

The
PEWTER COLLECTORS CLUB
of AMERICA INC.

• T H E B U L L E T I N •

WINTER 1997

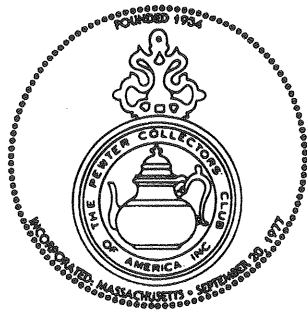
VOLUME 11, NUMBER 8



WILLIAM WILL PORRINGER, PHILADELPHIA 1764-1798
Collection of Charles V. Swan

See the Article by Charles V. Swain beginning on page 239

VOLUME 11
NUMBER 8



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President's Letter

The Fall National meeting in Flint, Michigan in late September was hosted by Mel & Bette Wolf. The Wolfs made sure that the weather was perfect, the food plentiful (we all ate too much) and the pewter absolutely outstanding. Their collection of American pewter is the finest ever assembled. Friday night we were treated to a slide presentation of the highlights of their collection during dinner at a local restaurant. Little did we know that on Saturday, at the Wolfs, we would be handed a quiz to complete, the answers to which were contained in the slides and accompanying discussion of the prior night. Rumor had it that Mel's first draft of the quiz was too easy, so John Carl Thomas "tightened" it up a bit. Easy for John Carl, not so for most of the rest of us. It was like a scavenger hunt, going through the collection to find the answers. It was great fun. Pewter is not the only attraction at the Wolfs. Other metals are represented in their home as well as wonderful period, painted furniture. Oh, yes we can't forget Mel's electric model trains.

Saturday night John Carl led a discussion on English and American lidded and open baluster measures. Members brought many fine examples from their own collections. On Sunday we were back at the Wolf's for further examination of their collection.

I am pleased to report that our Regions are active with fall gettogethers at Fairfield, Connecticut for the Northeast and State College, Pennsylvania for the Mid-Atlantic. Please try to attend a regional meeting in your area. They are interesting, informal and inexpensive.

The next national meeting will be in Albany, New York May 15-17, 1998. Details will be forthcoming.

Plans are well underway for our trip to Stratford-Upon-Avon next June. The British Society has invited us to their meeting. We will see the Neish collection at Harvard House as well as other interesting places on a full agenda.

Thomas A. Madsen

Photos from Flint



Fig. 1, Left: The corner cupboard at the Wolf's home, sometimes referred to as "Winterthur Mid-West." For the Flint meeting, the usual array of William Will pieces had been joined with other rare Philadelphia items including the "Love" baluster measure and the Philip Alberti teapot. Fig. 2, Right: It was good to see John Carl Thomas back again holding forth on baluster measures at the Saturday night meeting.



Fig. 3: Part of the Wolf's collection of American pewter. If you could own only the contents of a single shelf, which shelf would you choose? *All photos by Bill Snow.*

Editor's Notes

A very big thank you from the Club goes to **Ellen J. O'Flaherty** and **Thomas H. O'Flaherty**, past *Bulletin* editor and publisher respectively for their four years of service in what one former editor has described as the most thankless job in the club. We want them both to know their efforts were appreciated. The good relationships they built up with the members who contributed articles were made evident by the full issues they put out. They never had to plead for articles.

As your new editor/publisher, I am especially grateful for the help, information and advice that the O'Flahertys provided me. It has made for a smooth transition that I hope will be evident in this, my first issue.

I welcome all suggestions you may have to make this an even better publication. I promise to give every submittal serious consideration. If you have a good idea for an article but have never written before, I will help you write it. And while typed manuscripts are preferred, handwritten articles are better than no articles at all. Let's continue to keep the information flowing. There are many more discoveries to be made and questions to be answered.

On another matter, readers may recall a few issues back that it was decided to drop the sequential Bulletin Number used to designate each issue. This was done because it was redundant and confusing. As in the past, each issue is designated by its Volume Number and the issue number within that volume. While simplifying matters, dropping the Bulletin Number inadvertently eliminated the only reference to our publication's name. I have corrected that in this issue with an addition to the nameplate.

Garland Pass

An American Bud Baluster?

by Garland Pass

At the recent Fall National Meeting in Flint, the focus on Saturday evening, led by John Carl Thomas, was on baluster measures: lidded and unlidded, bud and double volute, English and at least hoped-for American. While only one marked American double volute showed up (the "Love" measure from the Wolf collection) plus the usual unlidded ones by the Boardmans, many of the balusters had American verification marks. Such marks include, "C M" for Commonwealth of Massachusetts; an earlier "P M" for Providence of Massachusetts; and "C P" for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The "A" with or without the "v"-shaped cross bar has definitely been determined via New York state statutes to stand for "Amsterdam," tracing back to the Dutch occupation of that state.

While many advertisements and inventories of early American pewterers list baluster measures, only two (including the "Love" measure mentioned above) with an American maker's mark have been found. All of the measures with American verification marks at the meeting were carefully examined and compared to marked English measures in an attempt to uncover any different feature that might suggest American manufacture. On two identical half gallon bud balusters—different collections but from the same mold—such a feature was found.

The accompanying photograph of one of the half gallon buds shows the peculiar form of the thumbpiece attachment to the lid. The normal form of this attachment tapers to a point. The attachment in the photograph has a truncated form. Is this a unique American-made feature or the idiosyncrasy of an English mold maker who may have exported this form to the American colonies? Please examine the bud baluster measures in your collection to see if you have one with a similar feature. We would appreciate it if members of The Pewter Society in England would do the same with any bud measures they may own. Please report your findings to the editor.



Detail of the thumbpiece attachment on one of two half gallon bud measures that were brought to the Flint meeting. Note the unusual truncated form of the attachment. *Collection of Garland Pass.*

William Will, New York

By Charles V. Swain

When William Will migrated to New York from Nieuwied on the Rhine with his father John in 1752, he was only ten years of age. It was not until 1764 at the age of twenty-two that he went in business for himself in Philadelphia. During the intervening years, in all probability, he received his training as a pewterer from his father and attained the status of journeyman while working in his shop and possibly in that of his brother Henry. Since later on he proved to be a great artisan and not a mere pewterer who followed accepted standards, it is reasonable to believe he became at times restless and bored making the usual contemporary models, so during his spare moments began creating a few original designs of his own.

One such likely New York creation is the porringer handle illustrated in Fig. 1. It is unmarked but the same in every way as his marked Philadelphia example illustrated in Fig. 2. However, there is one difference. The porringer bowl, to which the unmarked handle is attached, has four incised lines around the outside edge of the rim as illustrated in Fig. 3 on the left, while the porringer bowl on the right, to which the handle with the Philadelphia touch is attached, does not. These incised lines would suggest that the porringer with them was made in New York while Will was still a journeyman.

