

The
PEWTER COLLECTORS' CLUB
of AMERICA INC.

• T H E B U L L E T I N •

WINTER 2003

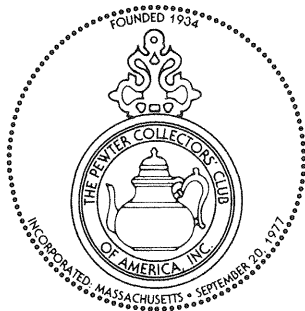
VOLUME 12, NUMBER 10

Flower Handle Porringers
A Method of Identification
see article by Melvyn Wolf, M.D.
on page 453



A flower handle porringer by Richard Lee

VOLUME 12
NUMBER 10



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President's Letter

In my first President's letter, I touched on the subject of meeting attendance. I asked for ideas from you to let me know how we could increase the number of attendees at our national and our regional meetings. As much as I looked forward to hearing from you, I heard from no one! Perhaps your suggestions and comments on ideas for increasing attendance might be better communicated through our web site Bulletin Board where they could be, more or less, brainstormed with other members. I will have some comments later in this letter on the topic of our web site and Bulletin Board.

With statistics given to me by Garland Pass, our Bulletin Editor, 52% of our memberships have joined *since* 1991. This is based on the household unit and does not include museums, historical societies, libraries or non-USA memberships. Yet when we look at who is attending our meetings, 90% or more are members who joined *before* 1991. This means that most of our newer members' only contact with the Club is through our publications. While our editors do publish an outstanding *Bulletin and Newsletter*, our newer members would gain even more if they attended our national and regional meetings.

Some of the advantages of those who attend our meetings are the opportunity to view pewter collections in major museums and private collections around the country, often with a hands-on inspection, something that as an individual you could not do. You can also attend the "Introduction to Pewter" session, presented by one or more of our experts, and have the opportunity to obtain answers to any of your questions. You will be able to examine the pewter brought by our member-speakers who bring items from their collections to illustrate their talks. And you will be able to buy pewter and reference books at fair prices from those who wish to sell pewter at the "Sales Table." But perhaps the greatest advantage of meeting attendance is the ability to glean first-hand information from some of our most knowledgeable members and to enjoy the camaraderie with a group of people who enjoy the same interest: collecting antique pewter.

Returning to the subject of our web site, when our total membership of 670 is considered (USA and non-USA members plus institutions), our Bulletin Board is not being used as much as it should or could be. Members, especially those who do not or cannot attend meetings, are missing a wonderful opportunity to post their questions, list their wants, praise what they like and criticize what they don't like, and discuss anything under the sun with other members. Learning about pewter from the experience of other members is the greatest benefit of membership, and the ability to do this via our Bulletin Board provides a means of doing this for everyone. Although the cost to the Club of providing this service is not great (approximately \$120.00 per year) if members do not take better advantage of it, it will be difficult for the Board of Governors to continue to support it. We realize that not everyone has a computer. However, if you get a chance to access one (a daughter's, a son's, a grandchild's, a niece's, a nephew's or a friend's), please visit the web site. It's awesome, thanks to Garland Pass and Bob Parker. If you have any questions regarding the web site, they would like to hear from you. So, visit the web site: <http://members.aol.com/pewterpcca>, and plan on attending the next meeting. You'll be glad you did!

Richard C. Graver

Two New Honorary Members

The Board of Governors at its meeting on October 31, 2003 unanimously bestowed honorary membership on the following two individuals:

John D. Davis

In honoring John Davis, the PCCA recognizes an entire professional life spent as curator at Colonial Williamsburg. A major part of that life has involved nurturing and expanding the finest collection of British pewter in the United States. During those years John has helped PCCA members, Peter Society members from Great Britain, and others conducting research by making the collection and himself available to all who sought his help. He has also gone out of his way to insure that every national meeting of the PCCA held at Colonial Williamsburg was a success. His latest achievement is the authorship of the catalogue for the CW collection, *Pewter at Colonial Williamsburg*, reviewed elsewhere in this issue of *The Bulletin*. It is the opinion of many collectors that this is the finest book on British pewter since Cotterell's *Old Pewter, Its Makers and Marks*.

David W. Hall

David Hall is a past president of the Pewter Society and has been the editor of their *Journal* since 1996. Together with Ronald Homer, he wrote, *Provincial Pewterers, A Study of the Craft in the West Midlands and Wales*, in 1985. This book has added considerably to information contained in Cotterell's, *Old Pewter, Its Makers and Marks*, specifically pewter from Worcester, Bewdley, Birmingham and Leominster. David, who has become very interested in Irish pewter, has written the only reference on this subject in 1995: *Irish Pewter – A History*. Currently this book is being updated as he continues to be passionately interested in all forms of Irish pewter. He, along with Jan Gadd, a member of the Pewter Society, catalogued and photographed all of the pewter in the Irish National Museum in Dublin. In September of 2002 he was the featured speaker, lecturing on Irish Pewter at the PCCA Northeast Regional meeting. He has written several articles on various subjects for the Pewter Society *Journal* and one article for the PCCA *Bulletin*. He has been a member of the PCCA since 2000.



Editor's Note

This issue brings to a close Volume 12 of *The Bulletin* and sixty-nine years of its publication. All previous volumes did not contain ten issues and the frequency of publication during the early years was not on a regularly scheduled basis. However, the number of pages in each issue has grown over the years and is now averaging fifty pages. Volume 12 is the first volume to exceed five hundred pages. This has been made possible by the continuing support of its contributing authors whose efforts I sincerely appreciate. I am especially grateful for those authors who contributed more than one article in Volume 12: Melvyn Wolf, Alex Neish, Andy Turano, Robert Smith, Thomas Pickett, Robert Bury, Robert Werowinski, Donald Herr, Terry Ashley, Ian Robinson, and Richard Bowen. Two lengthy and significant articles were also submitted by non-members: Jay Robert Stiefel and Philip Zea. With such an illustrious stable of authors, Volume 13 in its new format should be equally successful.

Flower Handle Porringers, A Method Of Identification

By Melvyn Wolf, M.D.

In Volume VII, Number 2, pages 54-62, I attempted to write an article on the identification of Crown Handled Porringers. Actually, there were significant differences in each of the Crown Handle Porringers, making the article clearly simple and easy for the reader. It was made even easier by the graphic interpretation that was written as a supplement by Bette A. Wolf. With that goal having been fairly successfully accomplished, I then followed up recently with the article in Volume XII, Number 6, pages 250-278 on "New York Handle Porringers, A Method of Identification".

It had always been my goal to conclude with an article on "Flower Handle" or "Rhode Island Handle" Porringers and possibly, even at some later date, an article on identification of miscellaneous porringers.

I obtained as many photographs as I could of the various "Flower Handle" porringers known. A large number of

these were obtained through the generosity of Webster Goodwin, The Winterthur Museum courtesy of Donald Fennimore, and Wayne Hilt.

When I assembled all of the photographs and started through them, I noticed almost immediately that none of the previous methods which I had used would be of any benefit in this particular type of porringer. With the exception of very few, almost all of these porringers have features that are so similar to each other, it became obvious that an article attempting to identify flower handle porringers would have to be done in a different fashion.

Some of these porringers do have characteristic features that allow relatively simple identification, but by and large, that is not the case. They all essentially have six pairs of apertures on the handle. I have described and numbered them beginning with the two basilar apertures as number 1 and then progressing toward the hanger hole (Figure 1).

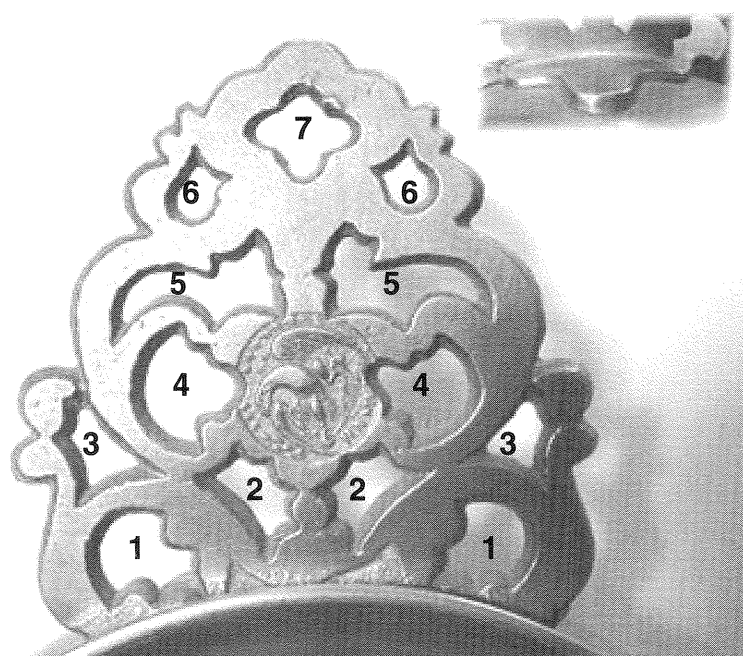


Fig. 1. Numbering of Apertures.

Most of these have a linguiform bracket and the typical bossed bowl. There are two which have a linguiform bracket with a point and two with splines on the back, helping to make identification simpler. One has a large basin bowl and another has a modified basin bowl with boss. A group of four porringers, having been made by Thomas Danforth II, Thomas Danforth III, Josiah Danforth and Ashbil Griswold have handles that are quite characteristic and will be shown in the photographs to follow. They also have handles that when unmarked prevent identification other than to those four.

As an aside to this article, I attempt to lay to rest the concern about the Ashbil Griswold porringer with the "AG" mark struck on the back. In the distant past, the late Bill Blaney wrote an article about that Ashbil Griswold Porringer and felt it was a fake or spurious mark, porringer or both. (See Vol. VII, No. 2, p.73) The fact that a second similar porringer existed at that time in the Midwest should have suggested that the porringer was probably correct and although an uncommon place for a mark to be applied by a 19th century maker, it was still a correct porringer. If we assume that the porringer handle started with Thomas Danforth II, it is obvious that since Thomas Danforth III, his son who apprenticed with him, the handle could have easily moved there. Ashbil Griswold also apprenticed with Thomas Danforth III and certainly that gives explanation to the handle being used at some later date by him. Since William Danforth, the father of Josiah Danforth, trained with his brothers, including Thomas Danforth III, the connection is reasonably acceptable since Josiah Danforth apprenticed with his father William. So, it can be seen that there is no problem associating this particular handle mold with the previously mentioned pewterers, Thomas Danforth II, Thomas Danforth III, Josiah Danforth and Ashbil Griswold. An example of each of these porringers is shown in the subsequent article, including an enlarged mark of Ashbil Griswold, which appears on the back of the porringer and is certainly a correct mark. I believe the whole problem arose because of the location of the mark, which is on the back of the handle. It is a typical 18th century marking technique but the fact that it was a small "AG" mark, as opposed to an eagle mark, means it could have been struck on the front. Had Griswold used his eagle mark and struck it on the front of the handle, no one would have given a second thought about the authenticity of the porringer.

I was able to separate out those few porringers which were unequivocally identifiable by specific features. The remaining "flower handle" porringers will just be photographed and it will be left for the reader to compare with any "flower handle" porringer which he possesses. It will be noted, however, that the lower outer aperture, those marked number 1, and also illustrated in Figure 2, are completely different on all of the porringers. While they are all at first glance similar, they are all distinctly different and if one just compares that particular aperture, with the porringer in their own possession, identification can be easily made.

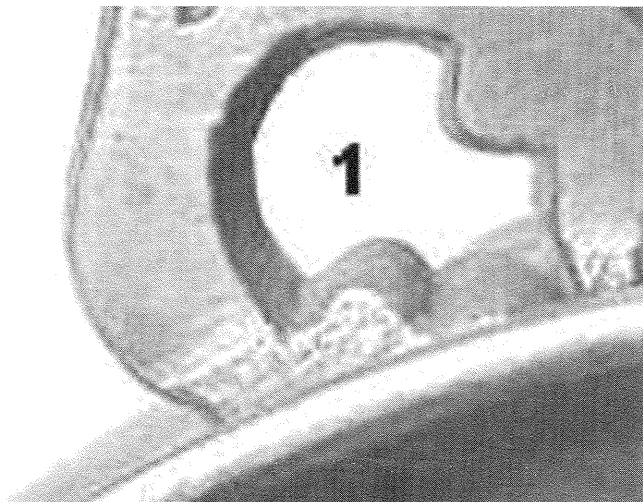


Fig. 2. Outer Basilar Aperture Number 1.

Since there is no special method for identification, I arbitrarily will place them in the following groupings by type. Figure 1 shows the arbitrary numbering of the apertures. Figure 2 shows the marking of the basilar aperture. This aperture on those porringers not otherwise identified will become the determining feature as to the maker of the porringer.

Type I porringers are the easiest type to identify in that they are made only by Richard Lee. They have a six inch basin bowl and the handle is characteristically shown in Figure 3.

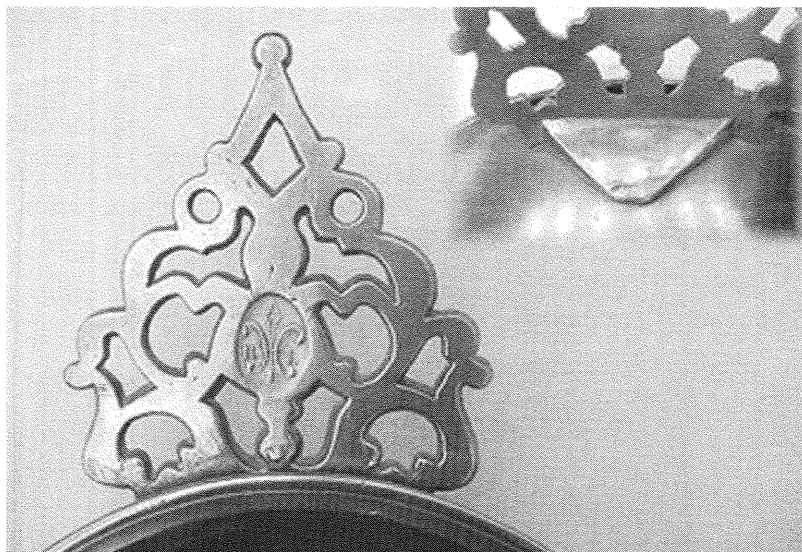


Fig. 3. Type I, Richard Lee.

