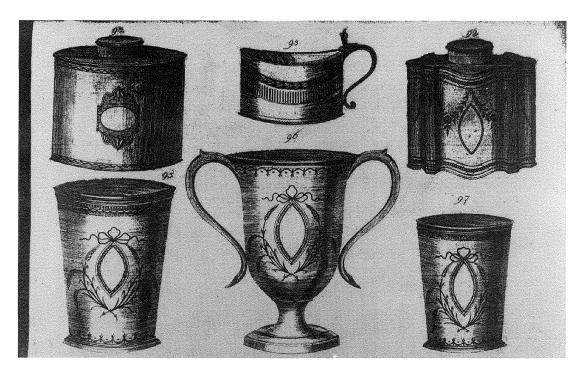


Figure 4a. Page from a B. G. S. & Co. trade catalogue (Volume 1) picturing two sizes of beakers similar to the pair of marked B. G. S. & Co. beakers in Figure 4b and a two-handled cup similar to the pair of unmarked two-handled cups in Figure 4c.



Figure 4b. Pair of marked B. G. S. & Co. beakers, from a set of four, similar to those pictured in Figure 4a. Collection of Charles V. Swain.



Figure 4c. Pair of unmarked two-handled cups similar to that pictured in Figure 4a. Collection of Mrs. Wayne A. Hilt.



Figure 5. Page from a B. G. S. & Co. trade catalogue (Volume 1) picturing a mug and tankard.

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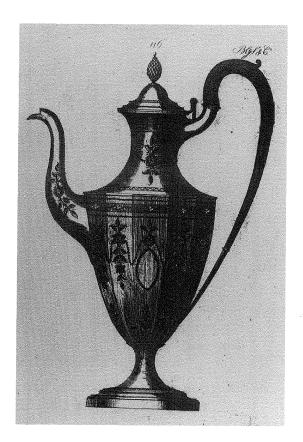


Figure 6. Page from a B. G. S. & Co. trade catalogue (Volume 1) picturing a coffeepot.

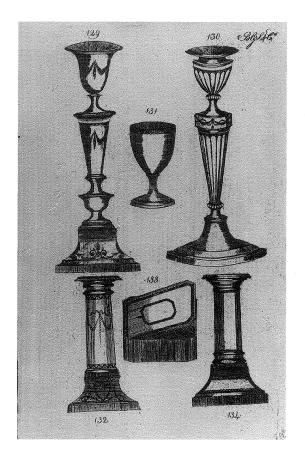


Figure 7. Page from a B. G. S. & Co. trade catalogue (Volume 1) picturing candlesticks, a snuff box, and a footed cup.

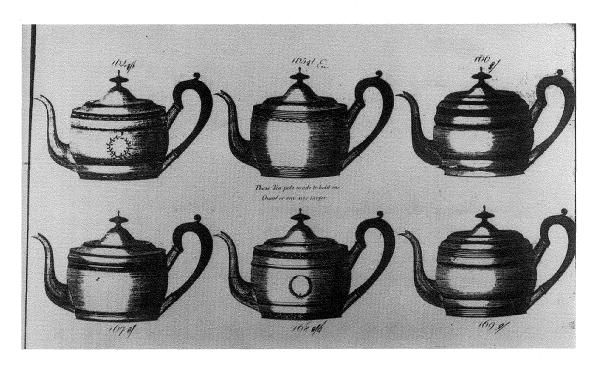


Figure 8. Page from a B. G. S. & Co. trade catalogue (Volume 3) picturing teapots.

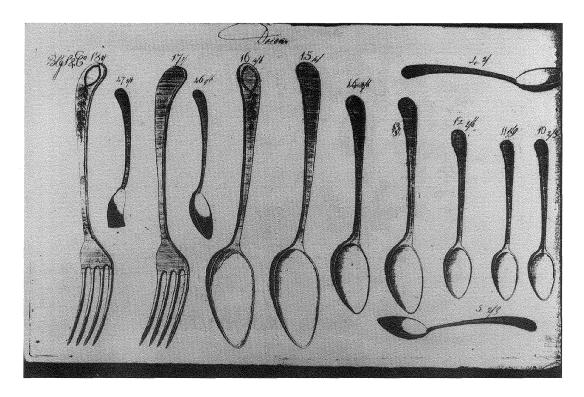


Figure 9. Page from a B. G. S. & Co. trade catalogue (Volume 3) picturing spoons and forks, each sold by the dozen.

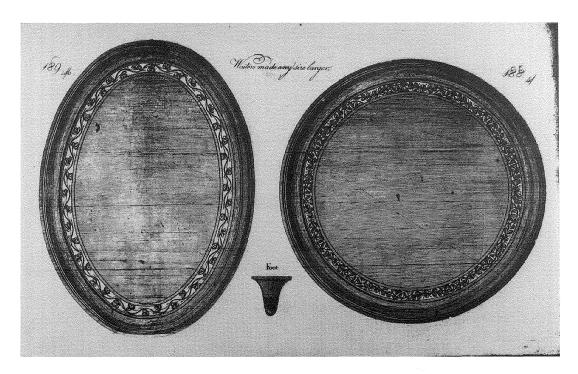


Figure 10. Page from a B. G. S. & Co. trade catalogue (Volume 3) picturing waiters.

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Figure 11. B. G. S. & Co. marks on the underside of the teapot in Figure 2b.