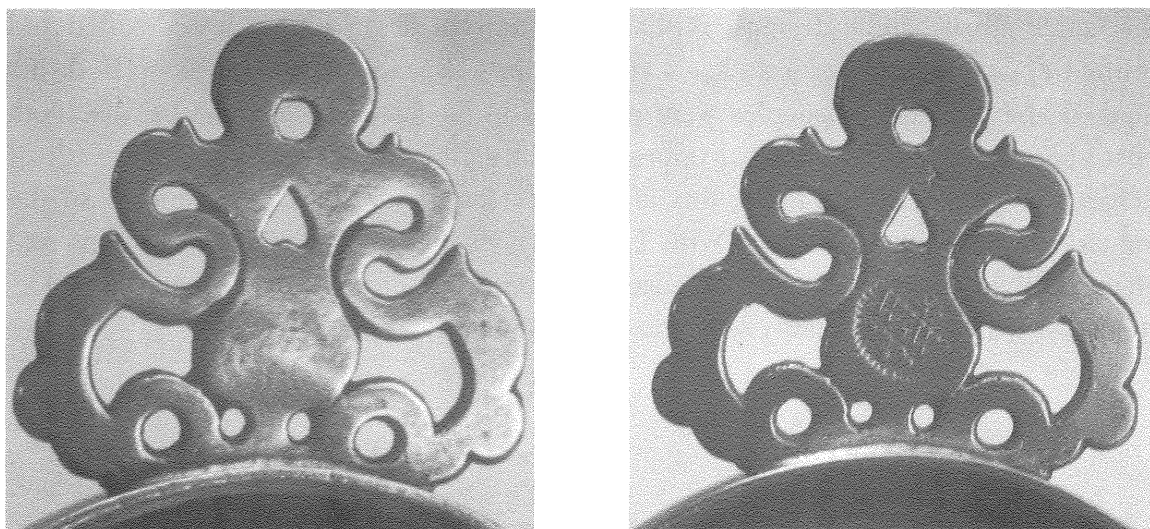


Fig. 1. Left: Handle from an unmarked incised rim porringer attributed to William Will, New York. Fig. 2. Right: Identical handle from a marked plain rim porringer by William Will, Philadelphia. This porringer appears on this issue's cover. *Collection of Charles V. Swain.*



Fig. 3. Left: four incised lines on unmarked Will porringer. Right: absence of lines on Wills marked porringer.

Incised lines were apparently the style in that city alone, as other examples of porringers here illustrated by John Will, Henry Will, John Bassett and Frederick Bassett all have them. There is an exception, a Frederick Bassett porringer without lines which was, in all probability, made during his years away from New York while in Hartford, Connecticut from 1780 to 1785. John and Frederick Bassett each used two incised lines on their New York porringer rims, as seen in Fig. 7, while John, Henry and William Will (New York) each used four, as illustrated on John's porringer in Fig. 6. The porringer handles of John and Henry Will appear to have been cast from the same mold, as can be seen in Fig. 4 and Fig. 5, and were of a different design than that of William's. Being unique in style among the Old English handle designs, William's is somewhat larger with a less detailed and refined appearance than his father's and brother's. Because the handles on both his marked and unmarked examples were planished in the same manner and because both porringers have certain identical impressions in the casting which were the result of defects or damage to the mold, this is sufficient proof for positive attribution of the unmarked porringers to William Will. The four lines on the porringer rims of John and Henry Will are deeply incised in the unusual fashion, while on some of William Will's porringers only two can be readily seen, the other two faintly visible.

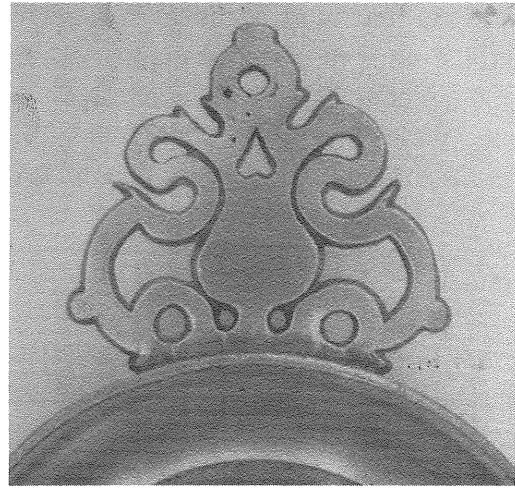


Fig. 4. John Will porringer handle. The mark cannot be seen, as it is on the reverse. *Swain Collection*. Fig. 5., Henry Will porringer handle. Mark on the reverse. *Collection of the Baltimore Museum of Art*.

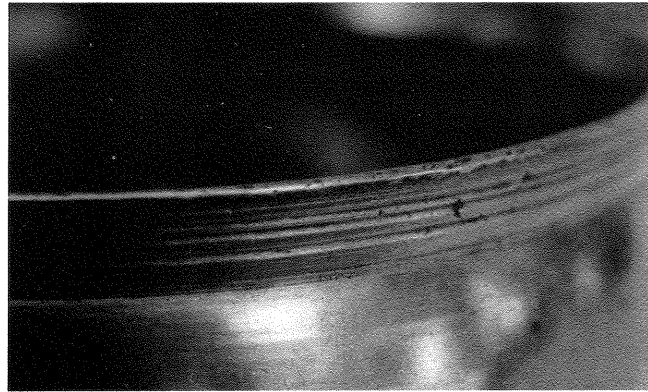


Fig. 6. The four incised lines on the John Will porringer.

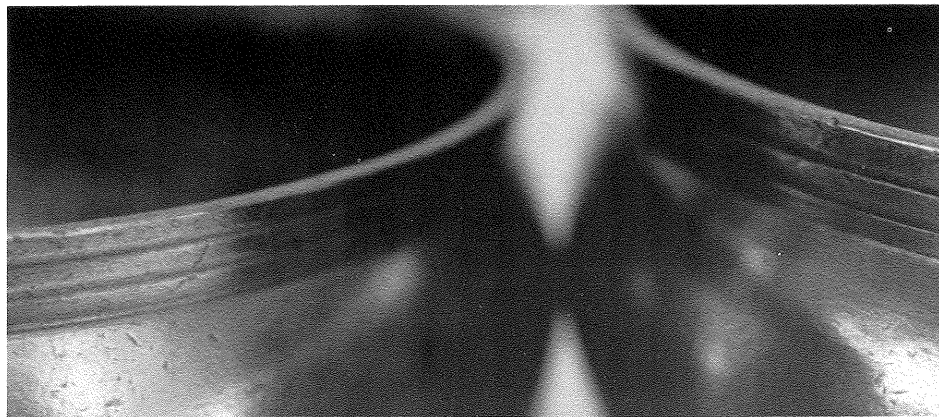


Fig. 7. Left: John Bassett porringer with its two incised lines on rim. Right: Frederick Bassett porringer with two incised lines. *Swain Collection*.

There are four more identical William Will unmarked porrings with incised line rims from the same mold as the marked one that are known to be extant at this time. They are in the collections of Melvyn and Bette Wolf, Robert and Dessa Cassens and George and Janice Wolfe. In the opinion of the author, these incised line porrings were all made, with little doubt, in New York City by William Will before moving to Philadelphia.

Addendum

Since the above article was written, the New York porrings in the Winterthur Museum have been examined for incised lines around their outside rims. It was found that they all had them, which would further suggest that because of William Will's use of this New York feature he must have, with little doubt, made his New York style porrings in that city before moving to Philadelphia. The Winterthur collection consists of porrings with Old English handles by John Bassett with two lines, Frederick Bassett with two lines, William Kirby with one line and a Crown handle example with one line, also by Kirby.

C.V.S.

References

1. Ledlie I. Laughlin, *Pewter in America*, Vol. 1, Barre Publishers, Barre, MA, 1969, p.51.
2. John Carl Thomas, *Connecticut Pewter and Pewterers*, The Connecticut Historical Society, 1976. Discussions with JCT concerning planishing and casting flaws.
3. Donald L. Fennimore, *Henry Will Account Book*, Masthof Press, Morgantown, PA, 1996, Fig. 7. Report on the Winterthur collection of New York porrings.