Type II is the only other basin bowl porringer $3\frac{3}{4}$ " in diameter, marked by Richard Lee. It may or may not have a hanger aperture and is characterized by the D shaped bracket (Figure 4). It is also characterized by only having 10 apertures or 11 if a hanger hole is present.

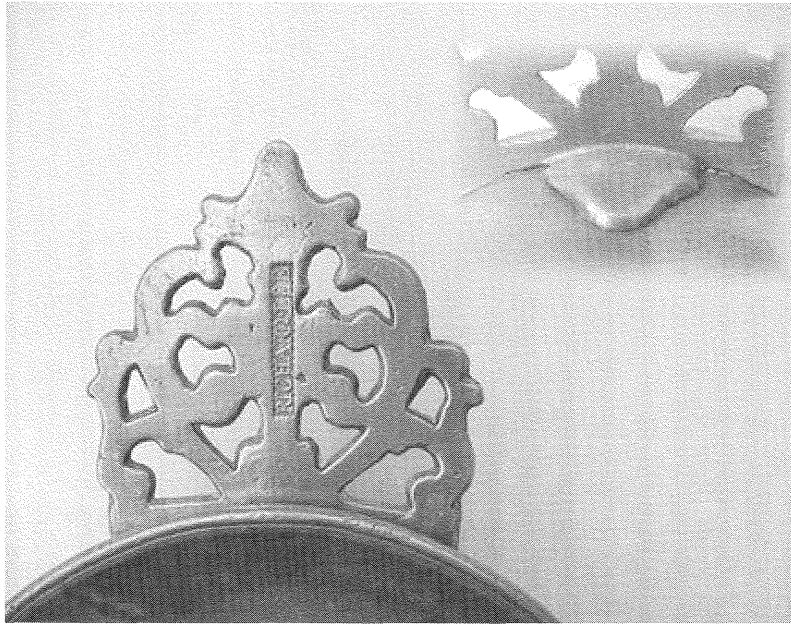


Fig. 4. Type II, Richard Lee.

Type III is the only other fairly simple porringer to identify in that aperture pair number 6 are perfectly circular and all bowls are bossed and in the 5" range. This, as well as can be determined, was only used by one group of porringer makers, beginning with an example by Thomas Danforth II (Figure 5), Thomas Danforth III (Figure 6), Ashbil Griswold (Figure 7) and Josiah Danforth (Figure 9). A photograph of the mark on the Ashbil Griswold porringer is shown in Figure 8. It is blown up to reveal the fact that it is an accurate mark.



Fig. 5. Type III, Thomas Danforth II.

Type III Continued



Fig. 6. Type III, Thomas Danforth III.



Fig. 7. Type III, Ashbil Griswold. (Webster Goodwin Collection)

Type III *Continued*

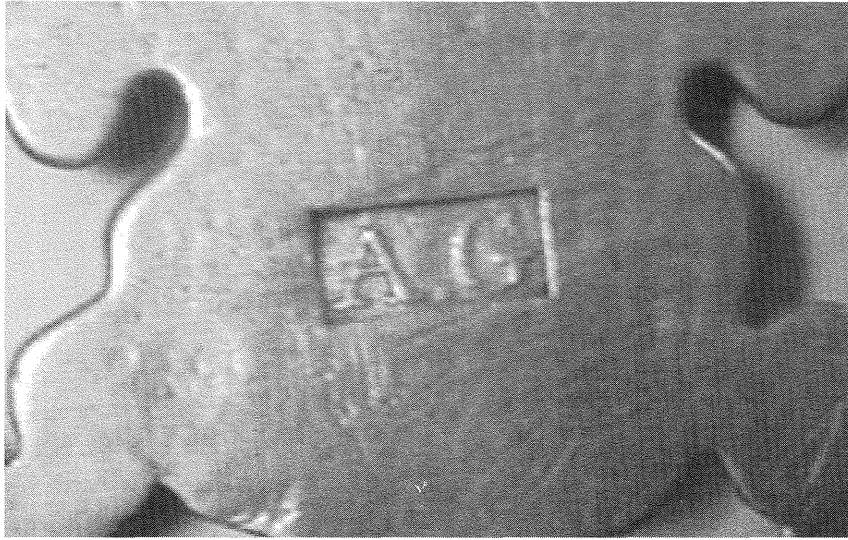


Fig. 8. "AG" Mark (Webster Goodwin Collection)



Fig. 9. Type III, Josiah Danforth

Type IV are all made by Samuel Hamlin and one example marked Josiah Keene. All bowls are in the 5" range. The handles are all characterized by the linguiform bracket and the so called "bow tie" which appears at the base of the handle, just medial to apertures number 1. If one looks carefully, it will be noticed that the "bow tie" on the left side is smaller than the one on the right. This is typical of this entire group of porringers. Figure 10 is that of a rare porringer marked by Samuel Hamlin, utilizing the "SH" rose. Another just as rare is that of the Hamlin in block letters (Figure 11). The other standard Hamlin eagles are shown in the next two figures (Figures 12 and 13). The Josiah Keene example is shown in Figure 14. This is obviously from the Samuel Hamlin mold and I suspect since this is one of the only porringers of its type, it may very well have been made by Hamlin on order for Josiah Keene who dye struck the mark himself. This is however, merely conjecture.



Fig. 10. Type IV, Samuel Hamlin with Rose.
(Webster Goodwin Collection)

Type IV *Continued*



Fig. 11. Type IV, Samuel Hamlin with Block "Hamlin".
(Webster Goodwin Collection)

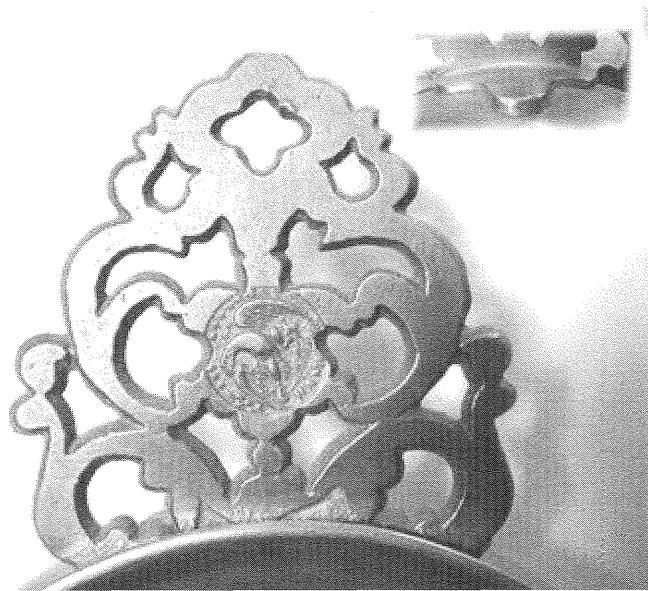


Fig. 12. Type IV, Samuel Hamlin.
(Webster Goodwin Collection)

Type IV *Continued*



Fig. 13. Type IV, Samuel Hamlin.

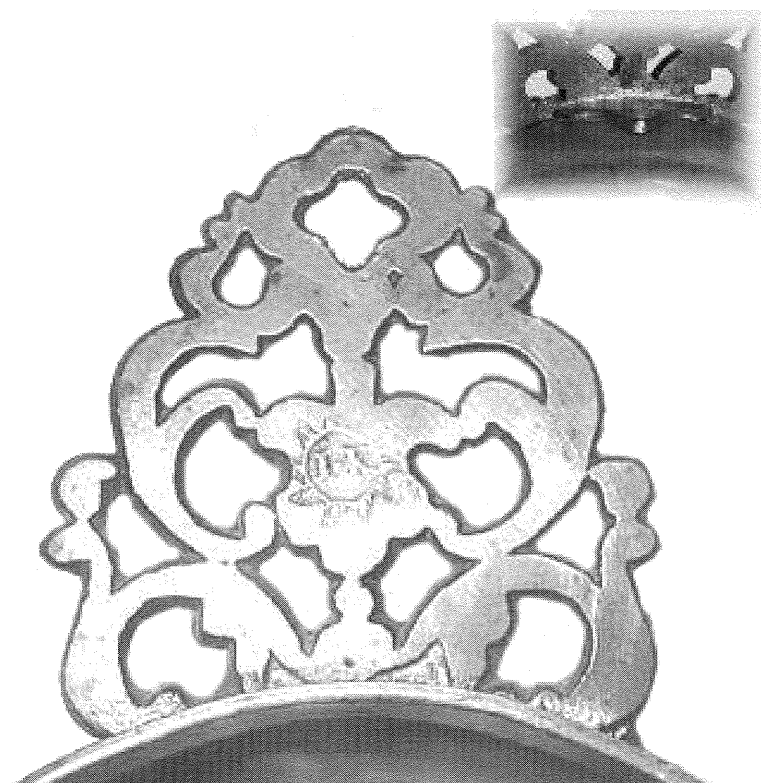


Fig. 14. Type IV, Josiah Keene. (Courtesy of Winterthur Museum)

Type V is a flower handle porringer which was used by both Gershom Jones and Samuel Hamlin. The porringers are in the $4\frac{1}{4}$ " - $4\frac{3}{8}$ " inch range and are shown in Figures 15 and 16.



Fig. 15. Type V, Gershom Jones.

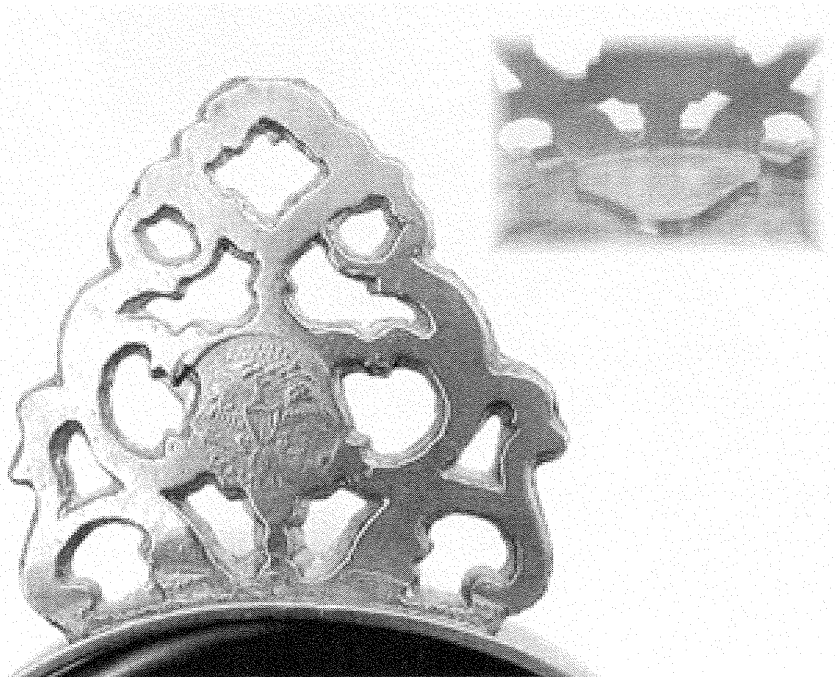


Fig. 16. Type V, Samuel Hamlin.

Type VI flower handle porringers were used by both Joseph Belcher, Senior or Junior, as well as David Melville. They are shown in Figures 17 and 18. The bowl diameters are $4\frac{1}{4}$ " to $4\frac{1}{8}$ " respectively.

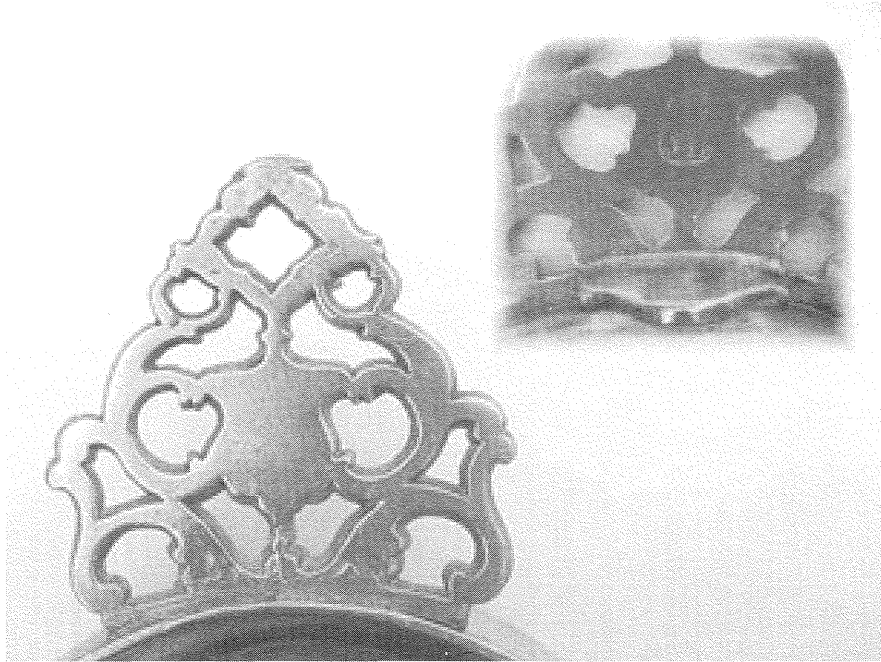


Fig. 17. Type VI, Joseph Belcher Senior or Junior.



Fig. 18. Type VI, David Melville.

Type VII was used by both David Melville and Thomas Boardman. They have a linguiform bracket with a pointed tip and are shown in Figures 19 and 20. These porringers are in the 5½" range.