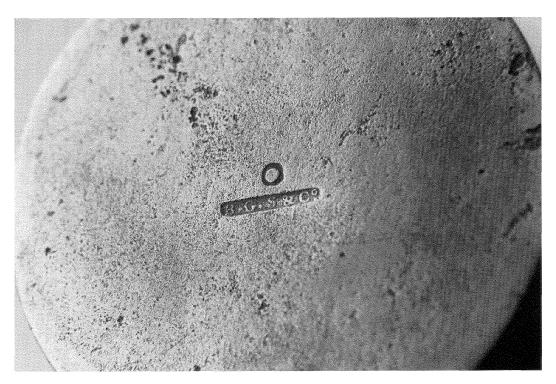


Figure 12. B. G. S. & Co. marks on the underside of one of the beakers in Figure 4b.

The Supreme Candlesticks

by Alex Neish

What the metal workers of yesterday used to call "the mystery of pewter" was not restricted to the secrets of the craft. It applies equally well to a pair of candlesticks (Figure 2) that were bought by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 1906 and seem never to have been exhibited. It is thought they came from the collection of Lady Selina Hervey. On the base of one is scratch-engraved 'Bro Kyrka Gottland,' for a church on the Swedish island of Gottland.

In his Pewter of the Western World, Peter Hornsby describes them as 'probably Dutch' and adds, "The wrigglework with its movement and well executed form is also typically Dutch." In fact, the unidentified touchmark of a rose and crown with the initials 'C B' (Figure 1) has been declared 'undoubtedly English' by Dr. Ron Homer, the writer and former editor of the Pewter Society Journal.² C. A. Markham,³ in his Pewter Marks and Old Pewter Ware, notes that at its 17th December 1691 meeting, the Worshipful Company ratified that "No Member of the Mastery shall strike any other mark upon his ware than his Touch or Mark struck upon the plate at the Hall, and the Rose and Crown Stamp."

There is a very arguable case for regarding the pair as the greatest of all English candlesticks — and circumstantial evidence that at some point they may have been part of the Mount Edgcumbe hoard in Cornwall.

The candlesticks stand 8 1/4 inches tall with a base diameter of 6 3/4 inches. The candle socket is topped by a drip tray of slightly above 3 1/2 inches diameter. All over are tulips, roses, pomegranates and sundry other floral designs. It is this

wrigglework decoration that distinguishes them from the only other comparable surviving pair (Figure 3), now housed at Williamsburg. These are plain except for some fine chasing around the upper base and, though again confused as 'probably Dutch,' bear the arms of Mary Glanville and Piers Edgcumbe, who were married in 1636 and brought together the pewter garnishes of their two families. The pewter was to remain in their home of Cotehele for over three centuries until in 1947 this passed to the National Trust in lieu of death duties. The pewter was found surplus to requirements and dispersed at auction in 1956, when Colonial Williamsburg had the vision to acquire some of the star pieces.

In his book, People and Places, James Lee Milne,4 the first Country House Secretary of the National Trust, describes how the Cotehele furniture, tapestries, and armor had occupied their same places since the times of Charles the First. When King George the Third and Queen Charlotte visited the house in 1789, she noted in her diary the splendor of the pewter and how they had eaten from its plates. Another aristocratic visitor went to Cotehele in 1827 and Milne notes that an excellent dinner had been prepared by the staff. "It was a novel experience to eat off pewter plates as the Queen had found and drink out of narrow wine glasses, the salt cellars, spoons, forks, tankards and salvers etc all in complete unison."

Ronald Michaelis, writing in the February 1959 issue of *The Antique Collector*, ⁵ described the Williamsburg pair of candlesticks as of "first rank importance, not only because of their large size They are of a type of which no other identical examples are known." He refers to a set of

four candlesticks in York Minster, one of which is illustrated in his 1969 British Pewter. Cotterell,6 who had collaborated on the restoration of these candlesticks and the replacement of the missing loose sconces, believed the heart-shaped touchmark with the initials 'F. L.' belonged to one of the Francis Lucas, father and son. of York at the end of the seventeenth or the beginning of the eighteenth century. Michaelis rectifies this when comparing them to the Williamsburg pair. While the stems are a unique four-cluster or quatrefoil column and so quite different, "the base section, from the drip tray downwards, is identical, even to the rope moulding around the rim of both drip-pan and foot." This means that the York candlesticks are much earlier than Cotterell had thought, and perhaps were made by a London maker whose touchmark was lost in the 1666 Great Fire.

The last piece of the mystery still remains unsolved. This is how the Metropolitan candlesticks somehow travelled to Sweden before emigrating again, this time to New York. All my efforts to solve this riddle have failed. It seems that no records exist to explain the event. One could speculate that the Edgcumbe family gifted the pair to a Scandinavian traveller, who in turn

gifted it to the Swedish church, which many years later disposed of it. Hopefully, some time this issue will be resolved. Hopefully also, the Metropolitan Museum will decide to display these great treasures on a permanent basis.

References

- 1. Peter Hornsby, *Pewter of the Western World*, *1600-1850*, Schiffer, Exton, PA, 1983, p. 41, plate 45.
- 2. Ron Homer, private communication, 1996.
- 3. C. A. Markham, *Pewter Marks and Old Pewter Ware*, Reeves and Turner, London, 1909, p. 112.
- 4. James Lee Milne, *People and Places*, 1995, pp. 134-149.
- 5. Ronald F. Michaelis, "Early Stuart Pewter from Cotehele, Cornwall." *The Antique Collector*, February 1959.
- 6. H. H. Cotterell, *Pewter: the Fine Work of the York Craftsmen*, published in *Apollo*.