Two Pewter World Records Set in September 1997

by Garland Pass

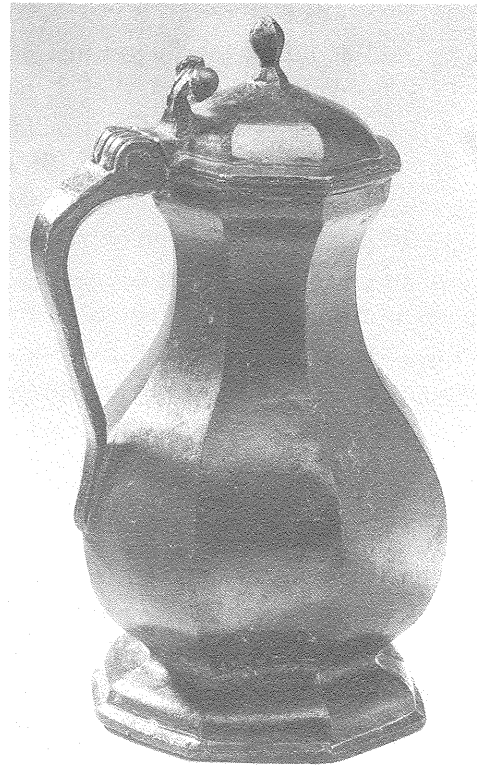


Figure 1, left. The communion flagon by Johann Christoph Heyne that sold for a record \$50,000 at a J. G. Cochran auction in Boonsboro, Maryland on September 20, 1997. It is missing the ball from its handle terminal and has a dent and small hole in its lid. While it retains the record for an American piece sold at auction, the world record passed five days later to the Tonbridge flagon, Figure 2, right, from the Sandy Law Collection which sold at a Phillips auction in Chester, England. It sold for £32,775 including a 15% buyers premium (\$52,440). It is black from oxidation and has a worn touchmark under its lid.

On September 20, 1997, the world record for pewter sold at auction was broken at a sale conducted by J. G. Cochran's in Boonsboro, Maryland. One of 18 known flagons by Lancaster, Pennsylvania pewterer, Johann Christoph Heyne, sold for \$50,000. Cochran's does not charge a buyer's premium. The previous auction record was also held by another Heyne piece, a covered sugar bowl, which sold for \$42,500 over twelve years ago in August of 1985. See *PCCA Bulletin Volume 9*, pp. 1 and 6.

While the Heyne flagon holds the record for an American pewter item sold at auction, the world record passed to England five days later when The Tonbridge Flagon, a fourteenth century piece from the collection of Dr. Sandy Law, past president of the British Pewter Society, sold for \$52,440 including a 15% buyers premium, at a Phillips sale in Chester. The previous auction record for a British piece was the 28³/₁₆" broad rim, engraved charger by "W B" which sold for \$42,240 in December 1984. See *The Journal of the Pewter Society, Volume 5, No. 1*, p. 16.

Dr. Law had acquired the flagon in October 1985 and briefly described it in the Pewter Society's *Journal, Volume 5, No. 3*, p. 98. It was also featured on the back cover of *Pewter, A Celebration of the Craft, 1200-1700*, the catalog for the outstanding exhibit at The Museum of London from May 1989 to May 1990.

The age of the flagon has been confirmed by the excavation of two similar examples from the ruins of Hamburg Castle, Aargau (N. Switzerland) which was destroyed in 1356. This flagon was found in the River Medway near Tonbridge Castle in Kent. Another was found in Bristol and is now in Bristol Museum. There is no firm evidence to prove that this flagon was made in England; however its weight, capacity (contemporary standard ale quart) and references in the 1348 Ordinances and Assay of 1438 suggest that the flagons were being made in England and Europe at the same time. Other highlights from the sale of the Law collection will be reported in the next issue of the *Newsletter*.

Following is a table listing the current six highest prices paid for pewter pieces sold at public auction. Prices include buyer's premium when it existed *but do not include sales tax or value added tax*. We would like to extend this table to ten items. If you have information on the remaining four, please submit your data to the editor. We will confirm it and reprint the table in the *Newsletter* from time to time as revisions warrant.

HIGHEST PRICES PAID FOR PEWTER SOLD AT PUBLIC AUCTION

<u>Item</u>	<u>Sale/Auction House</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1. The Tonbridge Flagon	Law/Phillips	25Sep97	\$52,440 ¹
2. Heyne Flagon	/Cochrans	20Sep97	\$50,000 ²
3. Heyne Sugar Bowl	Brenner/Horst	23Aug85	\$42,500 ³
4. 28 ³ / ₁₆ " English Charger	/Phillips	18Dec84	\$42,240 ⁴
5. Coffee Pot attrib. to "Love"	Enser/Skinner	22Feb94	\$36,800 ⁵
6. Will Drum-shaped Teapot	/Sotheby's	22Oct88	\$35,200 ⁶

¹ £28,500 + 15% Premium x 1.60 conversion rate.

² No premium charged.

³ No premium charged.

⁴ £32,000 + 10% Premium x 1.20 conversion rate.

⁵ \$32,000 + 15% Premium.

⁶ \$32,000 + 10% Premium.

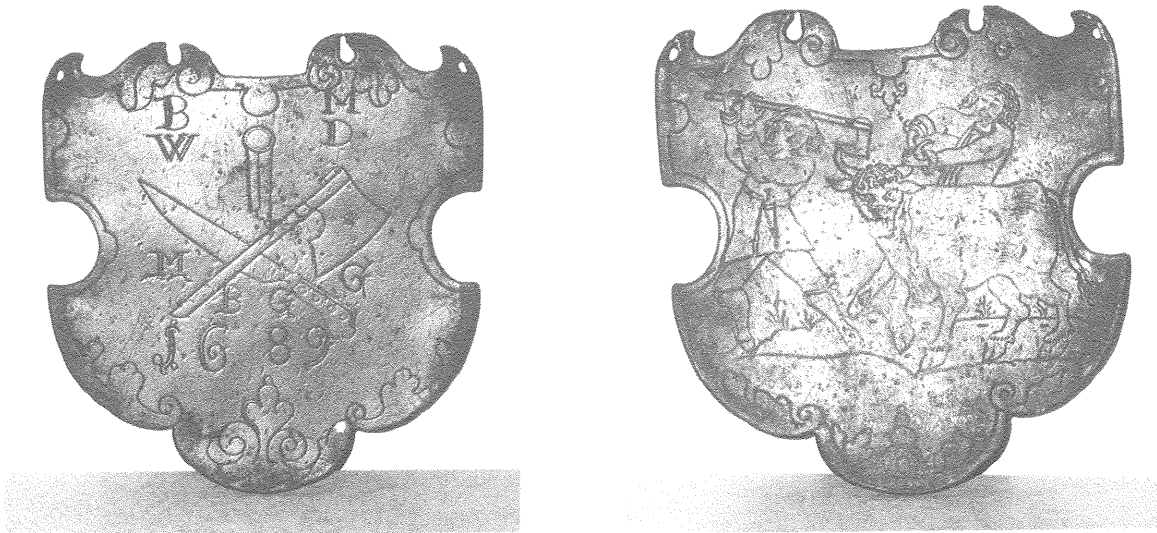
The Hidden Advertisement

by Alex Neish

Little attention has been paid to trade advertising signs in pewter. Presumably, as happened with the American wooden signs, most were junked when the business changed hands, leaving the few that have survived to become part of folk history. In the United States no pewter example seems to be known at all. In Britain the only one that appears to have survived is the small, bar spill-box advertising the services of a pewterer in Ealing, London. This is illustrated in Hornsby's "Pewter of the Western World."