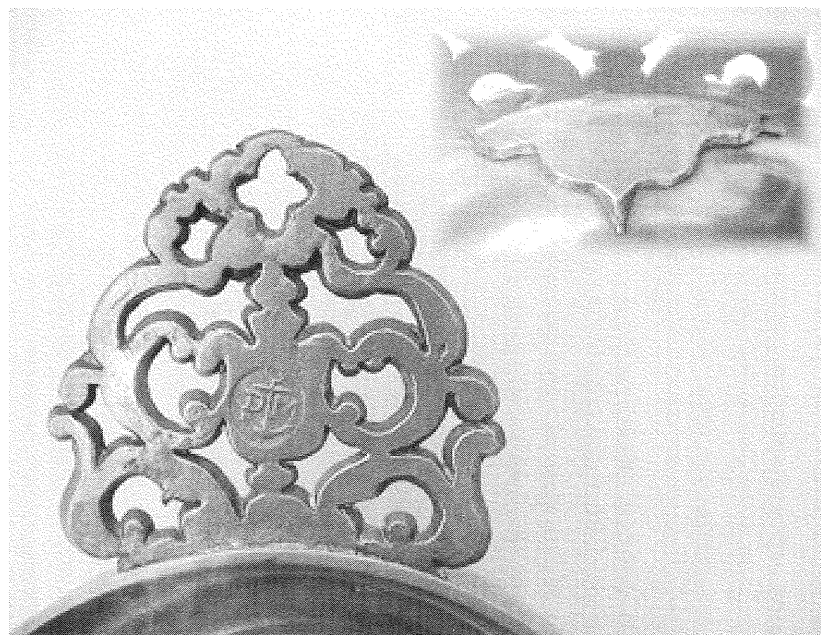


Fig. 19. Type VII, David Melville.

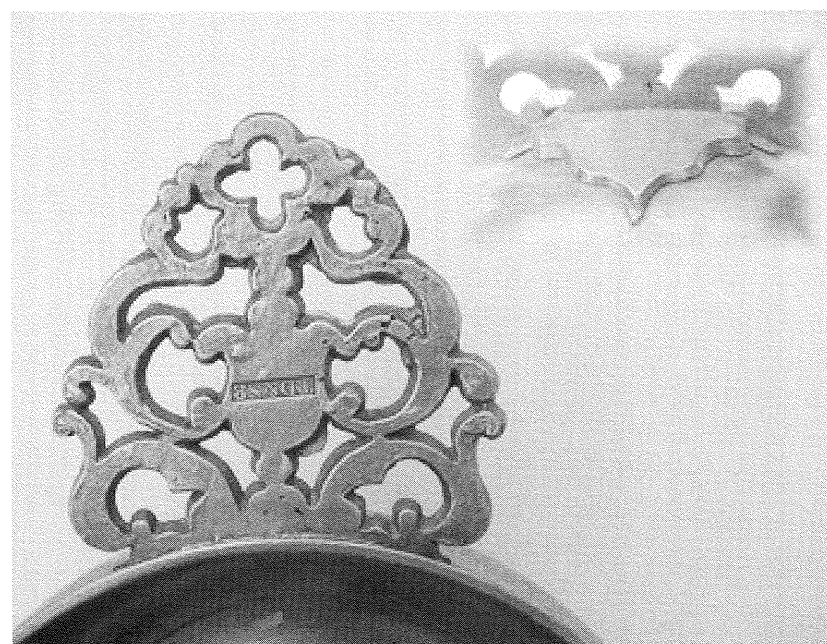


Fig. 20. Type VII, Thomas D. Boardman.

Type VIII is marked both by William Billings (Figure 21) as well as William Calder (Figure 22). There are in the 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ " range. If one notices, the handle has been somewhat recut below the shield. As well as can be determined by looking carefully the molds started out as one.



Fig. 21. Type VIII, William Billings.

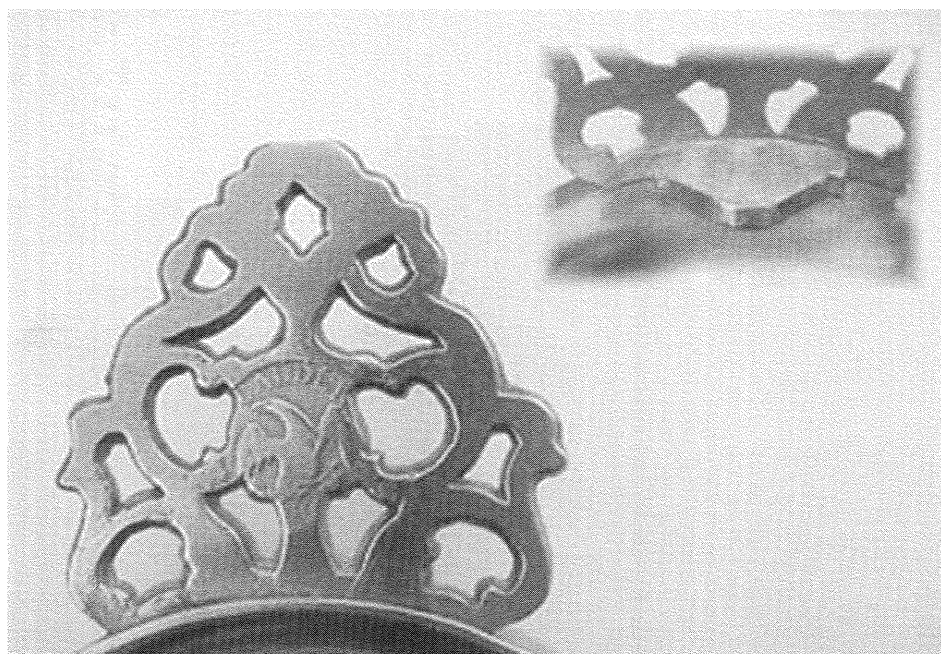


Fig. 22. Type VIII, William Calder.

Type IX is a 5" plus handle porringer by John Belcher Junior or Senior (Figure 23). I was unable to obtain the front of the porringer photograph in Ledlie Laughlin's book. I reproduced it from the back side only. I am reasonably sure, particularly based on the number 1 apertures, these porringer molds are the same and it is certainly consistent that the Belcher mold and David Melville molds are used interchangeably.

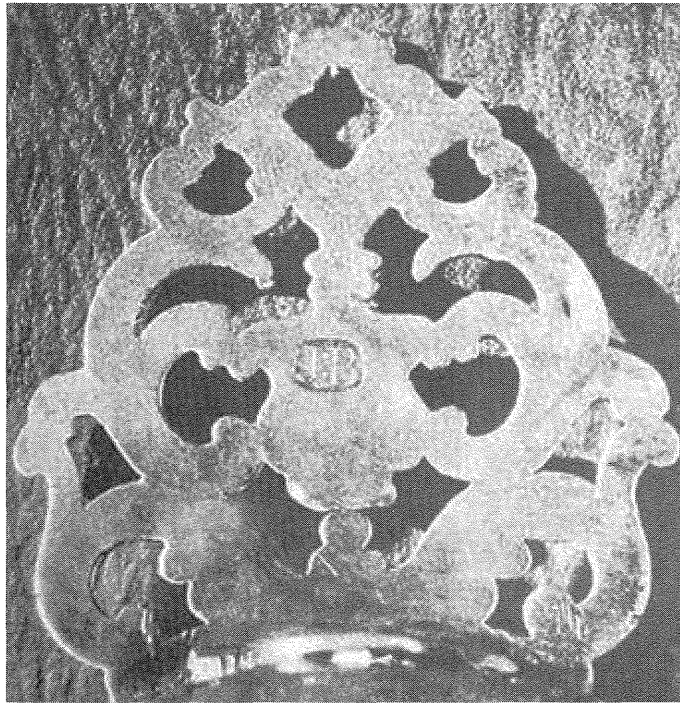


Fig. 23. Type IX, Joseph Belcher. (Pewter in America)

I know this is somewhat of a stretch, comparing the front of one porringer with the back of another, but it is the best I can do. If one looks carefully at the number 1 aperture on the lower left hand side of the Melville porringer (Figure 24), as it faces you, and compare it with the aperture on the lower right side of the Belcher porringer from the back, they are so similar and I have not been able to determine any other apertures which are of that type. I do believe this mold was used by both men.



Fig. 24. Type IX, David Melville.

Type X is the so called “stag” porringer. The photograph is shown in Figure 25. Unmarked varieties have been found and one is shown for comparison in the next photograph (Figure 26). This mold was also used by Gershom Jones (Figure 27).

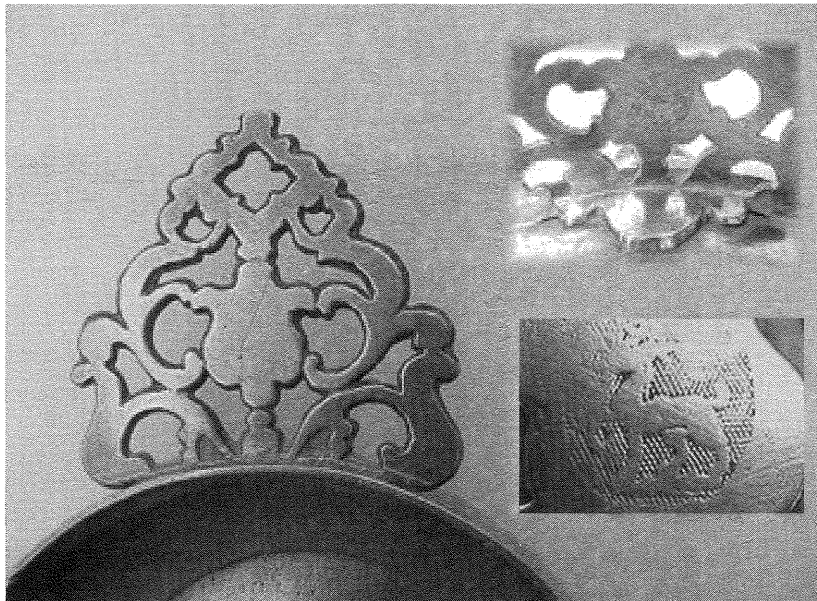


Fig. 25. Type X, “Stag” Mark.

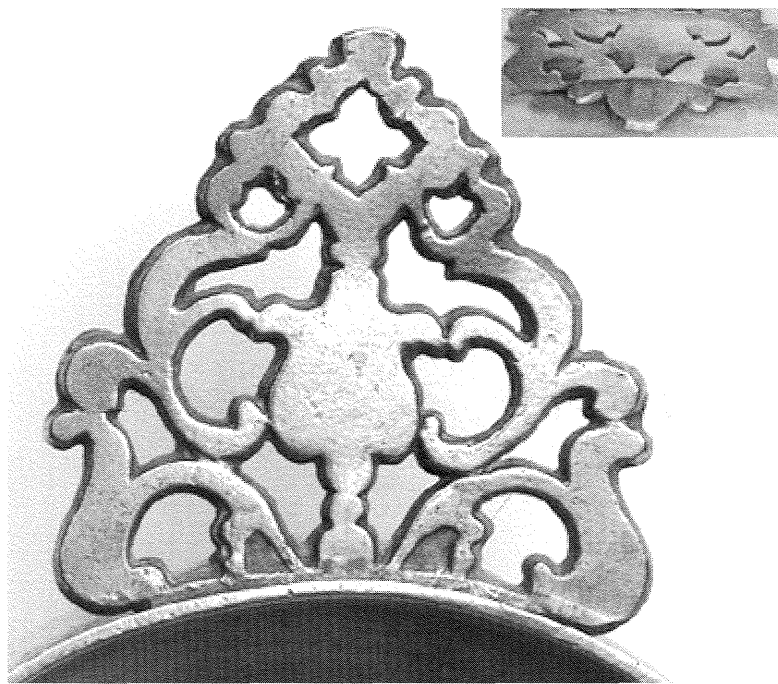


Fig. 26. Type X, Unmarked. (Courtesy of Wayne Hilt)

Type X Continued



Fig. 27. Type X, Gershom Jones.

Type XI is another handle which was used by both Gershom Jones as well as William Calder. It is shown in Figure 28 and 29. It is characterized by a very small support node under the shield and two very small nodes above the shield.



Fig. 28. Type XI, Gershom Jones.

Type XI *Continued*



Fig. 29. Type XI, William Calder. (Webster Goodwin Collection)

Type XII is by Gershom Jones (Figure 30) and William Billings (Figure 31). It measures $5\frac{1}{8}$ " inch in diameter and has a linguiform bracket. It is characterized by a small bow tie. Again, comparing these photographs with your specific porringer is mandatory if identification is to be made.



Fig. 30. Type XII, Gershom Jones.

Type XII *Continued*

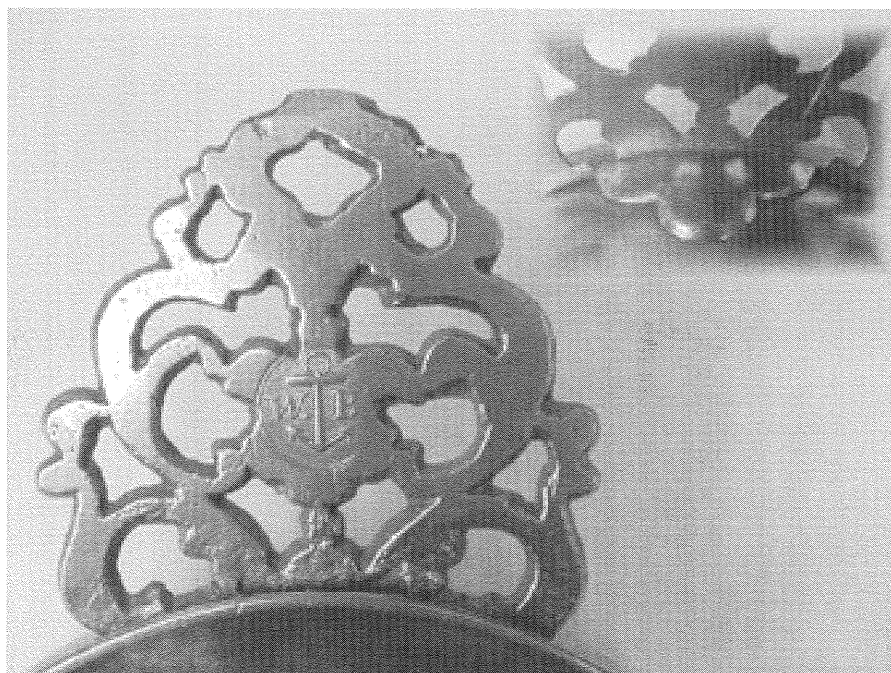


Fig. 31. Type XII, William Billings.

Type XIII reveals a fairly large bow tie and again a linguiform bracket and is unknown as to the maker (Figure 32).