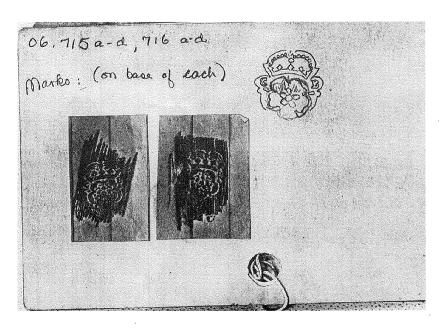


Figure 1. The touchmarks found on the bases of the Metropolitan Museum candlesticks in Figure 2



Figure 2. A superb pair of seventeenth-century candlesticks. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1906.



Figure 3. A pair of seventeenth-century candlesticks in the collection of Colonial Williamsburg.

The Family of Israel Trask

by Thomas E. Pickett

Much has been written about the britannia made by Israel Trask. He has been generally credited with being one of the first, if not the first, to make britannia in the United States. Because Israel Trask lived and worked in Beverly, Massachusetts, and had a connection with my family, I became interested not only in collecting his britannia, but in learning more about the man himself and his family.

My research took me to Central Cemetery, Beverly, the Beverly Historical Society, and the Beverly Public Library. I have newspaper clippings and some documents from my family archives that were useful. Robert Lovett of the Beverly Historical Society; Suzanne Nichelson of the Beverly Public Library; Natalie Webber Gulbrantsen, a direct descendant; Betty Webber; and Mr. and Mrs. Van Liere, current owners of one of Trask's houses, were all very helpful to me and I thank them. Many conversations with my aunt Lucy W. Pickett were very helpful to me. Ellen O'Flaherty, of the PCCA, graciously sent me photocopies of all references she had on Israel Trask.

The January 1924 article in *Antiques Magazine* by John Webber,¹ a descendant of Trask, has some family-related history that may be overlooked by more modern writers.

Israel Trask was born October 28, 1786, and died February 1, 1867, in Beverly, Massachusetts, about 20 miles north of Boston. His parents were Jeremiah and Hannah. According to Stephens Baker's diary, in 1805 Israel became an apprentice to the silversmith John Ellingwood at the corner of Vestry and Cabot Streets.² For a time he apparently made silver teaspoons.³ He later took over Ellingwood's business.

Family lore suggests that he turned to britannia sometime between 1807 and 1812, possibly in response to the embargo and subsequent war that made it difficult to obtain English silver teapots. Stone also reports a starting date of 1812. For a time, brothers George and Oliver helped him. Ebenezer (Eben) Smith also joined their endeavor. Later, George moved to Fitchburg, Massachusetts, and was a minister there. Oliver and Eben started their own britannia manufactories nearby on Cabot Street. Oliver's home, built in 1838, still stands at 19 Washington Street (Figure 1).

An old Beverly Directory of 1850, reprinted in an early twentieth-century newspaper clipping in my possession, lists separate hardware stores for Smith and Trask. There was also a separate listing for each for britannia manufactories. I believe that the manufactories were located behind the stores.

Another undated newspaper clipping from Beverly in my possession (but 1901-1909 because of a mention elsewhere concerning President Teddy Roosevelt's activities) contains reminiscences by an old-timer: Eben Smith "kept hardware and groceries and manufactured britannia in the rear of the building at Cabot Street and Broadway;" Oliver Trask's "china and crockery store" was located at Cabot and Milton Streets; and Israel Trask's store just down the street had "hardware and upholstery goods in the front, and he manufactured britannia in the rear."

In 1807, Israel Trask married Polly Wallis.³ I found a record of six births of this union in the vital records located in the Beverly Public Library. Apparently, only Mary Ann, born 1823; Caroline, born 1814

(1832 according to her gravestone), died 1857; and Israel W. Trask, 1817-1846, lived past childhood. Other births were Nancy, 1810; Alpheus, 1821; and Henry, 1825. In 1834, Polly died. Israel married Elizabeth Prentiss soon afterwards and their daughter Catherine was born in 1836.

Mary Ann, a poet, married Ezekiel Webber in 1843. Israel Trask, who lived at 12 Thorndike Street, built her a house at 16 Thorndike Street.⁵ Both are still standing (Figure 2 and Figure 3), separated by an old grove of trees and a large beech tree. These houses are only a few blocks from the Cabot Street site of the britannia shop, which is no longer standing.

Mr. and Mrs. Van Liere, who live at 16 Thorndike Street, shared some family stories with me during a visit and tour of their home. Israel had a large garden in the space between the two houses. He presented Mary Ann and Ezekiel with a beech tree seedling wrapped in linen as a wedding gift. Planted between the two houses, it still stands. The Van Lieres reported that there was a family tradition that brother George threw pewter molds down an old well on the property, but efforts with a modern metal detector to find them have been fruitless.

My own newspaper search found an advertisement in the May 31, 1851 Beverly *Citizen*⁷ for quince bushes and a few apple trees for sale by Israel Trask. Apparently he sold much more than britannia teapots at his hardware store.

Catherine, daughter by Elizabeth, married Cornelius Studley in 1862 and later inherited her father's house at 12 Thorndike Street. This house later (in the 1880's) became a kindergarten run for many years by Catherine's daughter Kate Studley.³ Natalie Webber Gulbrantsen's father attended in the 1880's and my aunt, Lucy Pickett, attended from the fall of 1908 to the spring of 1909.

Israel Trask married a third time, in the 1860's, after the death of his second wife in 1859.⁵ I have found, thus far, no record of her, but family tradition is that she destroyed Trask's business records after his death in 1867.