The best selection is contained in the difficult-to-locate 1982 "Altes Zinn aus Niederbayern" by Freudenberg and Mondfeld. This illustrates signs for a variety of trades ranging from the butcher to the fishmonger, from the glover to the cobbler.

One of the finest examples of the trade sign surviving is in the Reserve Collections of the NY Metropolitan Museum - and so has been seen by few. It belonged to a butcher. One side illustrates the 17th century way of killing a steer that would not have appealed to animal lovers. The other carries the date 1689. It shows the knife and chopper that were the tools of the butcher's trade - along with four sets of initials that presumably belonged to the partners in the German business. Both sides are illustrated in the accompanying photographs.



Pewter Trade Sign
Collection of Metropolitan Museum of Art

The China Trade Teapot

By Andrew F. Turano

Almost invariably, on picking up a piece of pewter, one wishes it could tell us about its journey through time. True, sometimes there are engraved names, or dates, touches, verification marks, and damages that allow us to presume various incidences in its life, but some detailed provenance is what makes collecting fascinating, especially when presented with an unusual piece.

One day I was shown, by the charming owner of a tearoom and herb garden, an unmarked pewter teapot she had recently acquired with an unusual finial (Fig. 1). Cast and soldered upon a bed of grape leaves was the figure of a “Kwan”, or Mandarin sitting upon a tea chest decorated with pseudo-Chinese inscriptions (Fig. 2). Driven by the desire to discover the reason for this unusual decoration, she traced from the dealer the name and address of the previous owner and obtained, in writing, the following story.

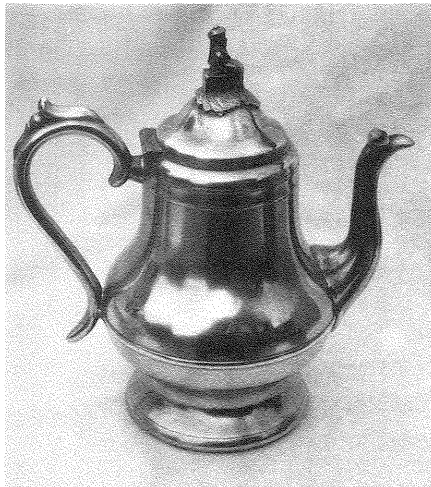


Fig. 1 Mid 19th c. unmarked teapot with “Mandarin” finial.



Fig. 2. Closeup of the cast finial soldered upon the lid.

This pot belonged to an elderly lady who lives in Chatham, Ma. She stated that it belonged to her great grandfather whose name was Captain William Baker who sailed on the Clipper ship “Swallow” out of the port of Plymouth during the decades of the 1840s and 50s. The family felt that he bought this pot in China for his wife during that period, presumably to celebrate his financial success in the China tea trade. Indeed, Clipper and other Merchant ship listings of that period revealed, in two publications, that many American Clipper ships traded from Shanghai to London, and the “Swallow” was listed as having completed such voyages in 1855 and 1857, as well as many others from Bombay, Hong Kong, San Francisco and Melbourne to New York and Boston. The

"Swallow" was built in 1854 in East Boston and abandoned at sea off Liverpool in 1885. A Captain William Baker was listed as one of the captains during some of these voyages. Thus, the anecdotal history given by the great granddaughter was fairly accurate, except for the decades described, the home port and the origin of the pot.

Historically, China, except for the port of Canton, was closed to foreign trade until 1842, when Britain, upon winning the "Opium War", obtained the exclusive right to trade at other ports with the signing of the "Nankin Treaty". Other nations, including the United States, persuaded China to open its ports without restriction in 1844, and so began the lucrative China Trade. In that year, the United States signed its first treaty with China, the "Treaty of Wanghai", allowing ship owners and captains the opportunity to acquire significant fortunes, the results of which are still evident in some of the seaports along the New England coast.

Inspection of this teapot reveals that it was made by the succession of Boston firms started by Smith and Morey who made lamps and teapots from 1841 thru 1864. The bottom is tinned sheet iron and the remainder of the pot, except for the finial, is identical in form and workmanship to their marked pieces. Mandarin "knops" or finials have, to date, been only reported on tobacco jars made in England. It is to the credit of our Boston makers that they could render such a remarkably accurate and artful depiction of a person residing in a country of which they had no first hand knowledge. The hat, the robe and necklace of beads are true representations of the dress that signified the rank of these officials during the Ch'ing dynasty.

Editor's Note: The following article is by Robert H. Bury whose father, mother and maternal grandfather were long time employees of the Reed and Barton Company. He grew up in a company house on company property and as he says, "I still have the genes in me although I never worked for the company." Most of the information on the succession of companies that formed Reed and Barton has been published before with minor errors in the dates or names. Mr. Bury provides correct data in a most succinct form and with an informative narrative that ties together all the changes.

Leonard, Reed & Barton, et al.

by Robert H. Bury

As a collector of early Reed & Barton Britannia and from a family of former long-term employees of the firm, I was interested in a recent article in the PCCA Bulletin mentioning Leonard, Reed & Barton and some dates associated with the firm¹. This prompted me to try to briefly clarify the record on the history of the firm which can be complicated and is not well understood.

Reed & Barton has laid claim to the fact that they began business in 1824, albeit under a different name². They also claim that the first Britannia ware made in the United States was produced in a small

shop in Taunton, Massachusetts in 1824. This has oft been disputed and I'll not try to sort out this part of the history, but let's move on to trace the first 16 years of the company, according to the record³.

This detailed history of the company published in 1943 states that there was "a continuity of management, and to a lesser degree, a continuity of ownership" to the company from its beginnings in 1824 with Isaac Babbitt, a local jeweler, gadget maker and experimenter. Using this reference, I'll try to summarize the early history of the company. Figure 1 lists the changes as they occurred.

<u>Company Name</u>	<u>Date Established</u>
Babbitt & Crossman	May 7, 1824
Babbitt, Crossman & Company	December 1827
Crossman, West & Leonard	February 19, 1829
Taunton Britannia Manufacturing Company	August 18, 1830
Leonard, Reed and Barton	February 20, 1837
Reed & Barton	August 26, 1840

Fig. 1. The changes in company name over a 16 year period.

Babbitt and his friend William W. Porter were interested in the shiny new Britannia metal that was beginning to show up from English factories. Through a host of experiments, they uncovered the formula.

Meanwhile, another Taunton native, William W. Crossman, had recently returned from a less than successful business venture in Vermont and fascinated by Babbitt's discovery, formed the first partnership, Babbitt & Crossman and used the rear of Babbitt's jewelry store on Merchants' Row to manufacture their first products. They soon moved to larger rented quarters on Spring Street where six men were employed during 1824 and 1825. They produced a limited line of products including Britannia inkstands, shaving boxes, looking glass frames and cups. With an expanding business and a need for more capacity, the pair moved in late 1826 to a new location which they built on Fayette Street. Here they installed the first rotary-valved steam engine in Taunton and bought new machinery. There were now 15 employees and in late 1827 they began the manufacture of teaware. A sample teapot placed in the jewelry store window generated great interest and a batch of 18 were made and sold.