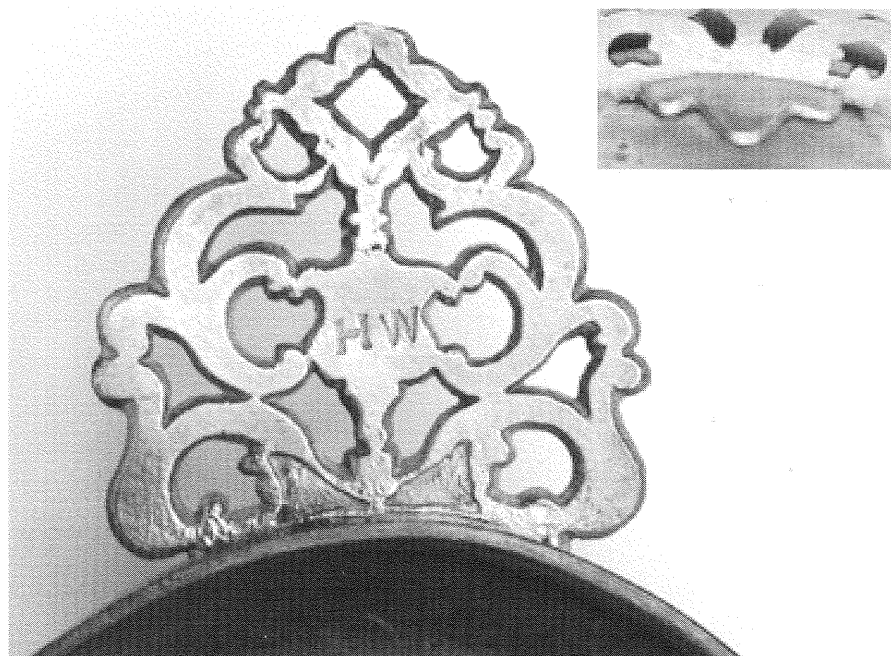


Fig. 32. Type XIII, Unknown. (Courtesy of Wayne Hilt)

Type XIV was used only by Samuel Hamlin, Jr. and is shown specifically because it shows the interchangeability of a handle on two different sized bowls. Figure 33 has a bowl diameter of $4\frac{5}{8}$ " while Figure 34 has a bowl diameter of $5\frac{1}{4}$ ".



Fig. 33. Type XIV, Samuel Hamlin, Jr.



Fig. 34. Type XIV, Samuel Hamlin, Jr.
(Webster Goodwin Collection)

Type XV by William Billings is a 3¼" bossed bowl porringer, characterized with what I describe as a Chinese Pagoda roof which forms the top of the hanger aperture (Figure 35). Also note that this is the smallest flower handle porringer described in this article and therefore its size is a distinctive characteristic.

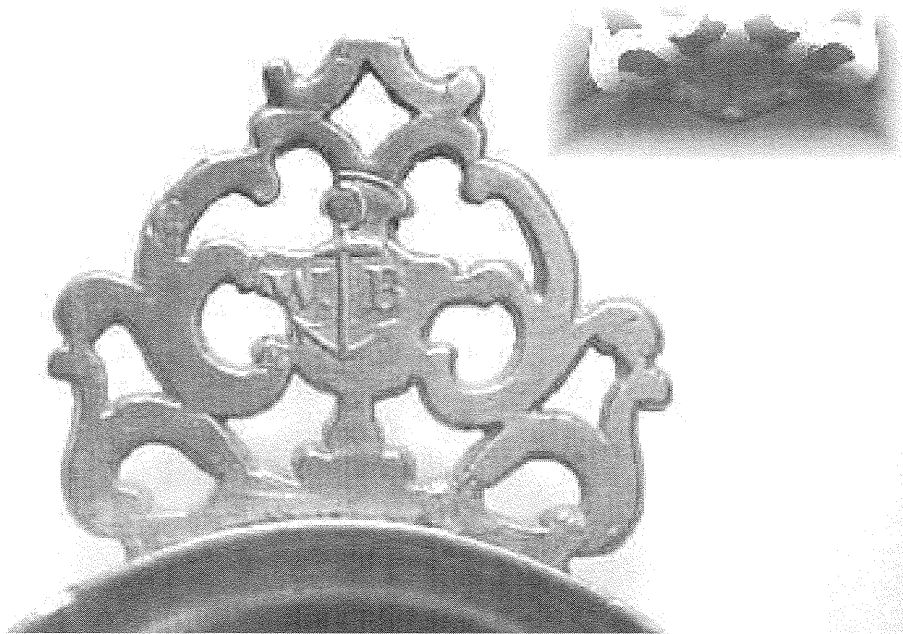


Fig. 35. Type XV, William Billings. (Courtesy of Winterthur Museum)

Type XVI is marked by Samuel Hamlin, Junior (Figure 36). While the tip is the same as the Type XV porringer shown in Figure 35, the number 1 apertures are completely different and therefore, it is my opinion, these porringers are from different molds.

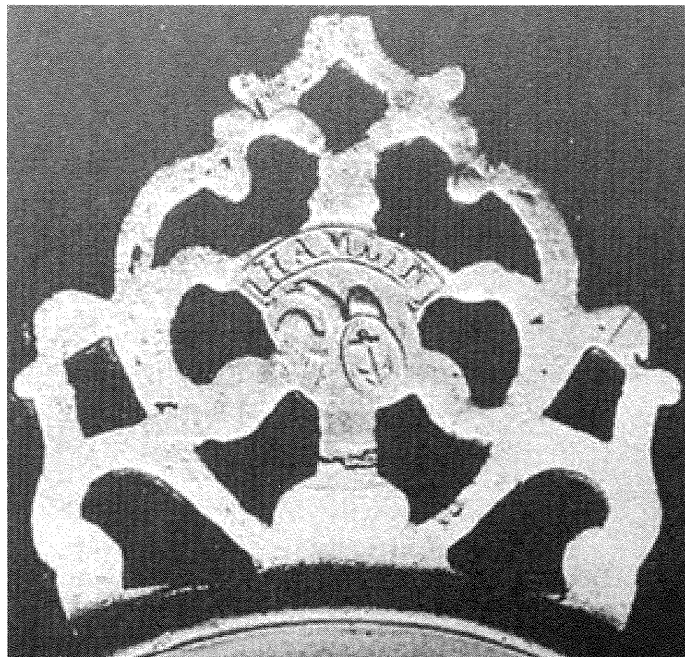


Fig. 36. Type XVI, Samuel Hamlin, Jr. (Pewter in America)

Type XVII is a $5\frac{1}{2}$ " inch William Billings porringer with a linguiform bracket (Figure 37).



Fig. 37. Type XVII, William Billings.

Type XVIII is a $5\frac{1}{8}$ " inch porringer by William Calder. Again, this has a linguiform bracket (Figure 38).

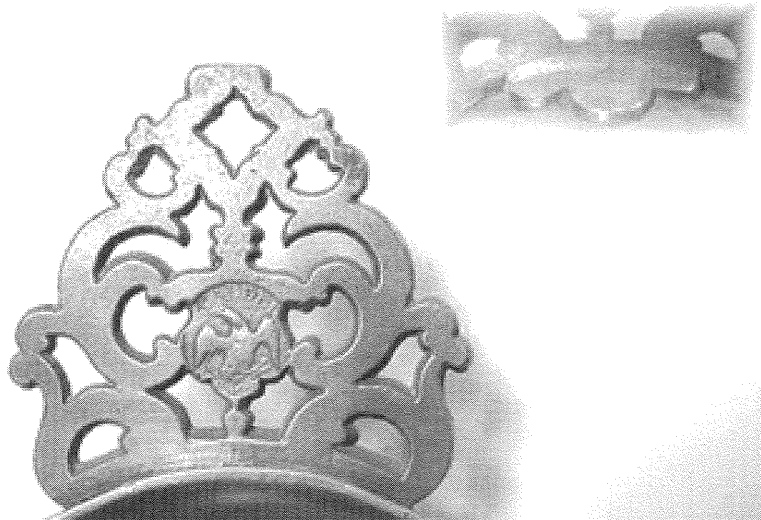


Fig. 38. Type XVIII, William Calder.

Type XIX is a $4\frac{1}{8}$ " inch porringer marked by "TD & SB" with a modified "D" bracket (Figure 39).

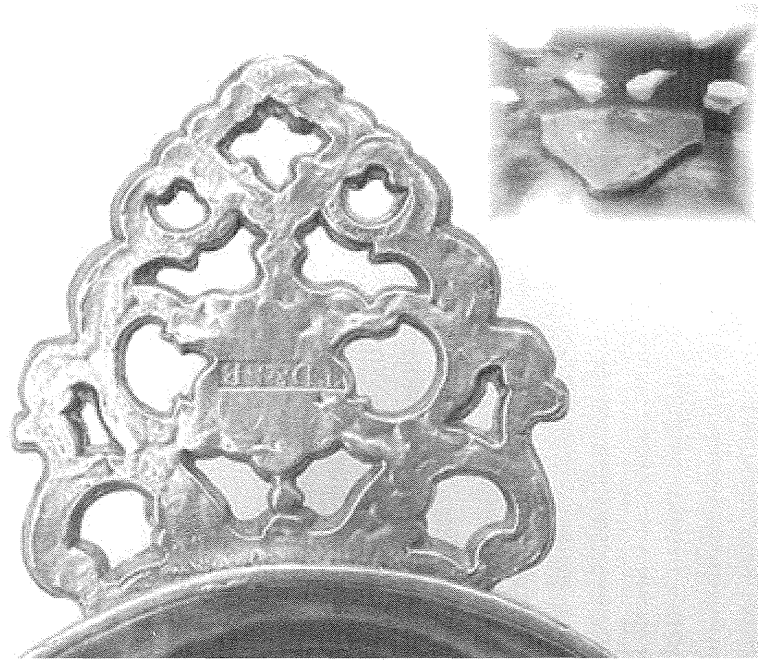


Fig. 39. Type XIX, "TD & SB"

Type XX is a $5\frac{1}{2}$ " inch porringer characterized by a linguiform bracket and a full spline which traverses the entire back of the porringer (Figure 40). This type, to my knowledge, has never been found marked nor has any of the subsequent types.



Fig. 40. Type XX, Unknown. (Webster Goodwin Collection)

Type XXI is that of a flower handle with 16 apertures, triangular bracket with short splines, and a normal bossed bowl. Some people have felt that this porringer handle may indeed be British, but it is included in this article on flower handle porringers (Figure 41).

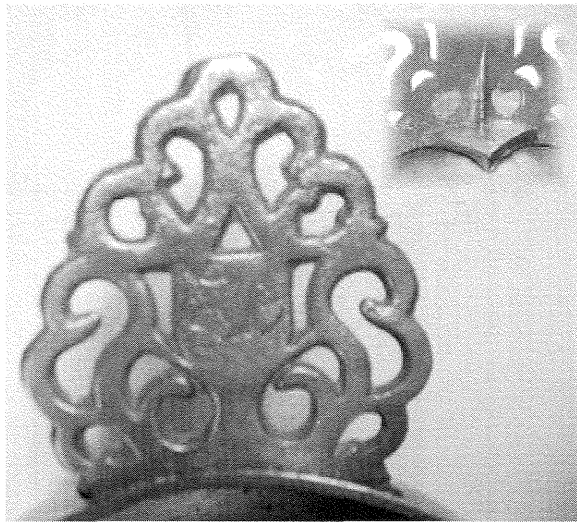


Fig. 41. Type XXI, Unknown.
(Webster Goodwin Collection)

Type XXII is again a $5\frac{3}{8}$ " porringer with bow tie. While it is similar to the other porringers, it does not match up with any I have been able to find (Figure 42).



Fig. 42. Type XXII, Unknown.
(Webster Goodwin Collection)

Type XXIII is a 5" porringer with a linguiform bracket (Figure 43).



Fig. 43. Type XXIII, Unknown.
(Webster Goodwin Collection)

Type XXIV is another modified bow tie porringer, $5\frac{3}{8}$ " inches in diameter (Figure 44).

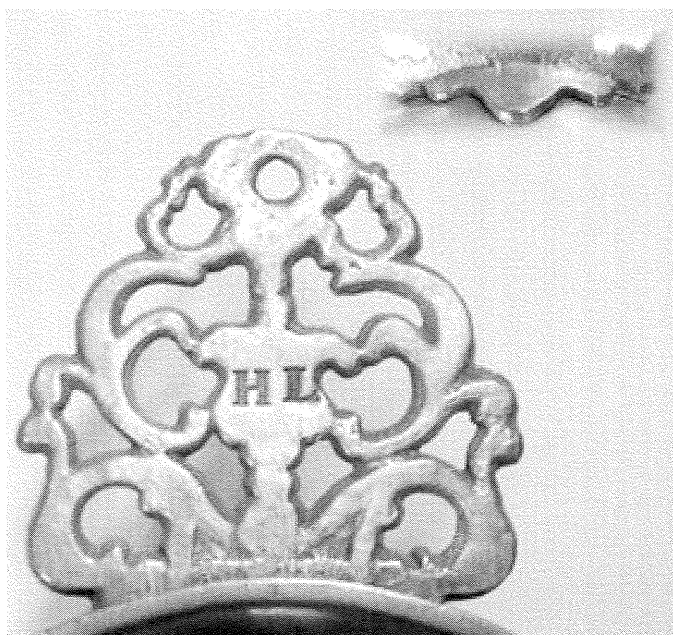


Fig. 44. Type XXIV, Unknown.
(Webster Goodwin Collection)

Type XXV is on a $3\frac{3}{4}$ " basin bowl which could be a Boardman type. The handle has a modified "D" shaped bracket, but is otherwise not similar to any handle previously shown (Figure 45). It also has a Chinese Pagoda type tip.