Of special interest to me is the entry in the vital records, supplied by the Beverly Public Library, of Israel Trask's son by Polly, Israel W. (Wallis?) Trask, 1817-1846. I have found, thus far, no evidence that he was involved in the britannia business, but he could have been, in spite of his untimely death at age 29. Perhaps some pieces marked 'I Trask' are really by the son, 'the other Israel Trask.' Israel W. Trask married Martha F. (Fornis?). They had a son Israel M. Trask, 1841-1843, and a son Jesse G. Trask, 1843-1905. I have found their mutual headstone, not far from that of Israel Trask, in Central Cemetery, Beverly.

I have inherited personal family documents and household objects (no pewter) of Jesse G. Trask and am fairly certain he was not involved in any serious way with britannia. He married Susan E. Bailey (1844-1936). Susan was the well-loved niece of my great, great uncle John Pickett (1809-1888), a local merchant, who doubtless knew Israel Trask. Susan and her mother moved in with John Pickett in 1850 after the death of Susan's father (Mrs. Pickett was the sister of Susan's mother). Jesse and Susan had one child, John Pickett Trask, 1873-1894. His death while he was a student at Amherst College apparently ended the male Israel Trask line.

The Webber line, through Israel's daughter Mary Ann, apparently is the only surviving line. Natalie Webber Gulbrantsen has many of the existing Trask papers.

The obituary of Israel Trask in the Beverly *Citizen*, February 9, 1867,8 stated that "he worked until about a year before his death." This suggests that we might

extend Israel Trask's years of producing britannia past 18569 to 1865, although it is also possible that he was just tending his hardware store and not producing britannia. The obituary also states that Trask began britannia production in 1812. Trask was credited in the obituary with giving shelter to the first runaway slave to show up in Beverly.

In addition to producing britannia of great form and beauty, Israel Trask was a family man, involved in civic and charitable responsibilities, and from all accounts I have seen, a generous and warm-hearted man who loved children.

I am very interested in continuing this research and would be grateful for any comments or other information about Israel Trask and his family from readers of this article.

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1. Webber, John Whiting, A Massachusetts Pewterer: *Antiques Magazine*, January 1924, v. 5 p.26-28.

- 2. Daniel J. Hoisington, A History of Beverly Industry, Beverly Historical District Commission, 1989, p. 15.
- 3. Natalie Webber Gulbrantsen, personal communication, 1996.
- 4. Edwin M. Stone, *History of Beverly*, James Munroe and Co., Boston, 1843, p. 200.
- 5. Betty Webber, personal communication, 1995.
- 6. Van Liere, personal communication, 1995.
- 7. Beverly *Citizen* (newspaper), May 31, 1851.
- 8. Beverly *Citizen* (newspaper), February 9, 1867.
- 9. Ledlie I. Laughlin, *Pewter in America Volume II*, Barre, MA, Barre Publishers, Barre, MA, 1969, pp. 114-115.



Figure 1. Oliver Trask's home at 19 Washington Street, Beverly, Massachusetts.



Figure 2. Israel Trask's home at 12 Thorndike Street, Beverly.

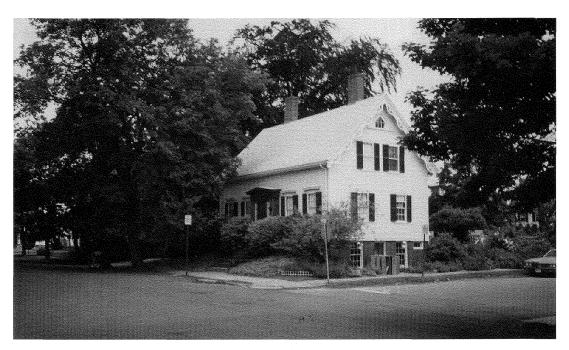


Figure 3. The home at 16 Thorndike Street in Beverly, built by Israel Trask for his daughter Mary Ann on her marriage ç 1843 to Ezekiel Webber. Trask's beech tree can be seen over the two chimneys.

Random Thoughts On Pewter Collection

by Robert E. Touzalin

I am sure that most pewter collectors have, in the process of collecting and studying pewter, many random thoughts that are not of great consequence, but are intriguing and promote some reasoning. I won't belabor this subject, but I will present a few items that have baffled or intrigued me.

A. Sometimes we value pewter out of proportion to age or rarity. A case in point is American vs. British beakers. There must be thousands of American beakers, and many hundreds of marked ones bearing an evaluation of \$400 or \$500 and up. In many years of searching in England, I've found only four marked British beakers, so they are reasonably rare. I paid only a modest price for any one of these. The British beakers are heavy, usually attractively decorated with grooving, and nicely touchmarked. Why is there such an illogical difference in the value placed on these pieces?

B. Among collectors there seems to be a lack of respect for, or at least lower values placed on, the products of Leonard, Reed and Barton, as compared with those of their contemporaries. It could be because the successors of Leonard, Reed and Barton are still in business with a closely allied name. This fact might lead to the opinion that they were later Britannia makers. This is not true, as they were out of business by 1840 or thereabouts, although the L. R. & B. touch may have been used until 1845. Many of their well-known and respected competitors, however, operated at a much later date. George Richardson and Henry Hopper worked until the mid-1840's. William Calder, Eben Smith and Israel Trask were in business until the mid-1850's. T. D. Boardman and Rufus Dunham lasted until 1860, and Roswell Gleason until 1871.