William Allan West, who owned a dry goods shop next to the Babbitt store, became increasingly interested in the efforts of Porter, Crossman and Babbitt and in December 1827 invested some capital and a new partnership was formed called Babbitt, Crossman & Company. Crossman, at 33 years of age was the oldest, Babbitt was 28 and West was 26.

The reasons are a mystery, but in February 1829, Babbitt sold his interest in the partnership. Zephaniah A. Leonard of Taunton, from a prominent local family since the 1650s, purchased a one-third interest and a new partnership of Crossman, West & Leonard was formed. Babbitt remained as plant superintendent and Porter as foreman. Zephaniah remained the outsider, sort of the first stockholder. By the fall of 1829, there were 22 employees, including Henry G. Reed who joined at the age of 18 with Crossman in 1828 and Charles E. Barton who joined in 1827 at the age of 19. Most of the sales in 1829 were teaware and a total of 2,596 coffeepots, teapots and sugar and creamer sets were sold, among some other products.

With a slowing economy and a need for more capital, the Leonard family were reluctant to contribute more money. So on August 18, 1830, the partnership was dissolved and new joint stock company, called the Taunton Britannia Manufacturing Company was formed with all the main characters still around. Shortly thereafter, they initiated a move to yet another location on the Mill River in Hopewell, then a suburb of Taunton. The street was to be called West Britannia Street and the company remains at this location to this day. (Later expansions were made on the back of the property which fronted on Danforth Street.)

The number of employees grew to 42 at the end of 1831 and to 55 by May 1832. In April 1832, Crossman, West and Zephaniah Leonard each sold their interest in the company to Horatio Leonard, son of Zephaniah. West and Zephaniah left the company and later in

mid-1833, Babbitt became disaffected with the company and also left. Horatio now owned a majority of the stock, 24 of 40 shares, the remaining shares owned by 4 other stockholders. Tough economic times in the country, increasing competition and a lack of credit to finance an increasing number of consignments, caused the failure of the company in November 1834. The details are lacking, but apparently the stockholders abandoned interest in the company. No goods left the works during the winter of 1834-1835. Some of the employees approached Henry Reed and Charles Barton in early 1835 with the idea that they both take over the business and rent the shop from Horatio Leonard. With little to lose, a possible return from otherwise idle equipment and perhaps some reduction in the company's huge debt, Horatio gave his approval to the idea.

April 1, 1835 was the official start of the Taunton Britannia Manufacturing Company, New Concern, as it was officially known, with a total of 11 employees. Legally, the New Concern seems to have been the old company with new management. Reed and Barton advanced money out of their own pocket as required for tools and machinery to keep the operation afloat. Since they had no design capability, they continued to freely copy products from their contemporaries, particularly the Dixon firm in Sheffield, England. With money still tight and Horatio Leonard looking on with favor as the company struggled to survive, he transferred to his young son Gustavus all right, title and interest in the stock and tools of the firm that he owned. The result was that the Leonard family now effectively owned the real estate but granted to Reed & Barton each one-third ownership in the tools of the TBM Company as well as one-third interest in future profits. So in 1837, the TBM Company remained a legal entity, but only in a landlord capacity, while the operating company became the legal partnership of Leonard, Reed & Barton. So now we have two companies.



Fig. 2. Leonard, Reed & Barton coffee and tea set, pattern # 2700. *Collection of the Author.*

Times were very tough during the depression of 1837 and by July only 5 employees were left. They survived, sales expanded sharply in 1838 and the number of employees grew to 33. Figure 2 shows pattern #2700 which contributed substantially to this success. But the partnership was short-lived. Reed left in the summer of 1838, feeling that the business was not large enough to support all three partners. A year later, however, he changed his mind and re-joined the partnership, but continued to have conflicts with Gustavus over control of the company operations. Finally, on August 26, 1840, to gain control, Reed and Barton purchased Gustavus's interest in the tools and stock on hand. The ownership of the real estate remained with the TBM Company (and the Leonard's), whose only function was to collect the rent.

The firm of Reed & Barton then came into existence and Gustavus continued to work for the firm as salesman-treasurer.

In the meantime, Horatio still had a majority interest in the landlord TBM Company. He eventually purchased all outstanding shares not in the possession of the Leonard family, with the exception of 8 shares owned by James Crossman, a banker. In 1840 he transferred his interests to his son Gustavus. On August 31, 1844, the two stockholders sold the property to Cyrus Lothrop and on December 24, 1844, the TBM Company was formally dissolved. The property was again sold to C.E. Albro in 1854 and on October 24, 1857, all interest in the real estate was bought by the Reed & Barton firm.

The Leonard, Reed & Barton mark continued to be used on some company products until 1847 when Gustavus's estate was settled after he prematurely died in 1845. Britannia products continued to be made with the Reed & Barton mark well into the 1860s. Barton died in 1867 and Reed purchased his interest and continued managing the business up to his death in 1901 at the age of 91 years.

The company is now approaching 175 years of operation.

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The Rarest Decoration of Them All

by Alex Neish

When we talk about decoration of pewter, most people automatically think of the wriggled work which, while it had existed earlier, reached its crowning glory in England in the last quarter of the 17th century under the Dutch influence of William and Mary. Those who are into pilgrims' badges and the like are familiar with the cast decoration that later was to continue into Continental masterpieces by France's Briot and the masters of 16th century Nuremberg.



Fig. 1. Perhaps the greatest of all William & Mary portrait tankards with the crowned touch of RS. Decorated with wriggled portraits, birds and flowers, it is only 4.7 inches high. The handle with the ram's horn thumbpiece has a unique sea-horse terminal. *Collection of Alex Neish.*

A few will add the designs cut into the metal of mazarines¹ or straining dishes. And some may even mention the repoussé work that at the beginning of the 18th century saw three dimensional design being hammered into the metal - a practice that was to reappear around the beginning of the 20th century when dishes of a much earlier period were used in one of the greatest examples of unrecognised deliberate fraud.

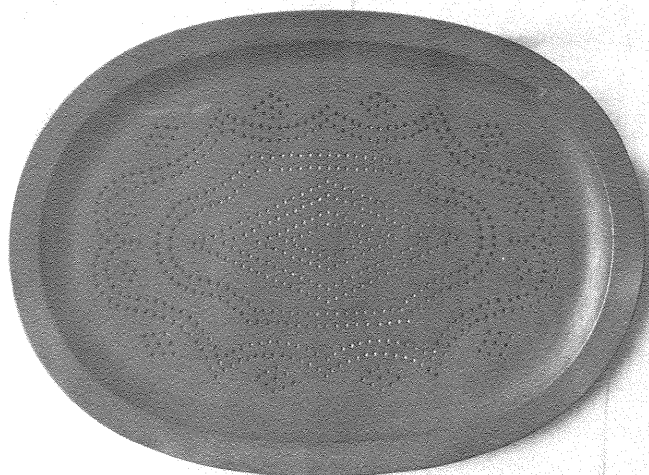


Fig. 2. A mazarine or straining dish with pierced design. *Niesh collection.*

Some will recall the engraved Jewish ceremonial dishes² that were featured some time back in the Pewter Society's *Journal*. Not many will mention the japanned pewter that was fashionable in the 18th century Holland, examples of which are illustrated in Dubbe's *Tin en tinnegieters in nederland*.³ Even fewer will cite the painting, or enamelling, of pewter that occurred in certain parts of Germany at the beginning of the 19th century, an example of which is illustrated in Donald Herr's *Pewter in Pennsylvanian German Churches*.⁴