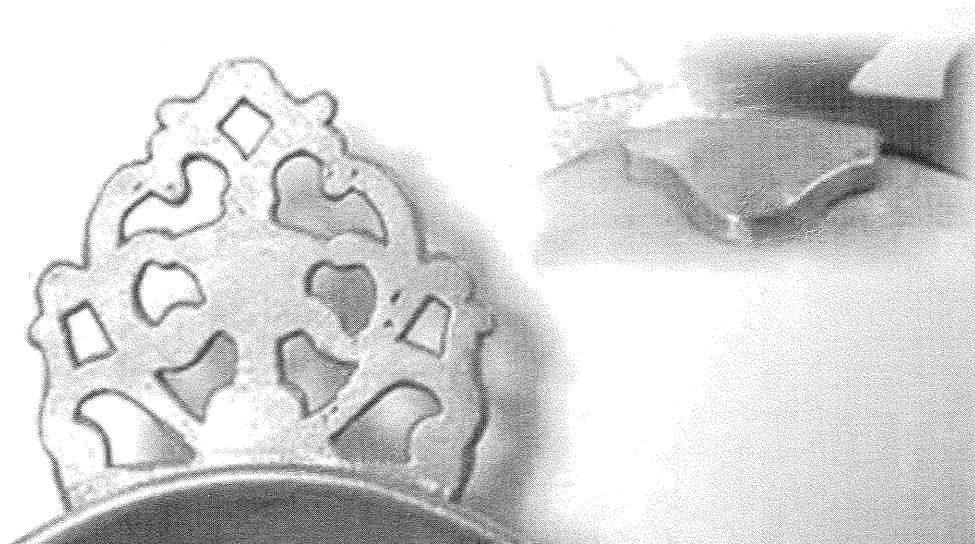


Fig. 45. Type XXV, Unknown. Possibly Boardman.
(Webster Goodwin Collection)

Type XXVI is a $5\frac{3}{8}$ " inch bossed bowl porringer. It has a typical Rhode Island handle and linguiform bracket, but no counterpart is identified in any of the marked varieties (Figure 46)



Fig. 46. Type XXVI, Unknown.
(Webster Goodwin Collection)

Type XXVII is a 5" English porringer by Hale and Son. It is included since it is very similar to the other porringers with the same number of apertures (Figure 47).

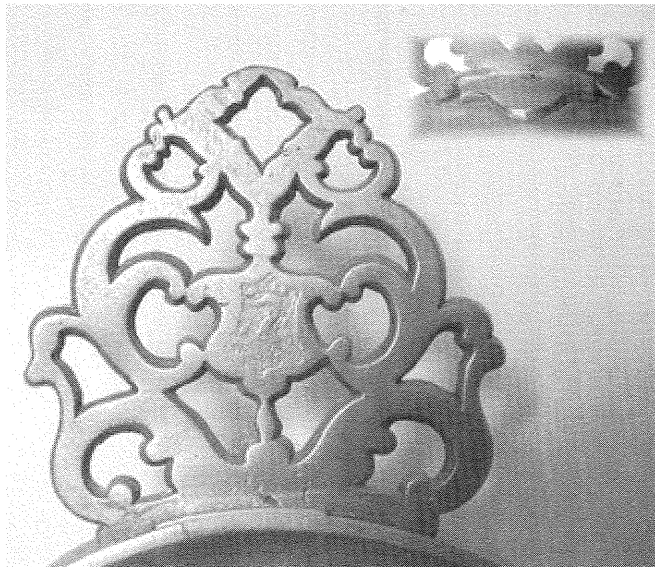


Fig. 47. Type XXVII, Hale and Son, English.
(Webster Goodwin Collection)

In reviewing some of the molds and the passage of molds to different pewterers, it certainly makes sense that Providence, Rhode Island pewterers such as Gershom Jones and Samuel Hamlin might have access to the same mold. It also makes sense that Joseph Belcher and David Melville, both working in Newport, might have had access to the same molds. The William Billings and William Calder combination is certainly explained by the Providence, Rhode Island connection.

There are however, some interesting connections that appear to have been established in this article that have yet to be completely explained. One of which would be the Type X porringer, where in Figure 25, the "stag" mark is identified and it is used on the same handle as in the Figure 27 porringer by Gershom Jones. It has been felt that the "stag" mark belongs to Boston pewterers, possibly the Greens, and yet the Gershom Jones handle is a definite Rhode Island form. It would suggest that somehow that handle mold passed from Boston to Rhode Island. Another similar case would be that in Type VII where Figure 19, a David Melville handle from Newport, apparently found its way to the Boardman group as is shown in Figure 20.

It would be very helpful if members of the Club would compare the unmarked, unattributed porringer handles illustrated in this article with porringers they own which are signed, and as time progresses we could reduce the number of unknown types.

In summary then, this is an attempt to describe the flower handle porringers. As mentioned, some are fairly simple to identify, but the bulk of them are so similar that photography and the use of the number 1 aperture appear to be the only way to separate them in a fashion that can be easily described.

I am sure members of the club will have significant comments and they will be appreciated. Hopefully, this article can be refined in the future and possibly simplified so as to be more authoritative than it currently is.

ADDENDUM:

Discussion with Wayne Hilt has raised the possibility that in some cases, molds were not passed from pewterer to pewterer, but a finished porringer may have been utilized by a pewterer to copy through plaster casting and then bronze molding a porringer handle that would be essentially the same with minimal discrepancies in size as the original handle. This is a real possibility and at this point, cannot be excluded. In some cases the handles are so identical that this possibility does not exist, but in others there are minimal and slight discrepancies that might be explained by the use of an intervening porringer to make a subsequent mold rather than the passage of the mold from pewterer A to pewterer B. Further investigation along these lines will be necessary.

More Surprises From Spain

By Alex Neish

The silversmiths who were one of the dominant medieval guilds of Barcelona were renowned for their craftsmanship. This did not make them averse to improving profit margins by slipping some pewter into their creations¹ but even this was not to detract from the quality of their masterpieces amongst which, then and now, are recognized the rare altar chalices made from the 13th to the 15th centuries. They are accepted as outstanding creations of the art that grace any leading museum.

Almost all stood on hexagonal bases with elaborate knopped columns. Surviving examples like that c.1360 from Mallorca in the Louvre Museum depict on the lobed base enameled religious scenes. Others like the hexagonal-based silver ones in the Cathedral of Vic in Catalunya – one hall-marked for 15th century Barcelona - are similar with enameled roundels on the knop. It is these that are particularly important for those interested in pewter as they carry, crudely engraved on the base, a cross standing on stones. (Figures 1 and 2)



Fig. 1. A typical Catalan silver chalice from the early 15th century. Vic Cathedral.

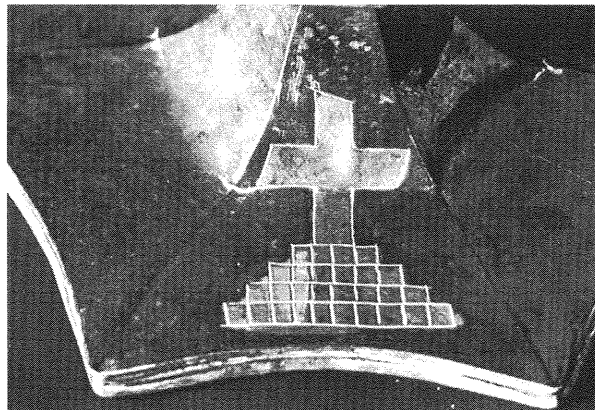


Fig. 2. The engraving of the Cross on the base of an early Vic Cathedral silver chalice. This also appears on the base of the pewter sepulchral chalice.

It is the same symbol that appears on the rounded base of what is one of the rarest pieces of all Spanish pewter. This is a sepulchral chalice standing 7 1/2" high, probably from the early 14th century. (Figure 3) Sepulchral chalices were occasionally buried with priests in medieval times. In the 1229 AD *Constitutions* of William de Blois, Bishop of Worcester it was even laid down that every church should be in possession of two chalices – “one of silver for the Mass and the other of tin to be placed in the coffin of the priest at his burial.” It is unclear how widely this rule was respected. Certainly – perhaps because grave robbing was not a popular activity - English ones are extremely scarce and, since they were to be buried, simple in format.



Fig. 3. The unique 14th century Catalan sepulchral chalice in the Neish European Pewter Collection.

The Spanish example, however, breaks the pattern by being in its way as elaborate as the contemporary silver ones. The stem is heavily knopped with 5 rosettes. Instead of their customary enameled decorations, these are cast in pewter with the symbols of the four Evangelists plus the depiction of Christ in Life. The subjects pictured on the rosette are shown below in the following order: A winged lion, Christ on the Cross, Christ in Life, an eagle, and an angel. (Figure 4) Once again, crudely engraved on the base, is the Cross standing on stones depicted in the silver examples.



Fig. 4. Detail of the rosettes on the knop of the sepulchral chalice with their religious scenes.

Apart from clear common provenance of Catalunya, the pewter reflection of the silver altar chalices must suggest that this sepulchral piece was specially made for the tomb of a high dignitary of the Church – perhaps a bishop. Equally that it was produced in Barcelona, either by a pewterer or perhaps even by a silversmith who felt the importance of the occasion was sufficient authority for him to break his Guild rules and create the chalice in pewter.

In fact pewter chalices, despite having been authorized by the early Church in poorer parishes for economic reasons were not popular in Europe. Antonio de Navarro in his *Causeries on English Pewter*² suggests that “with the exception of those found in tombs, pewter chalices and patens date from post-Reformation times.” He notes that towards the mid 16th century Edward VI ordered that chalices and patens “be exchanged for two communion cups of like weight and value.” These again were to disappear in subsequent reigns till re-appearing in the early 17th century.

A few Protestant pewter communion cups crept into Ireland but only the dour Presbyterian churches of Scotland adopted them in the late 18th century with any kind of enthusiasm. Before that Scotland in the late 17th century had offered a footnote to religious history when the Reformed protestants refused to be coerced into the public acceptance of Anglican Church communion and celebrated their own religion in small private ceremonies. Out of this developed the individual travelling chalices known as bell chalices as - for concealment - they adopted that format when inverted and screwed down. Most of these were in brass, some with highly attractive stems and bases. Today they are extremely rare as over 150 have been locked in recent years into a private collection – and by far the rarest are a handful of pewter examples.

All of this sets the background for the present example. It is the only known Spanish pewter sepulchral chalice. If others were ever made, they have been lost in the graves they honored. As a surprise discovery in the country’s national pewter output, however, it is not alone. Two unknown repoussé wall plaques from c. 1700 have also recently appeared. Once again they are the only known pewter examples of work that is relatively common in the world of Spanish brass. This clearly suggests that the English intermingling of pewterers and brasiers had not reached Iberia.

Repoussé work was an art practiced in England where a dish c.1720 by Butcher of Somerset (OP 748) recently surfaced at a Bonhams’ auction. Such work was also being faked in Britain in the early years of the 20th century when old plates were commandeered for the occasion. Such pieces can usually be recognized by the fact that the repoussé design is struck without compunction across the maker’s touchmarks.

The Spanish plates have a 9³/₄" diameter and date from around 1700. (Figure 5) The rims are profusely decorated with foliage and each bears struck three times the scallop shell that was synonymous with the pilgrim centre of Santiago de Compostela.³ In the wells appear classical scenes complemented by the classical busts that also figure on the rims.

This must suggest Santiago de Compostela as a main centre for the manufacture of pewter for this was where the plates were made. Yet why Spanish repoussé work is virtually unknown in pewter, while it proliferates in brass, is still a mystery. It can only confirm once again that pewter was unpopular in Spanish society, unable to compete with colorful ceramics, and soon relegated to the lower classes. By the late 17th century it was approaching extinction - until it enjoyed a brief revival in Barcelona towards the end of the 18th century and a few makers attempted in early 19th century Madrid to resuscitate the dying art.

Curiously the techniques for making these repoussé pieces was very similar to that for making the gothic hexagonal flagons from the 13th century which have of late been setting record prices. Less than a dozen have survived. Their place of manufacture is still obscure but it is clear they were made by beating strips of pewter on a mould. They were known in Catalunya where the only indisputable reference to them exists.

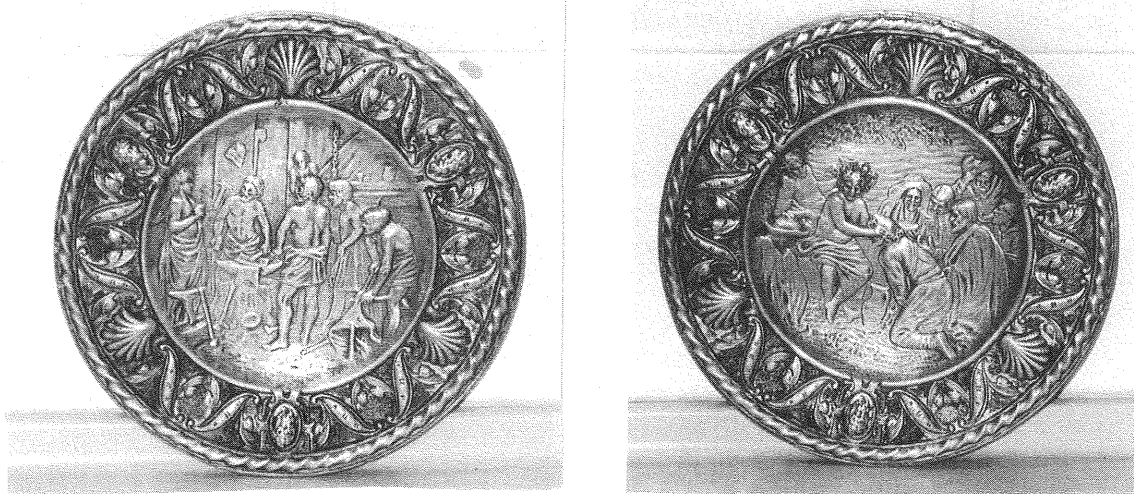


Fig. 5. A pair of pewter Spanish repoussé dishes with classical decoration bearing on the rim the shell of Santiago de Compostela. The Neish European Pewter Collection.

References

- ¹ "The Pewter of Spain", *PCCA Bulletin* – Vol. 11, No. 9, pp. 271-290.
- ² *Causeries of English Pewter* by Antonio de Navarro published by Country Life/Scribners. Undated
- ³ *PCCA Bulletin* – Op. Cit.

Lee & Creesy Teapots: Are There More Than Three?

By Thomas E. Pickett, Ph.D.

This article is a follow-up to my article in the Summer 2001 issue of the *PCCA Bulletin*¹ in which I discussed evidence of the relationship of Israel Trask in Beverly, Massachusetts to the Lee & Creesy teapots. I presented evidence to suggest that Trask had a role in their production. In this article I wish to expand and provide additional information on the provenance of the three known Lee & Creesy teapots and publish clear photographs of them. I also am seeking additional information from readers, specifically if they have knowledge of additional Lee & Creesy teapots.

Two of the three Lee & Creesy teapots are now owned and exhibited by the Springfield, Vermont Art and Historical Society. They were donated around 1970 by Mark C. LaFountain's estate at his death. Stevie Young documented them² with descriptions and photographs in the *PCCA Bulletin* Vol. 6, p. 204, in 1972. Laughlin³ published a photograph of one of these teapots and discussed it. In this article I present new photographs (which I obtained specifically for this article), and notes from correspondence between LaFountain, Laughlin, and the dealers for the Lee & Creesy teapots bought by La Fountain. Copies of this correspondence were provided to me by Amanda Page and Bob McLaughlin of the Springfield Art and Historical Society, and they also provided information on the past ownership of the teapots that should be of interest.