As far as workmanship goes, L. R. & B. can only be applauded. Their octagonal pots and other tea set pieces are not held in high regard, but a close study of the techniques and workmanship used in assembling these shapes can only result in strong admiration of the skill of these makers.

C. There are some nineteenth-century pewterers who are held in higher repute than others because of the imaginative design or attractive decoration of their products. This is to be expected. I believe that others benefited from the visibility of their products in early pewter books. Possibly Roswell Gleason and George Richardson could be included in this latter group.

D. Collection of pewter pieces of odd sizes, shapes and uses can be pursued at relatively low cost and with much satisfaction. Unfortunately, I have never made any special attempt to collect such items, but I wish that I had, as they add variety and interest to any collection. The few unusual pieces that I do own are shown in Figures 1 through 9. They are not one of a kind by any means, but are unusual and not frequently encountered.

Proceeding from left to right of Figure 1, the items shown are: Irish 'chicken and hen' measure (1/2 and 1/4 gill); sugar holder in the form of a miniature coal scuttle (this form is common in silver); pre-1826 pint bulbous measure by John Carruthers Crane, with added rim to meet Imperial Standard specifications; wine can with cork insert in stopper, unknown provenance. According to Cotterell, John C. Crane sold all his molds to James Yates, but I doubt that he sold the mold for the pre-Imperial measure.

Figure 2 shows the following items: 9 1/2-inch multiple-reeded plate by Thomas Compton, a very unusual design for a nine-

teenth-century plate; ink well with rotating spherical lid; 8-inch plate hammered all over, in corroded condition, but undoubtedly hammered, probably Swedish. Figure 3 is a close-up of the multiple-reeded plate, and Figure 4 is a similar close-up of the hammered plate.

Figure 5 includes: shaving mug; 9-inch, six-lobed paten with lion's-paw feet; and 7inch scale plate (I think). The six-lobed paten is, to me, a fascinating piece. Details of the paten and its feet are shown in Figure 6. I obtained this piece in a U.S. shop about three years ago. The lion's-paw feet lit a light in my memory. About thirty years ago, Bob Smoot had purchased from a British firm some pewter pieces that had been in a Spanish convent. The items included two patens, one of them a round plate with three lion's-paw feet. After obtaining the paten shown in Figure 6, I asked Bob about the one he had owned. It turned out that he had sold his paten to a collector who lived only a few miles away. Bob asked the owner to bring the piece to his house so that we could check my memory. We discovered that the feet had to have come from the same mold as my newly-found paten with an altogether different design. Wouldn't it be interesting to know the history of these pieces?

In the foreground of Figure 7 are a candle trimmer tray and a gravy ladle. In the background are: a pair of small continental pricket candlesticks; German snuff bottle; and a small syringe. Figure 8 includes: teapot stand with brightwork decoration; pair of shoe buckles (many forms have survived); and 15-inch stuffing spoon by Ashberry.

The spoon rack shown in Figure 9 is certainly German. It has a distinct angel mark with four initials and the date, 1732.

E. I believe it is a fact—I know it was true in my case—that a beginning pewter collector has more interest in large pieces than in small ones. With more experience,

a collector may begin to be equally or more intrigued by small shapes. I will never forget one of my early experiences in England, when I was walking down the high street of Alfristan, a lovely, small Sussex village, with Chris Peal, former president of the British Pewter Society and author of several pewter books and articles. As we looked in the window of an antique shop, Chris exclaimed, "Look at that little beauty." I was somewhat taken aback, as Chris was pointing at a fine little 1/4-gill bulbous measure, which I'm sure I had not been impressed by until then. It did impress me that a collector who had fine examples of Roman and Stuart period pewter could admire a piece of such modest lineage. It was a good lesson for a relatively new collector.

In Figure 10 are shown some of the smaller shapes that I have collected. Moving left to right on the top shelf are shown: 1/2-gill mug that could be from a child's set; 1/4-gill Irish measure; 1/20-pint mug or odd shaped bulbous measure, more likely the latter; double centiliter lidded French measure; classic shape 1/4-gill bulbous measure with brass rim and London City Council mark; 1/32-pint bulbous measure; and a child's set lidded tankard. In the background is a gallon haystack measure to provide a comparison of size.

On the middle shelf are some larger items including: a bachelor teapot; pint ale pitcher; 1/2-pint lidded tankard; gill straight-sided mug; and a gill U-shaped mug. In the center foreground is a very small cylindrical snuff box. The bottom shelf includes: a 1/2-gill double-volute baluster measure, probably eighteenth century; 1/2-gill double-volute baluster measure, nineteenth century; gill beaker with City of London stamp; gill beaker with handle; spirit cup; T.B.M. No. 22 whale oil lamp; 1/2-noggin haystack measure; 1/2-gill Glasgow measure; and a 1/2-gill Glasgow measure of different lid design.



Figure 1. Left to right: Irish 'chicken and hen' measure (1/2 and 1/4 gill); sugar holder in the form of a miniature coal scuttle; pre-1826 pint bulbous measure by John Carruthers Crane, with added rim to meet Imperial Standard specifications; wine can with cork insert in stopper. All pieces from the collection of the author.

Figure 2. Left to right: 9 1/2-inch multiple-reeded plate by T h o m a s Compton; ink well with rotating spherical lid; 8-inch hammered plate. All pieces from the collection of the author.