Fig. 3. A rare Jewish Purim dish celebrating the escape of the Persian Jews. Diameter, 17 1/2". On the rim the touch of Benedict Diuscher of Tolz who died in 1725. *Niesh collection.*

Some may refer to the inlay of brass into pewter which, as Peter Hornsby⁵ notes, was being done in Nymegen in Holland in the 17th century, while other examples were to be found in Germany, Switzerland and Sweden in the same period. It will, however, be a well-informed specialist who may mention the dishes being inlaid with copper by T.F. Schutjes of Eindhoven around 1800 - just as it will be a well-informed expert who will mention English punched decoration, that rarest of all forms. In *Pewter of the Western World* this is said to have appeared on saucers, plates and dishes from around 1560-1700 but "less than 20 examples...are known."

Peter Hornsby feels the punch style probably had its origins in the decoration of leatherwork in the Middle Ages when a variety of stamps were used to produce designs on belts, purses and costrels, or pilgrim bottles. The argument is plausible. What, however, is little known is that punch decoration on pewter existed in the south of France. René Richard's outstanding *Potiers d'Étain de l'Ancien Languedoc et du Roussillon*⁶ illustrates five 17th century examples, one by Pierre Méric of Toulouse inlaid with a Limoges enamel of Samson supporting the pillars of the temple. It is always possible that there was cross fertilisation from here with England.

The technique of punch decoration is extremely simple. As Michaelis⁷ observed, "a series of shaped punches, or dies, was used; the dies being made of steel, their ends tooled or cut in high relief with an ornamental design, such as semi-circle or crescent; a tudor rose, a fleur-de-lys, or some other purely conventional motif. The design was built up by the use of several of these punches struck repeatedly to form a running ornamentation round the borders of plates or dishes."

The few examples that have survived in fact are plates and dishes - except for one Stuart flat-lidded tankard that surfaced a few years ago and had been struck with punch decoration. The poor design concept did not make this an attractive piece but rare it undoubtedly was. Michaelis illustrates an outstanding Elizabethan dish dated 1585 that was at one



Fig. 4. The 18 $\frac{1}{8}$ dish with punch decoration now at Harvard House in Stratford-on-Avon. *Neish collection*.

time in the Jaeger Collection. Another superb dish with a 18 1/8th diameter came up at auction in London 1984. Its rim was punched with crescents enclosing fleur de lis, and above this line of decoration appeared another with more fleur de lis and flowerheads. The piece still shows traces of the original silvering, a process extremely rare outside a few early church vessels. It is now included in the Museum of British Pewter at Stratford-on-Avon's Harvard House.

The serious collector, however, should never give up hope. As recently as 1996 there appeared on one of the pewter stands in London's Portobello Road what may be the rarest example of them all, emphasising why German and American visitors to the United Kingdom are making this Saturday street market their first port of call. It is an 8 3/4 inch single reeded plate made by Thomas Leach of London, who took the Livery in 1736 and appears in Cotterell's *Old Pewter* as number 2887. Illustrated in the photograph, it shows punch work around the rim, married to the wriggled vase of flowers in the well. It would seem to be the only known example of this combination of the two techniques. It is made even rarer by the fact that both decoration techniques were being used very late in the history of English pewter to generate this example. It carries the name of one L. Best who presumably was its original owner and - to judge by the size of the lettering - something of an egoist.



Fig. 5. The 8 3/4" plate by Leach that combines wriggled work with punch decoration. *Neish collection.*

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Theodore Jennings

by Jack H. Kolaian

In *Pewter in America*¹, Laughlin records the fact that ships' passengers lists furnished the names of two English pewterers who emigrated to Maryland as indentured servants in 1775.

One of them, Theodore Jennings, a pewterer of Middlesex, aged forty, came to Maryland in April of 1775 in the ship *Fleetwood* under indenture for four years. Laughlin could find no record to indicate the circumstances of his indenture or what became of him after that but acknowledged that Cotterell's *Old Pewter*² contained a listing (#2616) of a Theodore Jennings who joined the Yeomanry in London on March 24, 1757. This date plus his age in 1775 assured Laughlin that the man listed in Cotterell and the indentured servant were one and the same.

Jacobs' *Guide to American Pewter*³ contains a listing for a Theodore Jennings of Maryland, 1775, with no known examples. Subsequently in PCCA Bulletin No.44, Jacobs illustrated four marks with what appears to be a rosebush with makers' name, a rose and crown with "London" (both marks respectively within pillared gateways), a cartouche with name and "London", and four hallmarks with various devices and the initials "TI". *Figure 1*.



392

JENNINGS, THEODORE
Maryland
Last half 18th C.



406

JENNINGS, THEODORE
Maryland
3rd quarter 18th C.



298

JENNINGS, THEODORE
Maryland
Last half 18th C.



116

JENNINGS, THEODORE
Maryland
Last half 18th C.

Fig. 1. Marks of Theodore Jennings illustrated by Carl Jacobs as they appeared in PCCA Bulletin No. 44, Volume 4, p.78.

In Volume III of *Pewter in America*⁴, Laughlin presented the additional information that two 9 1/2" smooth rim plates with the marks of Jennings had turned up in Maine and Massachusetts and that photographs of the touches were submitted to Ronald Michaelis of The Pewter Society for comments. Laughlin did not indicate if the marks were similar to those recorded by Jacobs, but it would seem likely that they were. Michaelis replied that the maker of the plates was not Theodore Jennings (#2616) but rather Theodore Jennings (#2615), c1713-1747, stating "...the touch and all the supplementary marks and crowned ownership initials are typical of the early 18th century rather than the late 18th century..." On the basis of this information, Laughlin concluded that the plates could not have been made in the Colonies by the emigrant to Maryland.

Subsequently, Peal's *More Pewter Marks*⁵ contains a listing for Theodore Jennings with illustration of the marks as first shown by Jacobs. Presumably, these were the marks submitted to Michaelis for comment by Laughlin. Peal appeared to be somewhat uncertain about which Jennings could be associated with the marks but in conclusion stated that they undoubtedly belonged to the earlier man. Later, Peal in *Pewter of Great Britain*⁶ referred to the "pillared gateway" marks as "three sided dometops" and stated that they dated from 1720 onward.

The reason for this rather long-winded background regarding an obscure and shadowy subject is the finding of a matched set of five well made and hammered 9 1/2" smooth rim plates with the marks of Theodore Jennings. The marks, *Figure 2*, are struck on the back of each plate and are identical to those by Jacobs and Peal, except for the hallmarks. Since there are five plates, the details of each touch, except the hallmarks, can be construed in detail.