The other known Lee & Creesy teapot is owned by the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts. They allowed me to have it professionally photographed and granted permission to reproduce the photographs here.

The teapots now in Vermont were collected by LaFountain because he believed, initially, that the Lee in Lee & Creesy was related to the Springfield, Vermont maker Richard Lee or his son. The first teapot, with ball feet (Figure 1), was purchased in the summer of 1943 by LaFountain from Charles F. Montgomery for \$135.00. Montgomery, in his letter of July 13, 1943 to La Fountain, describes the similarity to Trask teapots but considers it to be related somehow to the Springfield Lee. Montgomery asks, in a note added in the margins of his letter, that his name not be mentioned in connection with this teapot as he has other customers! LaFountain's second teapot is one with no ball feet (Figure 2) that he bought in the fall of 1943 from Reginald F. French, 155 Lincoln Avenue, Amherst, Massachusetts. In a letter dated October 14, 1943, French offers it to LaFountain for \$80.00. French notes its similarity to ones produced by Trask and notes that LaFountain bought "the only other one I know about."

In August 1943 Laughlin wrote La Fountain (see excerpt in Figure 3). He thanked La Fountain for a photograph of the teapot and discusses the similarities with the Trask examples as well as a Creesy-Trask connection. Laughlin also provides a discussion of a Beverly connection in "Pewter in America"³



Fig. 1. Lee & Creesy footed teapot in the Springfield, Vermont Art and Historical Society.



Fig. 2. Lee & Creesy non-footed teapot in the Springfield, Vermont Art and Historical Society.

Aug. 5th 1943

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
PRINCETON NEW JERSEY

RADCLIFFE HEERMANCE
Director of Admission
Room 302 Nassau Hall

MARGARET J. WILLIAMS
Assistant to Director
Room 300 Nassau Hall

Dear Mr. LaFontaine:

Several weeks ^{ago} I learned of the existence of your Lee + Cressy teapot but did not know who the owner was. I am most grateful to you for the photographs which I am very pleased to have. This is an attractive and interesting shape, rare in American pewter.

Both the form and the decoration are suggestive of the work of Israel Trask and I find by reference to Beverly records that the Trask and Cressy families there intermarried. It will not be surprising to me therefore if we find that Cressy was a native of Beverly and possibly a relation or apprentice of Trask. The original Cressy settled in Salem but the family spread also to Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and elsewhere in Massachusetts before 1780 so my guess may not prove correct.

Fig. 3. Excerpt from a letter by Ledlie Laughlin to Mark C. LaFontaine dated August 5, 1943.

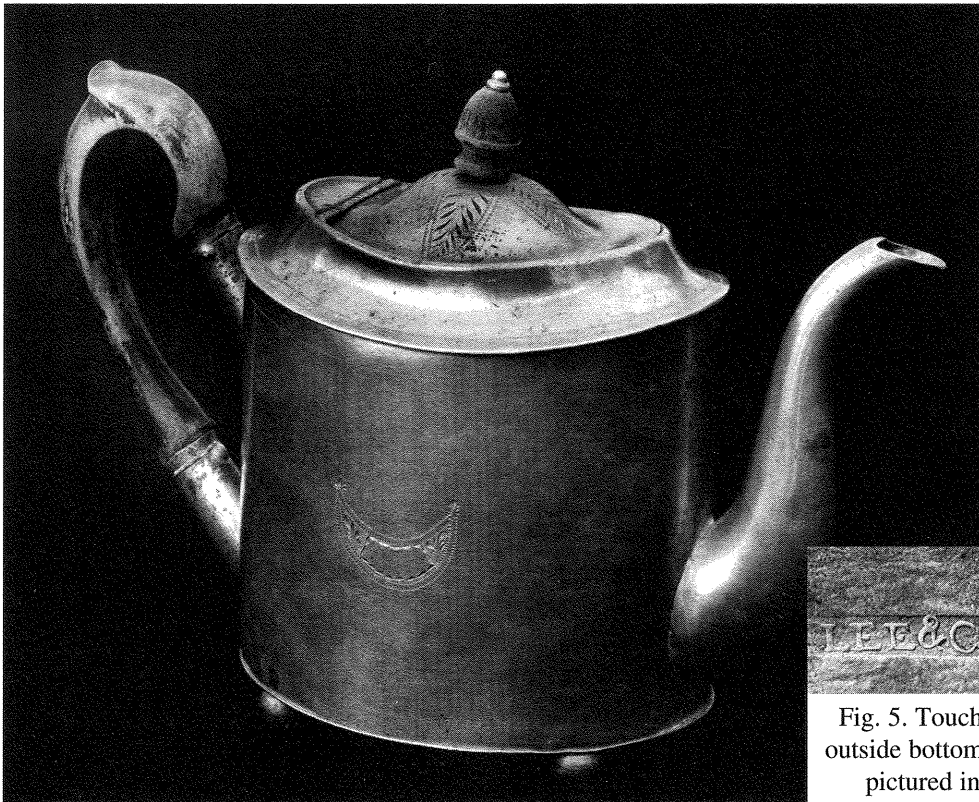


Fig. 5. Touchmark on the outside bottom of the teapot pictured in Figure 4.

Fig. 4. Lee & Cressy footed teapot (#134662) in the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts by whose kind permission Figs. 4 and 5 are reproduced.



Fig. 6. Footed teapot marked "I Trask" in the author's collection, for comparison with the Lee & Cressy teapots.

The teapot now in Salem (Figure 4) was owned at one time by Carl Jacobs, then, the Litchfield (Connecticut) Historical Society, later, Thomas D. Williams, next, William D. Carlebach of Bedford, New York and finally accepted by the Peabody Essex Museum Committee on May 15, 1979. This provenance information was provided to me by Kristen Weiss, Collections Manager, American Decorative Arts Department, Peabody Essex Museum.

The teapot in Salem (Figure 4) is $6\frac{7}{8}$ " overall height with a base of $3\frac{7}{8}$ " by $5\frac{3}{8}$ ". The footed one now in Springfield, Vermont (Figure 1) is $6\frac{5}{8}$ " overall height and 10 inches overall length. It is figured in Laughlin, Plate XCIV, Figure 770. The non-footed one in Springfield (Figure 2) is $10\frac{1}{4}$ " overall length and $6\frac{1}{2}$ " overall height. These dimensions are those provided by Stevie Young², and visually corroborated by my inspection, although I did not have an opportunity to physically measure them.

Similarity of construction, touchmarks and decoration suggest that all three teapots came from the same workshop. A similar foliate engraved decoration is found on all three teapot lids, as well as similar escutcheon designs on the sides. Figure 5 shows the touchmark on the Salem example. It appears identical to the touchmarks on the Vermont examples (I have examined rubbings) with the ampersand (&) slightly elevated above the other letters. The three teapots are recognized by many to be very similar to ones by Trask. See Figure 6 of an Israel Trask marked teapot in my collection for comparison of form. Surely all three Lee & Creesy teapots were made either by Israel Trask or someone with a close connection to him.

Hopefully with these photographs and the recent history of these three teapots, other examples may be recognized, if they exist.

I wish to acknowledge and thank Amanda Page and Bob McLaughlin of the Springfield Art and Historical Society for sharing correspondence of LaFountain, and arranging for photographs to be taken of their two teapots. I also want to express my appreciation to Heather Shanks, Photographic Services Coordinator, Peabody Essex Museum, for arranging to have their teapot professionally photographed; and to Kristen Weiss, Collections Manager, Peabody Essex Museum, for providing provenance data. Peabody Essex Museum has granted permission to reproduce their photographs in this article. I appreciate the editing assistance that Suzanne Steinmetz, my wife, provided. The author would appreciate comments and any additional information that PCCA members or others might share. I can be reached at 11236 Blackwalnut Pt. Indianapolis, IN 46236.

Email: tpickett1@earthlink.net

References

- ¹ Thomas E. Pickett, "Exploring The Legend of Lee and Creesy" *Bulletin of the Pewter Collectors' Club of America*, 2001, Vol. 12, No.5 pp231-235.
- ² Stevie Young, "Lee Pewter at the Springfield, Vt. Art and Historical Society" *Bulletin of the Pewter Collectors' Club of America*, 1972, Vol. 6, No. 7 pp198-205.
- ³ Ledlie Irwin Laughlin, *Pewter in America: its Makers and Their Marks* 2 vol. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1940; vol. 3 Barre, Massachusetts, Barre Publishers, 1971, p 171, and Fig. 770.

Two Sixteen And Three Eighths Inch Deep Dishes, One By Henry Will And One By Frederick Bassett

By Melvyn Wolf, M.D.

I recently obtained a $16\frac{3}{8}$ " deep dish with hammered booge, well marked by Frederick Bassett of New York City, 1761 to 1800. I compared this dish with a similar dish in our possession by Henry Will of New York and Albany, 1763 to 1793. When I compared both dishes closely, it became apparent that they were both from the same mold. Both dishes are shown in Figure 1. The hammering, while similar, is distinctly different and is shown in Figures 2 and Figures 3. The fact that both dishes were from the same mold started me thinking as to how this could indeed have occurred. There are basically two hypotheses. The first is that the dishes were made by Frederick Bassett only and sold to Henry Will. If this scenario is correct, there would be no reason to see an entry in "Henry Will Account Book", so beautifully compiled by Donald Fennimore. There are transactions, on page 27 in that book, between Frederick Bassett and Henry Will; however they reveal the sale to Frederick Bassett of bed pans and the receipts of funnels as well as some cash. It seems that if indeed the "first Bassett dish scenario" is correct, he might have paid Henry Will in large deep dishes as well as cash. Since no transactions appear between the two of them concerning the large deep dishes, it brought me to scenario number two which is that this mold was jointly owned by these two pewterers, each one casting from time to time as needed and then finishing in his own shop. This would explain the fact that the hammering was performed by different pewterers.

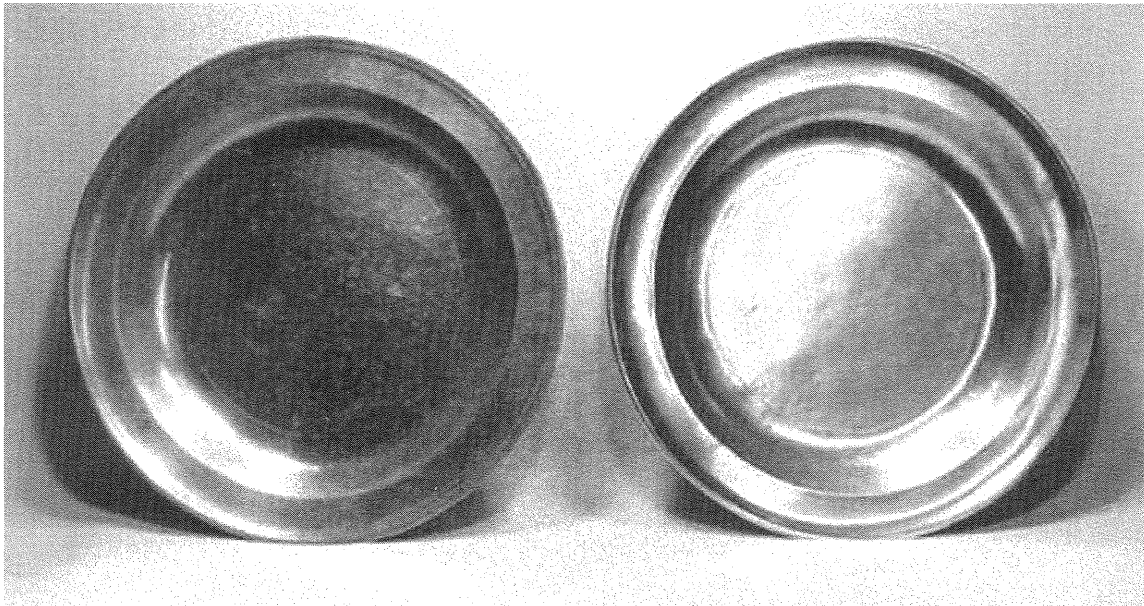


Fig. 1. Henry Will $16\frac{3}{8}$ " deep dish left. Frederick Bassett $16\frac{3}{8}$ " deep dish right.

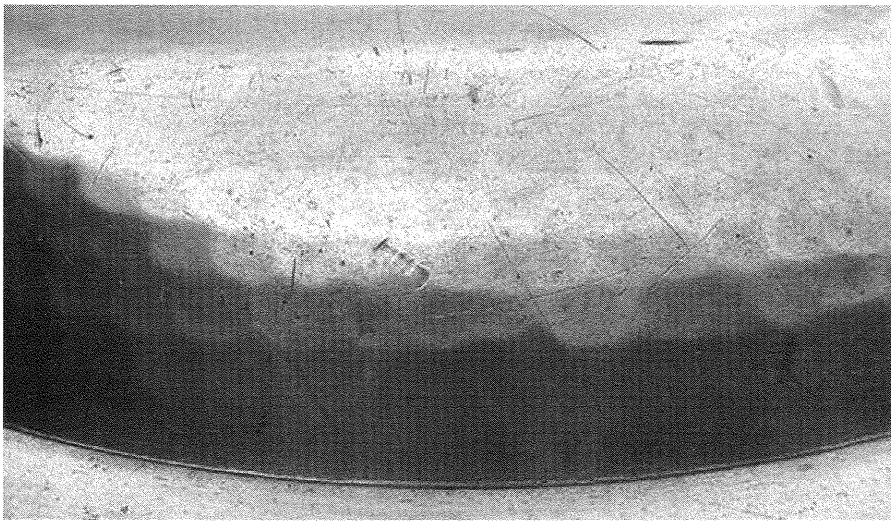


Fig. 2. Hammering on Henry Will deep dish.