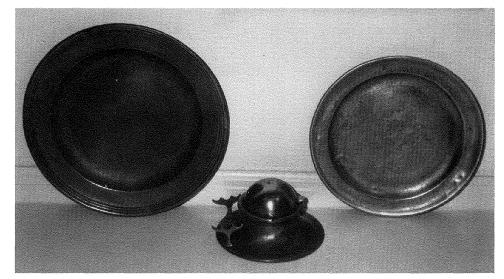




Figure 3. A close-up of the multiple-reeded plate in Figure 2.



Figure 4. A close-up of the hammered plate in Figure 2.

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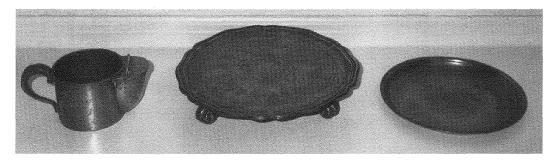


Figure 5. Left to right: shaving mug; 9-inch, six-lobed paten with lion's-paw feet; and 7-inch scale plate. All pieces from the collection of the author.

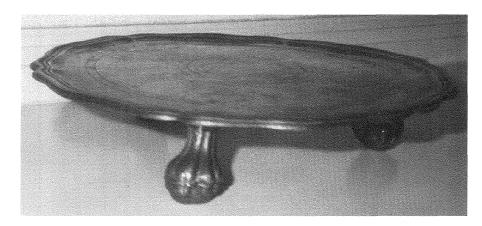


Figure 6. Detail of the paten and its feet from Figure 5.

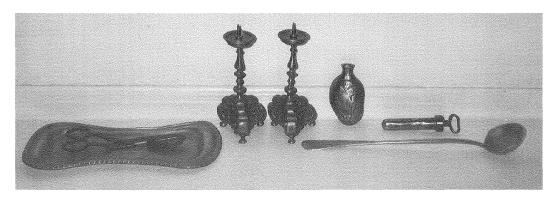


Figure 7. Foreground: candle trimmer tray and a gravy ladle. Background: pair of small continental pricket candlesticks; German snuff bottle; small syringe. All pieces from the collection of the author.

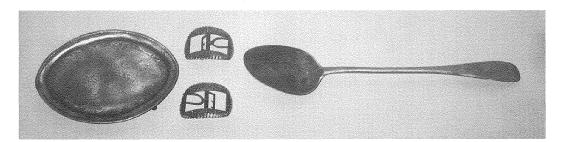


Figure 8. Left to right: teapot stand with brightwork decoration; pair of shoe buckles; 15-inch stuffing spoon. All pieces from the collection of the author.

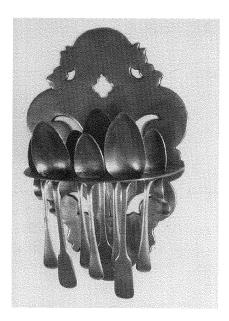


Figure 9. German spoon rack from the collection of the author.

F. Now to a debatable and usually ignored subject: pewter repair. Opinions regarding pewter repair very so widely that one hesitates to discuss the subject. At one end of the range of thought, some collectors who have repaired their own pieces have initialed each point of repair, so that it is identified. Sometimes, the analysis of the repair metal has been varied from the original metal, to make the repair obvious. Wasn't it the Philadelphia Museum that used a different metal analysis in replacing the legs of a Will pot?

On the other hand, who knows how many repaired pieces have a fair proportion of replaced parts? If a person is not a purist, he could always say, "Who cares, if the repairs are undetectable?" But I'm sure that most collectors don't subscribe to that

philosophy. Probably their thinking is somewhere between the extremes. If the leg or handle of a piece has been damaged or lost, it is, in my opinion, reasonable that the piece be returned to its earlier appearance and shape. The repairer can justify his work with the thought that the original maker would be pleased that his product was still attractive and serviceable.

I'm afraid that the collections of both American and British pewter lovers and museums would be only fractional in size if all repaired pieces were eliminated. When one sees the rate of oxidation and deterioration of pewter pieces not protected by controlled atmospheres, it is not difficult to understand the deplorable condition in which much pewter is found. All of our houses are not air-conditioned twelve months of the year, and I sometimes worry about the condition that our existing collections will be in, two hundred years from now.

So much for my random thoughts, 1997. I'm sure that many of you readers have similar thoughts that would be interesting to all of us collectors.



Figure 10. Assortment of smaller pewter pieces from the collection of the author. For details, see the text.

A Thomas Danforth Signature

by Andrew C. Hauck

The writ of execution, part of which is reproduced below, was found in a home in a Cincinnati suburb some forty years ago, and purchased by me at that time. It reads as follows:

To the Sheriff of the County of Windham or his Deputy, or either of the Constables of the town of Ashford within said county, Greeting.

Whereas Thomas Danforth of Norwich in New London County, on the 25th day of June 1753 before me Isaac Huntington Esq; one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for New London County; Recovered Judgment against Caleb Johnson of Ashford aforesaid for the sum of £19-7-2 for Debt; and for the Sum of £0-8-6 lawful honary [sic] for Costs of Suit, as appears of Record: Whereof Execution remains to be done.