If the principal marks on these five plates are the same as those submitted to Michaelis and illustrated by Peal (which they appear to be) I disagree with the attribution to Jennings (#2615), whose touch illustrated in Cotterell was a small circle with a rosebush device, the date 1713 and initials only—typical of the 1st quarter of the 18th century. The pillared gateways with maker's name and "Made in London" respectively; the cartouche

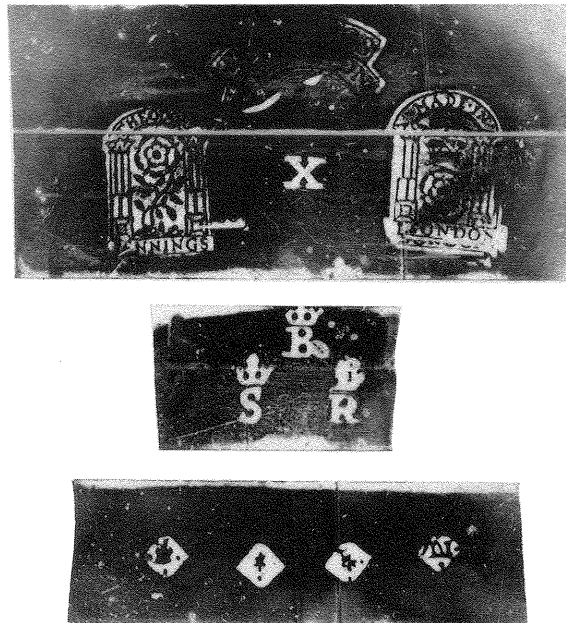


Fig. 2. Marks of Theodore Jennings found on 9 1/2" smooth rim plates.

with name and London; and finally the manner of striking the various touches would strongly seem to indicate a later mid-18th century maker; hence Jennings (#2616), probably the man who emigrated in 1775. A quick perusal of Cotterell will reveal a large number of similar name and London gateway touches with and without associated cartouche, mostly dating from around the 2nd decade of the 18th century. There also appears to be no pillared marks struck on the London Touchplates much before 1717.

Additionally, as Peal noted in *More Pewter Marks*, Jennings (#2615) would have had to be at least 75 years old when he migrated. Actually, if he gained his freedom at age 21, he would have been 83 in 1775. No one in his right mind would have taken on an indentured servant for four years if the man was in his eighties. Using the same freedom age 21, Jennings (#2616) would have been 39 or 40, corresponding to Laughlin's information.

The earlier Jennings may indeed have been the father of Jennings (#2616). The dates in the Cotterell entries certainly support this. There does not seem to be any reason why the hallmarks shown in Figure 2 are different from those shown in Figure 1. Perhaps these were the elder Jennings hallmarks or some other predecessor or successor pewterer. There are a number of such double marked pieces in English pewter.

The discovery of these plates in Maryland cannot be construed as evidence of American manufacture. That would be quite a large leap of faith, especially since the plates have crowned ownership initials, rather seditious for 1775 or thereabouts to say the least. They were more probably made in England and whether they came to America with the owners, "S and RB", or in later years in the trade is speculative.

In any event, it is reasonable to believe that these plates were made by a well trained pewterer who was admitted to the Freedom of the London Company in 1757 but who never struck his mark upon a touchplate and for whatever reasons, 18 years later at the age of 40 was sufficiently unsuccessful that he bound himself as an indentured servant for a four year period in order to pay his passage to the American Colonies. A fascinating piece of history.

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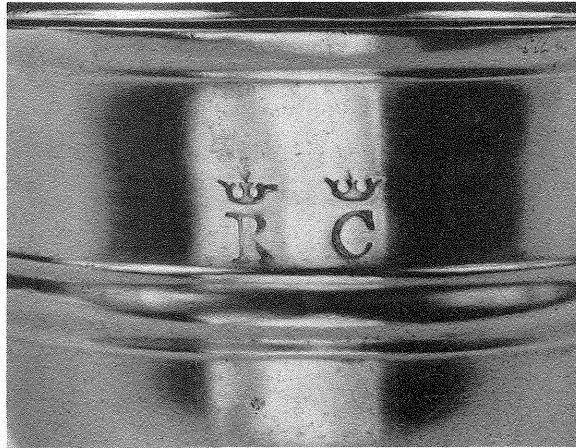
A Neighbor Comes Home

by Ronald G. Chambers

On one of my recent trips I came across a sugar bowl in a form that I had not previously seen. On close examination I was doubly surprised to not only see my initials stamped on it but that the stamp was from the Thomas Danforth II set of marking dies. I was sure I had found a very desirable piece and the workmanship was so good as to reflect someone of TD II's talent.

I showed the sugar bowl to Wayne Hilt who knew of only three or four others like it that had been found, none marked but all attributed to TD II. It stands to reason that this one with TD II's initial die marks pretty well pins it down.

Thomas Danforth II worked from 1755-1782 in Middletown, Connecticut, the town next to Higganum. My house in Higganum was built around 1760, so it is like a neighbor has returned and now sits in a prominent place in the old corner cupboard.



Left: Figure 1. Sugar bowl attributed to Thomas Danforth II, Middletown, Connecticut, c1755-1782. Height = 5 1/4"; Diameter at bowl rim = 4"; Diameter at foot = 3". Right: Figure 2. Enlarged view of TD II's crowned initial die marks.

The Thomas/Shorey Connection

by Robert C. Werowski

This article is a continuation of the one written by William O. Blaney in the *PCCA Bulletin*¹. The subject of that article is an English pewter tankard with the touchmark of John Thomas of London, c1698 (Cotterell #4709)², on the inside bottom and the mark of John Shorey, Sr. of London, c1683-1720 (Cotterell #4262) on the lip of the lid.

Percy Raymond, who is quoted in the above article, suggests that John Thomas made the tankard and Shorey made the lid. Raymond also speculates that Thomas made the whole tankard and sent it to Shorey for distribution. Raymond did not favor that the lid was a replacement by Shorey. William O. Blaney disagrees with the last statement because of the loose lid and two sets of dents in the handle made by two different thumbpieces.

The article further quotes Ronald Michaelis who also believes the lid was a later replacement. Michaelis believes the "original cover would have had frontal projections."



Fig. 1. One quart tankard marked by both John Thomas and John Shorey. All photos of items in the collection of Robert C. Werowski.

I now have in my collection another tankard with the same two touchmarks, *Figure 1*. Both tankards have Thomas' mark on the inside bottom, *Figure 2*, and Shorey's mark on the lip of the lid, *Figure 3*. Mine is of the one quart size while the previous is a massive two quart size. The smaller one has a plain body with slight entasis and a double dome lid. The thumbpiece is scrolled, *Figure 4*, and the lip has "frontal projections," *Figure 3*, as alluded to by Michaelis above.

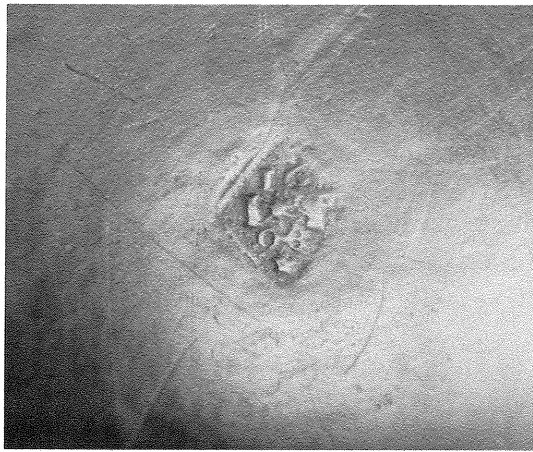


Fig. 2. Mark of John Thomas, Cott.#4709.