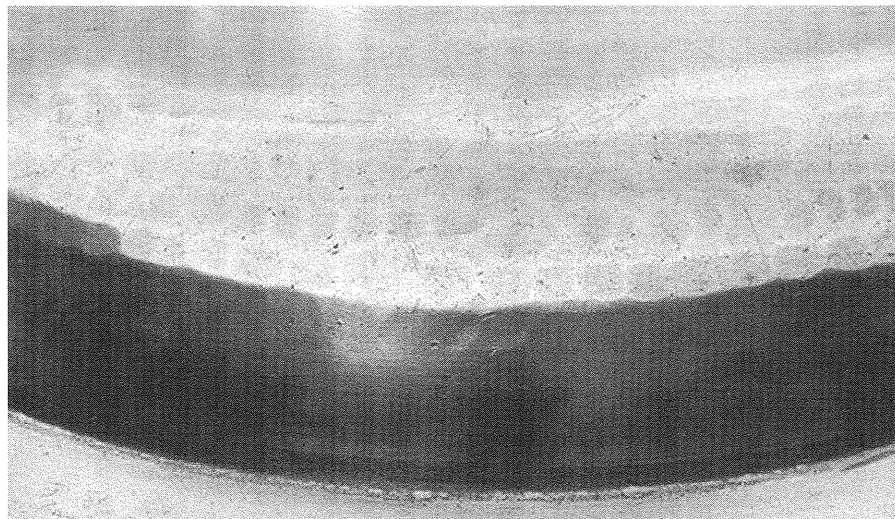


Fig. 3. Hammering on Frederick Bassett deep dish.

It is worthy to note that a $16\frac{3}{8}$ " inch deep dish would be a relatively uncommon piece of pewter. In fact uncommon to the point that it is unlikely that any one pewterer would have had need to own a mold so large and expensive for such a few pieces which needed to be produced.

It seems reasonable to assume since finished products were transferred between Bassett and Will, such as bed pans and funnels, it is more likely these large deep dishes were cast in a single mold and owned by the pewterers jointly. I am sure this article will raise the concerns of many collectors and I will be waiting for holes to be punched in it. At this point however, it does seem reasonable that because of the infrequent need for a large dish that two pewterers working contemporaneously in the same city, might have found it economical to join forces, purchase one mold, use it as needed, finish the dish in individual shops and strike it with their own die.

Emma Finney Welch, 1855-1926 An Early Pewter Collector *By Mark Duffy*

Emma Finney Welch was born in Hunterdon County, New Jersey in 1855 and died in Pennsylvania probably around 1926. She inherited her first piece of pewter in 1903 from a relative of her husband. That inheritance was her initiation to a 14-year career of pewter collecting.¹ Mrs. Welch meticulously researched and journaled each piece in her collection. Her journal contained 278 scrapbook entries detailing the items' provenance and genealogical information (if available) of previous owners. She marked each piece in her collection with her name, "Welch", and assigned it a number. The number corresponded to a specific scrapbook entry. For example, the porringer illustrated in figures 1 and 2, has "Welch 27" etched into the outside bowl.² Figure 3, is her scrapbook entry for this item, "The Capwell Porringer". Figures 4 and 5 are of an 18th century pear-shaped teapot marked TS on the outside bottom.³ This teapot is the 82nd entry into her scrapbook. Figure 6 is her scrapbook entry for this piece.

In 1927, the estate of Mrs. Welch donated the following items to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (H.S.P.): her scrapbook, her letters, her research and genealogical materials, and 26 pieces of pewter. In 1999, the 26 pieces of pewter were transferred to The Atwater Kent Museum.⁴



Fig. 1. "The Capwell Porringer." Unmarked porringer attributed to T.D. Boardman. Overall length 5½"; Bowl diameter 3⅞". Duffy collection. Photo by Jill Powell.

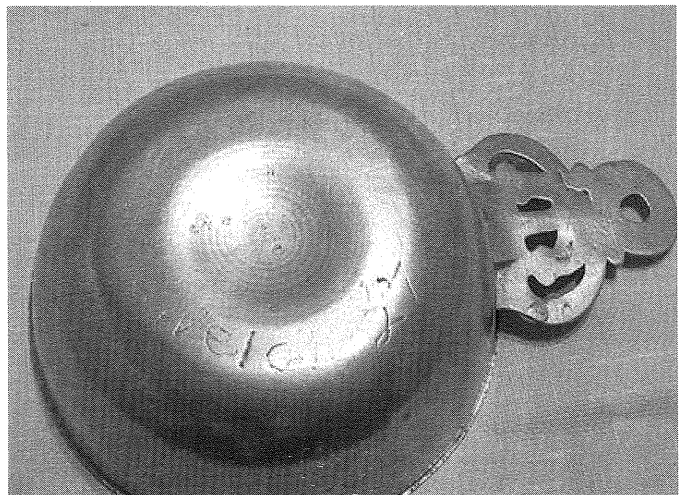


Fig. 2. Back of the porringer in Fig. 1 showing "Welch27" scratched into outside bottom of bowl. Photo by Jill Powell.



No. 27.

June 25, 1904. The Caprwell Porringer. $3\frac{7}{8}$ inches in diameter. $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches deep.

Handle broken. No marks. Presented by Mrs Henry N. Hyde-Williamantic, Conn. who wrote: "About the porringer! I could not find much of its history, only that it once belonged to a family by the name of Caprwell, an old Windham County, Conn. family, all of them now dead as far as I know, and the house has been sold. The porringer was found in a lot of old rubbish and that is all. I want you to accept it as a little reminder of me and of our trip."

Mrs Hyde refers to a driving trip we took in June 1901. On the 17th we photographed the ruins of the Caprwell house, located on the south side of the southerly Windham and Scotland road east of Palmerburn Cemetery - where Samuel + Deborah (Spalding) Manning are buried - and near the place where they lived. (They were ancestors of Arabel Welch.)

Fig. 3. Mrs. Welch's Scrapbook Entry No. 27, dated June 25, 1904, describing some of the history of ownership of the porringer in Fig. 1 and how she acquired it. Reproduced with the kind permission of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania (Inv. #030621.2)

Fig. 5. Outside bottom of the teapot in Fig. 4 showing “Welch” scratched into the metal and the maker’s mark “T-S” under a crowned X, possibly London pewterer Thomas Scattergood or Thomas Swanson. Photo by Jill Powell.

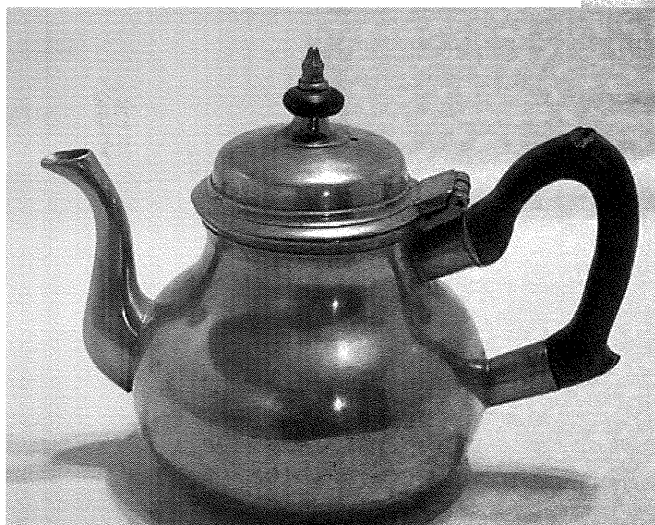


Fig. 4. “A Titus Teapot.” 18th century English teapot. Height 5¼”; Length 7”; Bottom diameter 2⅞”. Powell collection. Photo by Jill Powell.

Here is the last entry in Mrs. Welch’s scrapbook.

“...May 30, 1917 we sold our house at 426 West Stafford St., Germantown, to Mr. Samuel C. Pritchard: the collection was packed and sent to our son, Ashbel Russell Welch – now (Feb 26, 1921) of 95 Hamilton Avenue, Englewood, New Jersey – and we moved out June 14, 1917. Since then I have never collected another piece – though I must add that the temptation to do so has always been – and still is great. May the future owners have as much pleasure in possession, as I have had in collecting.”

Mrs. Welch collected pewter from 1903 until 1917. Her reference material was limited to three books, some magazine articles and an exhibition.⁵

If any club members have a piece of pewter from the Emma Finney Welch collection or have any questions concerning this information, please feel free to contact the author at Mark.Duffy1@Comcast.Net.

No. 82

As Titus Teapot.

Dec. 4, 1905. As Titus Teapot. 5 1/2 inches high, with wooden handle and edge marked in parallel lines.

Holds about a pint. Touch mark TS in a small shield under a crowned X. This was a private mark frequently used by Thomas Scattergood the younger, who was admitted to the Pewter Company of London in 1744 and served as master warden in 1774 and 1775. The initials IP in fine scratches near the touchmark are probably those of a former owner. This teapot and No 15 are from Mrs Reuben Titus who lives two miles east of Pennington, N.J.

Titus Notes.

I Robert Titus the first of the name in America was a respectable English agriculturist living near Stanssted to Bley, Hertfordshire, England, thirty miles north east of London, who with his wife Hannah and two sons John and Edmund, in 1625 emigrated to this country and settled at Weymouth near Boston Mass., and afterwards, in 1644 near Providence R.I. where were born Samuel, Content, Abel and Susannah.

The family, except John who became the ancestor of the New England Tituses, removed in 1654 to Oyster Bay, Long Island.

II Content Titus, styled Captain, was born at Weymouth in 1643.

He came from Huntington to Weymouth, L.I. in 1672 where he remarried and became an active and valuable resident and so vigorous were his powers at that he was elected in 1724 to the eldership of the Presbyterian Church. He died in 1730.

Fig. 6. Mrs. Welch's Scrapbook Entry No. 82, dated December 4, 1905, describing the teapot in Fig. 4, relating how she acquired it. The entry also provides some genealogical information on Robert Titus, the first Englishman of that name to immigrate to America. Reproduced with the kind permission of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania (Inv. #030621.2)

Nos. 273 — 278.

May 29, 1917. These six pieces came from William E. Rogers, a dealer at 5238 Germantown Ave. Germantown, Phila. where my sister, Louise (Pinney) Merrick of Hamilton, Canada, and I spent an afternoon among the antique shops.

The pieces secured at that time were no. 273 a large pewter plate nos. 274 and 275. Two medium plates, no. 276 a basin - no. 277 a soup plate - and no. 278 a brass bleeding cup - such as was used by physicians.

The following day, May 30, 1917 we sold our house at 426 West Stafford St. Germantown, to Mr Samuel C. Pritchard. The collection was packed and sent to our son, Ashbel Russell Welch now (Feb 26, 1922) of 95 Hamilton Ave. Englewood, New Jersey - and we moved out June 17, 1917.

Since then I have never collected another piece - though I must add that the temptation to do so has always been and still is great. May the future owners have as much pleasure in possession, as I have had in collecting.

Emma (Pinney) Welch.

(Mrs Ashbel Welch)

Household Gods.
The baby takes to her bed at night,
A one-eyed rabbit that once was white;
A watch that came from a cracker, I
think;
And a lifeless inkpot that never held ink,
And the secret is locked in her tiny
breast
Of why she loves these and leaves the
rest.
And I give a loving glance as I go
To three brass pots on a shelf in a row,
To my grandfather's grandfather's lov-
ing cup,
And a bandy-legged chair I once picked
up.
And I can't, for the life of me, make you
see
Why just these things are a part of me!
— J. H. Macnair, in *The Spectator*.



Fig. 7. The last page and entry in Mrs. Welch's scrapbook, dated May 29, 1917, describing the acquisition of the last six pieces, Nos. 273-278, in her collection. It also describes the sale of her house the following day and the shipment of her pewter collection to her son in Englewood, NJ. At the bottom of the page is a poignant poem that must have expressed Mrs. Welch's feelings toward her collection, together with a small photograph of Mrs. Welch sitting near a table holding several pieces from her collection. *Reproduced with the kind permission of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania (Inv. #030621.2)*

References on next page

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- ¹ The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, *Welch, Emma Finney, b. 1855. Collection, 1714-1921 (275 items) #703.*
- ² Porringer. Unmarked. Attributable to Thomas Boardman. John Carl Thomas, *Connecticut Pewter and Pewterers*, Hartford, Connecticut: Connecticut Historical Society, 1976, page 135.
- ³ Teapot. Marked TS. A Catalogue by Donald L. Fennimore, *British Pewter; The Charles V. Swain Collection*. Self published, 2003. TS was once thought to be an American maker. He is now accepted as English.
- ⁴ Atwater Kent Museum of Philadelphia, 15 South 7th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106 (215)685-4830.
- ⁵ Reference material used by Emma Finney Welch. A. Christopher Markham, *Pewter Marks and Old Pewter Ware*. B. William Redman, *Marks in Old Pewter and Sheffield Plate*. C.N. Hudson Moore, *Old Pewter; Brass, Copper and Sheffield Plate*. D. N. Hudson Moore, *The Delineator; The Collector's Manuel-Short Papers on Variuos Subjects of Interest. -Old Pewter*. March 1905. E. no byline, *Odd Collection of Old Pewter is Exhibited by Colonial Dames. Many rare pieces in lot gatheres by Charles W. Gramm and now in the Van Cortlandt Mansion - found in junk shops and bought for the price of old metal*. F. no byline, *Musueam Treasures Unknown to Public - Rich Variety in Pewter*; New York Time, August 1915. G. no byline, *Pewter Antiques Sold, First Part of Drake Collection Fetches \$1758*. The Philadelphia Public Ledger, March 11, 1913. H. no byline, *Curiosities of Old Pewter, Drinking Vessels Once Common Now Sought By Collectors*, Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, October 13, 1915. I. Exhibition, *Old Pewter on Exhibition - City Hall, Philadelphia Founder's Week*, October 1908. Twenty pieces of pewter described by Mrs. Welch.



A James Weekes Covered Soapdish

By Melvyn Wolf, M.D.

I recently had the opportunity of purchasing the soapdish shown in Figure 1. It is a lid-ded soapdish signed by James Weekes. The diameter is approximately $4\frac{3}{8}$ inches and the height is $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

When I obtained the piece of pewter, it had a sticker affixed to the bottom stating that it was from the Laughlin collection. I thought this was most interesting and referred to Volumes I, II and III of *Pewter In America* by the late Ledlie Laughlin. James Weekes is listed as a pewterer working in both New York City and Poughkeepsie from 1820 to 1835. While Laughlin describes a multitude of small pieces of pewter which have been found marked by James Weekes, he did not include a soapdish. It is more interesting since this particular piece of pewter was apparently in his own private collection and must have been in his collection at the time of publishing either Volumes I, II or III and somehow never was put into the text.