These are therefore in His Majesty's Name to Command you, That of the Money of the said Caleb Johnson or of his Goods, or Chattels within your Precincts, you cause to be Levied, and (the same being Disposed of as the Law Directs) Paid, and Satisfied unto the said Thomas Danforth. The aforesaid Sums being Nineteen pounds Seven Shillings & two pence due on bill of credit for debt, & Eight Shillings & six pence in full money is the Whole, with One Shilling Proclamation Money more for this Writ; together with your own Fees. And for want of such Money, Goods, or Chattels of the said Caleb Johnson to be by him shewn unto you, or found within your Precincts for the Satisfying the aforesaid Sums, you are hereby Commanded to Take the Body of the said Caleb Johnson and him Commit unto the Keeper of the Gaol in Windham in the County aforesaid, within the said Prison; who is likewise hereby Commanded to Receive the said Caleb Johnson and him safely to Keep until he Pay unto the said Thomas Danforth the full Sums above Mentioned, and be by him Released, and also Satisfy your Fees. Hereof Fail not, and make due Return of this Writ, with your Doings therein, unto me the said Isaac Huntington Esq, within Sixty Days next coming. Dated at Norwich this 2nd Day of July Anno Domini, 1753. And in the 27th Year of His Majesty's Reign.

Isaac Huntington
Justice of Peace

The creditor would have been the first Thomas Danforth. Windham County lies in the northeast corner of Connecticut, not far from Norwich where Danforth's business was located. Happily, the matter was resolved satisfactorily for all concerned. The portion of the writ that is reproduced states,

Windham Sept. 19th 1753 Then received of Nathaniel Hovey The full Contents of the within Execution by me, Eleazar Fitch, Sheriff.

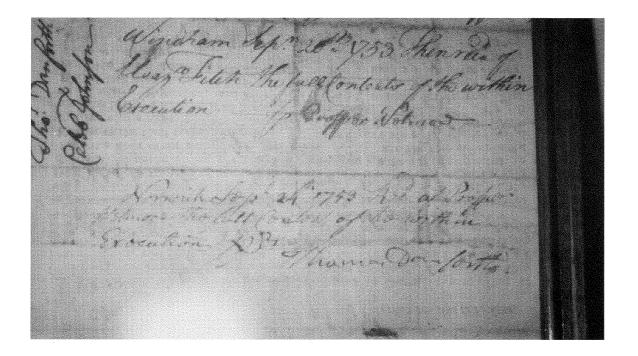
Windham Sept. 20th 1753 Then received of Eleazar Fitch The full Contents of the within Execution by Proffer Wotmore.

Norwich Sept. 24th 1753 Received of Proffer Wotmore The full Contents of the within Execution by

Thomas Danforth (signed)

The total sum owed by Caleb Johnson is noted by hand on the writ. It appears to have been £24-2-2 with all the court costs and fees added in. This would have been a considerable sum at that time.

How the document made its way to Cincinnati is not known.



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The Gleason Medallion Massachusetts Coat of Arms Mark

by Andrew C. Hauck

The previous issue of the PCCA *Bulletin* contained an article by Andrew Turano about the raised medallion Massachusetts coat of arms mark of Roswell Gleason. Three silver-plated items with the mark were identified: a Victorian footed bowl, a table bell, and a handled beaker.

Figure 1 shows a pair of Roswell

Gleason chalices with the same mark. The marks are illustrated in Figure 2. The chalices are a traditional form. They show no sign of ever having been plated. They have been in my collection for about 40 years, ever since I purchased them from a collector/dealer in Westwood (in Cincinnati).

Figure 1. Pair of Roswell Gleason chalices from the collection of the author.



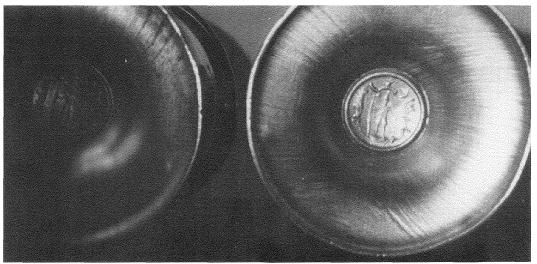


Figure 2. The Gleason medallion Massachusetts coat of arms marks on the chalices in Figure 1.

Beware Again—Another Generation

by Gene F. Seevers

The owner of the objects shown in Figure 1 had purchased them, identified as 'wine bottle coasters,' in a sight-unseen telephone bid. Subsequently, he recognized them as false twentieth-century products, and lent them to us for display at the autumn 1996 Mid-Atlantic Regional Group meeting in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Once again, members are cautioned "Caveat Emptor!" and to resist the urge to buy a supposedly previously-unreported form, especially at a 'floating' market where recourse may be difficult or impossible.

The 'coasters' measure 3 13/16 inches top diameter, 3 9/16 inches bottom; inside depth is 1 3/8 inches with overall outside depth of 1 13/16 inches. The upper outside band is 9/64 inches wide and the double-banded base is 5/16 inches. The spurious 'touchmark' (Figure 2) is struck, not cast, on the outside bottom—near dead center on one, visibly off-center on the other. The mark is that illustrated in Laughlin, 'from a porringer handle, and is included in the list of "Wrong-uns" by Percy E. Raymond; an early cautionary report, and one well worth obtaining if you do not already have it in your library.

As illustrated in Figure 2, the teeth of the serrated edge of the mark are unevenly spaced with noticeably blunter points on the first few reading clockwise from the letter P of the false P Boyd mark. There are only eleven six-pointed stars, in contrast to fifteen in the genuine mark. In the sixth such star is an indentation suggesting that even spurious dies develop flaws or damage through use, but under magnification these apparent flaws, on both items, are

seen to be themselves star-shaped. The eagle's outline is highly simplified; has but two raised lines in lieu of feathers on its neck; and a few tiny V or heart-shaped raised devices on its breast. Similar heart shapes are present on both wings. extension of tail feathers creates the appearance of four legs, surely an anomaly unknown to even the most ardent bird watcher. The ill-clawed feet clutch neither olive branch nor arrows, but instead poorly depicted three-leafed bits of vegetation. The 'coasters' are uniformly dull gray in color, but probably capable of considerable brightening with a little metal polish and some modest labor. They are also rather heavy for their size, implying the presence of lead in the alloy.