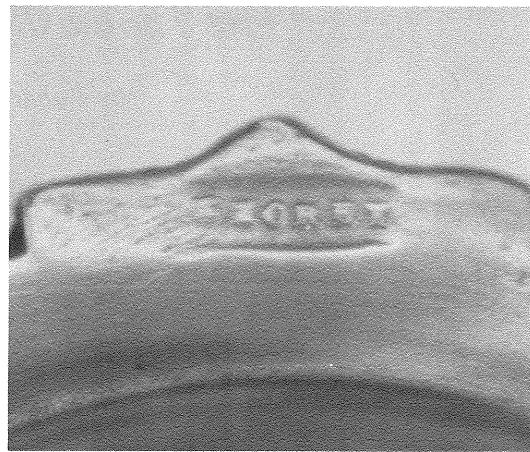


Fig. 3. Mark of "Shorey" (in rectangle), unrecorded.



Fig. 4. Thumbpiece on one quart tankard.

Now let's complicate things a little further. I also own an English pewter flagon, *Figure 5*, marked the same as the two previous tankards. The flagon has a tapering body, mid-body band, and an almost flat lid with a single frontal projection on the lip where "Shorey" is stamped. The thumbpiece is ornately splayed, *Figure 6*, and the handle is hollow cast. John Thomas' mark is on the inside bottom.



Fig. 5. Flagon marked by both John Thomas and John Shorey.



Fig. 6. Thumbpiece on the flagon.

We now have three different pieces with the unusual feature of each being marked by two makers. In Cotterell's *Old Pewter*, under the Shorey, Jr. entry (#4263), we can see that there are two more maker's marks used with Shorey. One of them is "RW", the other, "EH". Were "RW", "EH", and John Thomas the makers of the pewter items and Shorey the distributor as Raymond Percy suggested in 1938?

Wayne Hilt, who has seen both tankards, believes that the two quart tankard has its *original* lid and the reason for the two sets of dents on the handle from the thumbpiece are from the realignment of the original thumbpiece, *Figure 7*. Hilt is also familiar with English pewter pieces having two makers' marks. He did own a pint mug with the touchmark of Samuel Ellis on the inside bottom and the mark of Robert Iles on the outside, just left of the handle.³

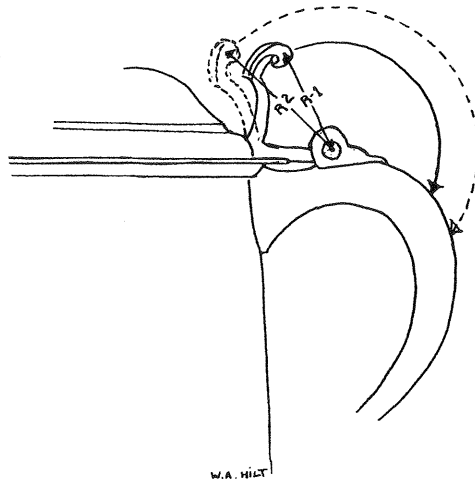


Fig. 7. Diagram of the two-quart tankard thumbpiece and handle mentioned in the Blaney article.

R-1 = radius of thumbpiece in current position.

R-2 = radius of the thumbpiece when bent forward.

Note: Hinge pin acts as origin of radius. Solid line shows impact point of thumbpiece at present position. Dotted line shows impact point of thumbpiece when the thumbpiece is bent forward. *Drawing by Wayne Hilt.*

We do know that John Shorey, Sr. exported to the colonies starting in 1695 as described by Ronald Homer in a *PCCA Bulletin*⁴. Homer also says that the "Inventories of the Shorey's molds show that they made only flatware."

Putting all this information together, it appears that John Shorey, Sr. (and/or Jr.) shipped his pewter ware and the pewter of other makers to the American colonies after he stamped his mark (Shorey) on the lids of holloware—a ware he is known not to have made. After all, the makers of this holloware would not see these pieces after they left British shores.

All three of the above pieces are marked with "Shorey" in a rectangle which is not illustrated in Cotterell for either Shorey, Sr. or Jr. Perhaps this was a special mark for pieces shipped to the colonies that were not made by Shorey. I would be interested if there are any other pewter pieces similarly marked.

The dimensions of my two pieces are:

	<u>Tankard</u>	<u>Flagon</u>
Height overall	6 1/2"	11 1/4"
Height to brim	5"	9 1/2"
Lip diameter	4 3/16"	4 15/16"
Base diameter	4 3/4"	6 5/8"
Anti-wobble ring	3 7/8"	4 7/16"

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—Thanks to Wayne Hilt for for his drawing.

A "Must Have" for Pewter Collectors

By Donald M. Herr

Fennimore, Donald L., Compiled by, *Henry Will Account Book: A Record of His Pewtering and Related Activities in New York City and Albany from 1763 to 1800*, Donald L. Fennimore, 1996, 307 pp., 30 blk. and wh. illus., \$16.50 ppd. (Available from Donald L. Fennimore, Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware 19735. Phone: 302-888-4698)

The *Henry Will Account Book* compiled by Donald L. Fennimore is a scholarly treatment of the only surviving account book of an eighteenth century America pewterer. It contains a trove of information and insight on the day-to-day affairs of an important American pewterer that can be found nowhere else. It is primary source material and it is a treasure.

The book is well illustrated, having thirty photographs of forms, marks and bills associated with Henry Will. Particularly enlightening to collectors and art historians are the business transactions, in the pewterers own attractive legible hand, with other pewterers. Multiple entries include dealings with his father John Will and brothers Philip, William and Christian, as well as Fredrick Bassett, George Coldwell, William Elsworth and Malcolm McEuen. Thousands of transactions are recorded between Henry Will and nearly 300 companies and individuals that date over a thirty-seven-year period from September 22, 1763 to September 27, 1800. A 23 page account index that

accompanied the document is incorporated into the book and greatly enhances the use of the manuscript.

In the introduction and Acknowledgments, Fennimore tells us of his excitement when he first learned of the discovery of the account book in Charlestown, South Carolina, in 1978, by officials of the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts (MESDA). His persistent interest resulted in its acquisition by the Winterthur Museum.

A section on The Man and the Account Book gives the reader background information on the pewterer and his account book. Numerous public notices and advertisements from early newspapers are cited. They chronicle Will's various business locations, his departure to Albany during the British invasion and his eventual return to New York City. The occasional typographical error or misspelling do not detract from the perceptive narrative.

The entries in the account book tantalize the mind. Tankards, mugs, beakers, porringers, round bowl spoons, plates and basins, funnels, a warming pan and an inkstand have been found with Henry Will marks. But where are the coffee urns, milk pots, sugar cisterns, steam pots, sucking bottles, colanders, tobacco boxes, chamber pots, bedpans, measures, round teapots, candle molds, pint

and a half teapots, long spoons, and ladles listed in his account book? Or the gallon size mugs? A challenge to the best of the imbibers! Or belly-shaped tankards? The collector's mind races as to what might be out there just waiting to be found.

Donald L. Fennimore, Curator at Winterthur Museum, has written extensively for prestigious magazines and journals in the field of American decorative arts. His vast knowledge of metals includes

pewter. He has held PCCA offices at regional and national levels.

Funded, in part by the Grant-in-Aid program of the Pewter Collector's Club of America, Fennimore's much awaited publication of the Henry Will Account book provides insight into this rare survival and increases our understanding of the important role pewter played in our society.

It is a "must have" for pewter collectors.