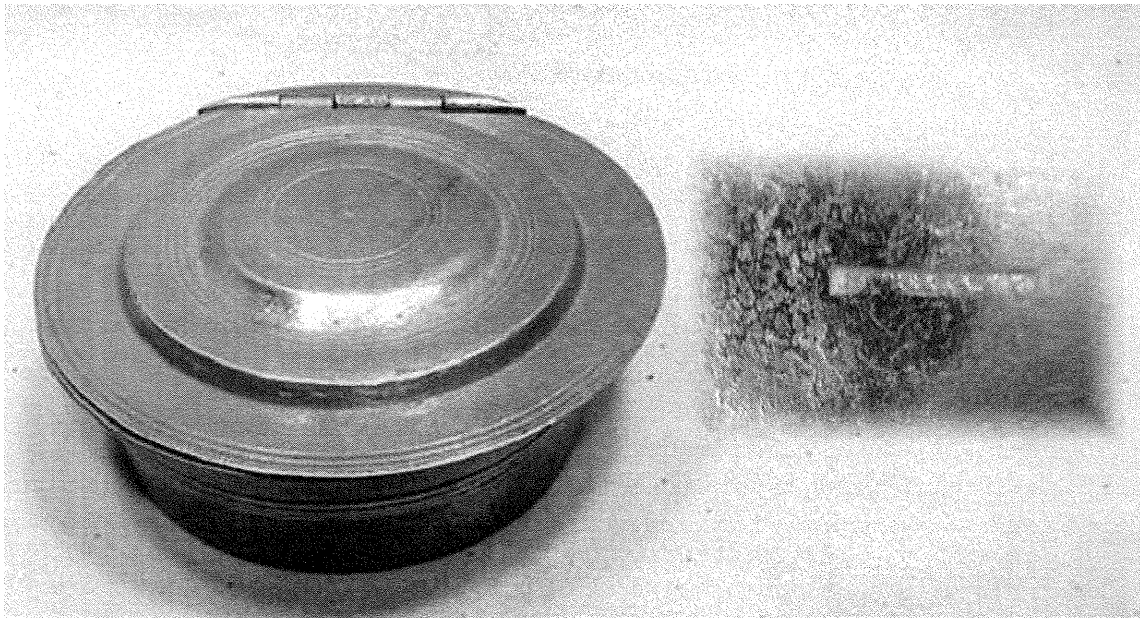


Fig. 1. Soapdish by James Weekes. (Private Collection)

Also included is a photograph of an Ashbil Griswold soapdish, Figure 2, which is the most typical and only other marked soapdish I have ever encountered. It measures approximately $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter and $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches in height. The lid on the Weekes soapdish is a double dome lid, if you wish, whereas the lid on the Griswold soapdish is a flat lid. Both soapdishes have incised turnings on the body as well as on the lid and obviously they are similar in age as well as in style.

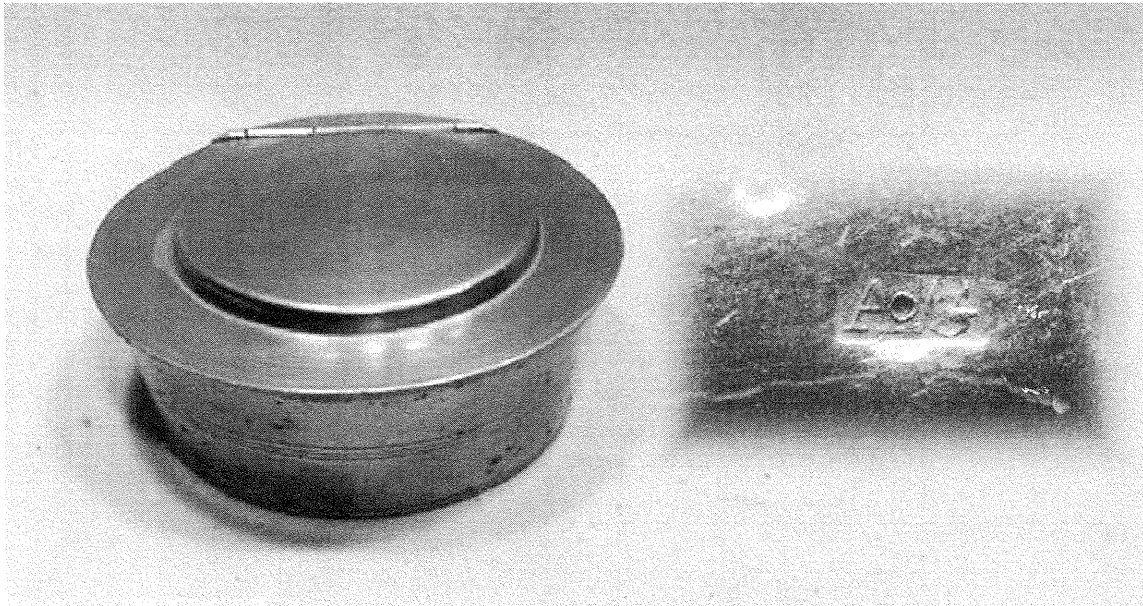


Fig. 2. Soapdish by Ashbil Griswold

I think the membership would be interested in this piece of pewter since, to my knowledge, this is the first James Weekes lidded soapdish I have ever seen.

Any comments from the membership would certainly be appreciated.

Excavated Medieval Pewter

By Alex Neish

The diversity of excavated medieval pewter is so astonishing that Brian Spencer, former Senior Curator of the Museum of London, has dedicated a major part of his life to the subject – and in the process produced two remarkable books.¹ The accompanying photographs give a brief introduction to items that are up to eight centuries old.

Fig. 1 illustrates a selection of pilgrim items with religious associations. The 4" large three dimensional figure of Thomas Beckett shows the martyr in his mitre and robes, one hand holding the archiepiscopal cross, the other raised in blessing. This was excavated at Canterbury and is the only known complete example. It was used as a staff end. The head of Beckett appears as another badge while the peacock, finely decorated on both sides, shows an arm emerging from the peacock's back. Originally this would have held a cross and banner. The piece again is associated with Beckett.

The magnificent cast decorated cross with Jesus Crucified stands 3½" tall and is a Rood of Boxley crucifix badge dating from the 15th century.



Fig. 1. Excavated medieval pewter pilgrim items with religious associations.
Courtesy of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

Fig. 2 offers a more diverse selection. The small decorated boss with six radial leaves inside a beaded rim was probably a 16th century stud on a horse's harness and the lyre-shaped badge is 15th century as is the ear of wheat. The circular badge with a face at the top of the pin carries in Lombardic lettering the names of the three Magi and, though dating from the 14th century, is in immaculate condition.

The large, late 15th century badge in the shape of a hat with a narrow brim, turned up at the front, is cast with lozenge-shaped badges or broaches that pilgrims displayed to record their travels. A feathered plume rises from one of these circular badges. Perhaps most interesting is the figure of an ape standing on a fish and urinating into a pestle while it holds a mortar at the ready. This is a satire on medieval doctors, emphasising their base and slippery characters - and the highly dubious nature of their medicines. The piece probably dates from the 15th century.



Fig. 2. Excavated medieval pewter items with diverse associations. *Courtesy of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.*

¹ Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular Badges by Brian Spencer, published by The Stationery Office, London 1998, and Medieval Catalogue Part 2 of Salisbury Museum, published by Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum 1990.

Book Review

By Garland Pass

Pewter at Colonial Williamsburg by John D. Davis. Photography by Hans Lorenz, Delmre Wenzel, and Craig McDougal. Designed by Helen M. Olds. Hardcover, 346 pages, almost 1000 black and white illustrations, a few in color. Published in 2003 by The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, VA, in association with University Press of New England, Lebanon, NH. ISBN 0-87935-218-3 (CW: alk. Paper) – ISBN 1-58465-315-9 (UPNE: alk. Paper). Price: \$70.00

John Davis has been a curator at Colonial Williamsburg for thirty-eight years, his entire professional life. Now the senior curator of metals, his responsibilities include brass, copper, iron, tin, and silver, the latter the subject of three books previously published. But pewter collectors know him best as the curator of the pewter collection at Colonial Williamsburg, the finest collection of British pewter in the United States and the third finest in the world.¹ This book is a testament to his years of nurturing and expanding the collection, which was begun in 1930, and to his research and scholarship, so evident in the detailed description of each piece.

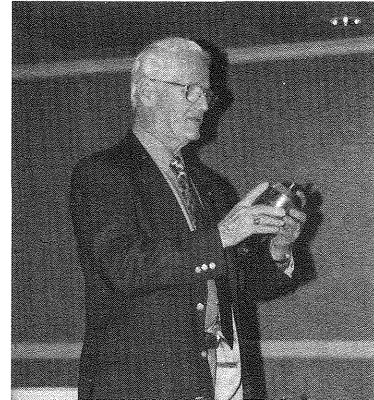
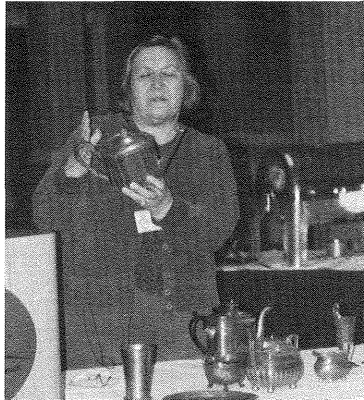
The introduction provides a brief but thorough history of pewter in Great Britain. It also explains the reason why the emphasis of the collection is British rather than American. During the colonial and Federal periods, the lower Chesapeake Bay area of Virginia had no major metropolitan center and consequently few, if any, American pewterers. The plantation owners of the 17th century and the growing middle class families of the 18th century therefore had to rely on imported pewter to fill their cupboards, and almost all of this pewter came from Great Britain. And not just in pewter, but in all of its collections, Colonial Williamsburg has tried to be representative of the culture of the lower Chesapeake Bay area of those times. Although the collection is primarily British, there are representative American pieces, some quite rare such as the Heyne flagon and chalice. This is the only museum collection in Britain or America that also contains a representative selection of English export pieces made specifically for the American market.

The catalog is divided into six sections based on major functions: lighting devices, dining wares, drinking vessels, tea and coffee equipage, household and personal accessories, and religious. The period covered is from 1610 to 1820. Items within each section are arranged chronologically. Information on each piece includes the name of the pewterer, his working period, key dimensions, detailed photos of engraved crests or owner's monograms, provenance, and publication history. Many pieces include one or more paragraphs of information on the piece describing unique or unusual features and relating them to similar pieces illustrated elsewhere. In every descriptive paragraph the reader will be impressed, and often amazed, at the depth and thoroughness of John Davis' research.

Pewter marks are not displayed with each piece but are grouped together at the back of the book. Each mark is shown with the item number on which it appears. It would have been helpful if the pewterer's name had been listed with the mark. Without the name, if the reader is comparing marks, he must flip back and forth between the mark section and the section where the piece is illustrated to identify the makers. But this is a minor criticism in a major work. It is this reviewer's opinion that this is the finest book on British pewter since H. H. Cotterell's, *Old Pewter, Its Makers and Their Marks*, published in 1929. In terms of the description and details provided each piece in the catalog, it far exceeds it.

¹ Although some collectors may disagree with the ranking, the other two collections in contention are the collection of British Pewter at the Shakespeare Trust in Stratford-on-Avon, and the collection of The Worshipful Company of Pewterers in London.

National Fall Meeting Photos
Southbury & Litchfield, CT, Oct. 31 & Nov. 1, 2003
(Photographs by Bill Snow)

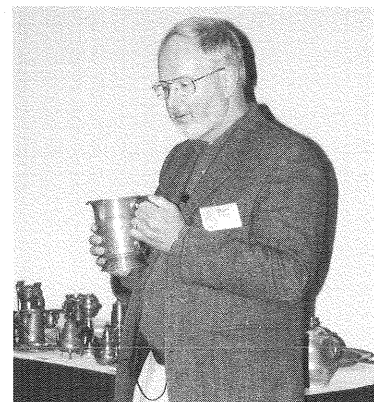
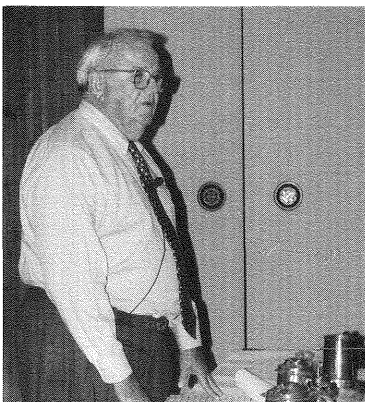


On Friday evening, **Rick Benson, Phyllis Hilt, and Ron Chambers** brought to the meeting and discussed some of the favorite pieces from their collections



Members toured the Litchfield History Museum on Saturday morning and inspected the museum's pewter collection.

On Saturday afternoon, members enjoyed a fine Fall day by taking a walking tour of some of Litchfield's historical houses.



For the Saturday evening program, **Jack Schneider** (left) and **Peter Uhry** (right) discussed pieces from their own collection while **Garland Pass** (center) did likewise but also included folk art pewter brought in by other members.

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IT CAN TAKE UP TO THREE MONTHS TO PRODUCE AN ISSUE.

While good articles will be accepted in any form (even handwritten), if authors try to conform to the following guidelines, it will make the work of the editor and printer much easier and will lower the cost to the club. Please contact the editor for assistance.

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Typed copy should be double-spaced on numbered sheets. The preferred method of submittal is word-processed text on a floppy disk. *Microsoft Word* is acceptable. But if this is not available to you, save the document in Text (ASCII) format. Please submit a hard copy for editing and scanning if necessary.

Use a plain typeface and 12-point font for clarity.

Do not indent paragraphs nor triple space between them.

Refer to book titles or publications by typing in italic or underline.

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Drawings and tables should be designed with the page size of the publication in mind as well as the likelihood that a reduction of 30-50% may be required.

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Endnotes and References

Designate all endnotes with superscripted numbers (unless submitting via floppy disk) or with numbers in parenthesis, within the text and describe under "References" at the end of the article.

Book references should include author(s) (first name or initials, then surname), title (in italic), volume number (if one of several), edition (if the editions vary), publisher, place and year of publication, ISBN number for recent publications, and page numbers.

Bulletin, Journal or Magazine references should include author(s) (first name or initials, then surname), title of the article (in quotations), name of the publication (in italic), date, volume and number, and page numbers. See previous issues for examples to follow.

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