As Laughlin pointed out, a European maker may have been the source of these and other similarly marked pieces for an American retailer. Past President/Honorary Member Eric de Jonge, at the regional meeting, referred to such pieces as "having been sold through certain well-known department stores." Our thanks to the owner for sharing the coasters for members' enlightenment and protection of the family finances, and to Mr. E. O. Fogels for his photographic work.

References

- 1. Ledlie I. Laughlin, *Pewter in America Volume II*, Barre Publishers, Barre, MA, 1969, Plate LXXVIII,
- 2. Percy E. Raymond, PCCA *Bulletin* #21, 1948, pp. 29-35.



Figure 1. 'Coasters' of twentieth-century manufacture, with spurious Parks Boyd marks.

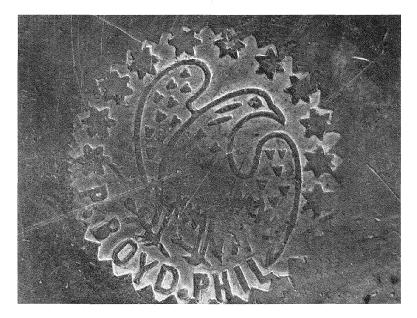


Figure 2. Spurious Parks Boyd mark on one of the 'coasters' in Figure 1.

Necrology

Vincent J. A. Davies

Vince Davies died on Monday, April 7, 1997 in Seneca Falls, New York. One of the last things he had asked his daughter, Cheryl Silvers, to do was to pay his PCCA dues and to notify his PCCA friends of his health problems. He very much regretted having been unable to attend the last several meetings.

Vince had served on the Board of Governors of the PCCA. His abiding love of pewter and his commitment to the PCCA were expressed in the pewtering workshops he pioneered in Seneca Falls in the 1990's. There, the participants learned to cast, spin, polish and repair pewter in the company of others who also appreciated and quickly learned to respect the alloy.

Vince Davies was a teacher throughout his life. From 1942 to 1970, he taught shop in the Seneca Falls high school, after which he enjoyed an extended career as instructional media arts coordinator at Eisenhower College, from which he retired in 1976. In retirement, Vince took up pewtering, with his workshop and his shop in his basement. He made candlesticks, bowls, porringers, goblets, tankards, and boxes. His signature holiday pieces were his dated Christmas bells, of which he made 100 this past holiday season for friends and for sale.

Vince is survived by his two children, Tim Davies of Seneca Falls and Cheryl Silvers of Skaneateles, and by two grand-daughters, Emily and Amy Silvers. His wife, Marion Davies, who also was a pewterer and an active member of the PCCA, died in 1993. Vince will be remembered as a loyal member of the PCCA who generously shared his extensive knowledge with others who also love pewter.

by Ellen J. O'Flaherty

Eric de Jonge

Eric de Jonge, 94, honorary member and past president of the Pewter Collectors' Club of America, died February 25, 1997. He was president of the Club from 1953 to 1955. In 1960, he helped found the Pennsylvania Regional Group that later became the Mid-Atlantic Regional Group. His knowledge of continental pewter was respected and invaluable at discussions at regional and national meetings. He contributed numerous articles to the PCCA Bulletin and his treatise, Johann Christoph Heyne: Pewterer, Minister, Teacher in Winterthur Portfolio 4 greatly expanded our knowledge of that maker. He was elected to honorary membership in the PCCA in 1996.

Eric was a graduate of the universities of Darmstadt and Heidelberg, Germany. He was retired as chief curator of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and was an organizer of the State Museum. He was a former staff member of the H. F. Du Pont Winterthur Museum and a consultant for the Ulster-American Folk Park in Northern Ireland. He was also an arts and antiques consultant, and lectured in both these areas. He was a contributor to the Concise Encyclopedia of American Antiques and to numerous American and European publications. He was the recipient of the Daughters of the American Revolution's Americanism Medal for outstanding professional contributions to the American people.

Eric's wife, Frieda de Jonge, predeceased him.

We will miss his wit and that everpresent twinkle in his eyes.

by Donald M. Herr

Alice Winchester

Alice Winchester, honorary member of the Pewter Collectors' Club of America, died in Danbury, Connecticut, on Monday, December 9, 1996. Miss Winchester, who was 89 years old at the time of her death, had been editor of The Magazine Antiques for 34 years, from 1938-1972. She is credited with leading the magazine through the golden age of collecting: the 1940's, 1950's, and 1960's. During this period, she also wrote extensively, publishing on a variety of antiques and decorative arts topics including primitive painting. Two of the features she inaugurated at The Magazine Antiques, "Living with Antiques" and "History in Houses," became the basis of several books on antiques.

Alice Winchester received many awards from antiques organizations and museums. She served on the boards of a number of historical associations and trusts including the Governor's Advisory Committee for the New York State Historic Trust, Old Sturbridge Village, Shakertown at Pleasant Hill, and the Museum of American Folk Art. She is best remembered by her many friends among connoisseurs and collectors of antiques and the decorative arts as a gracious woman who wrote and edited with dedication and skill, and who nurtured other writers who have become authorities in their fields.

Alice Winchester is survived by her brother, John Henry Winchester of Torrington, Connecticut.

by Ellen J. O'Flaherty