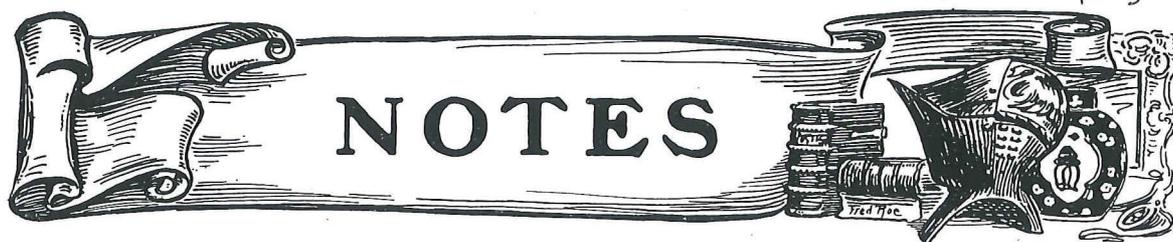


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# NOTES

## Pewter Church Vessels from the old Church of St. Mary, Northgate, Canterbury

THE ancient church of St. Mary, Northgate, Canterbury, was actually built across the road, either on or itself forming the north gate of the city, being supported near its centre on pillars. Beneath this church the kings of England went to pass to Reculver and the Isle of Thanet, on their way to foreign lands, and beneath its shadow it was the custom of the mayor to meet the monarch on his return, and present to him the keys of the city. The old building, which was demolished about the year 1830, is referred to by Canon Gostling, in his *Walks in and about the City of Canterbury*, as being "a church of uncommon length and narrowness."

But we are not so much concerned with the church itself, except as a point of added interest, so we will pass on to a consideration of the vessels which prompted these notes and which have recently come into the possession of the headmaster of Herne Bay College, Mr. E. W. Turner, M.A. It is seldom that pieces with a pedigree

so fully authenticated loom up on the horizon of the private collector, and one rejoices that these examples have fallen under such careful guardianship, and that they will remain almost within the proverbial stone's-throw of the spot where originally they were in use. One also finds food for satisfaction in the fact that such treasures of the pewterer's art have escaped the melting pot—that maelstrom which drew into itself so many of our finer early pieces.

The service consists of two very early dated flagons, two later ones also dated, and two paten-plates. These four later pieces, though quite good of themselves, are dwarfed and suffer badly by comparison with the earlier pair, which are of exceptional interest; they are well shown in No. i., whilst the complete array appears in No. ii., both photographs having been taken specially for these notes.

This earlier pair bears a mark which, though well known to collectors, is nevertheless of a date previous to the existing touchplates, and we have no record of the maker's name beyond the fact that his initials were E.G., as shown in the mark of which a sketch is here given.



In addition to this maker's mark, however, they both bear on the front a very clear inscription, which adds immensely to their value and interest. This inscription reads as follows:—

1634  
St. Marye Northgate  
Thomas Gilbert & William  
Wootton  
Church Wardens  
Decemb. 13th.

As will be seen, they are in a wonderful state of preservation, and though the administrators of the church's property obtained a faculty for selling them years ago, it is but quite recently that they have acted



No. I.—PAIR OF PEWTER FLAGONS, DATED 1634 FORMERLY IN ST. MARY, NORTHGATE, CANTERBURY. NOW IN MR. E. W. TURNER'S COLLECTION

## Notes



No. II.—PEWTER SERVICE OF CHURCH PLATE  
NOW IN MR. E. W. TURNER'S COLLECTION

FORMERLY IN ST. MARY, NORTHGATE, CANTERBURY

under it. The dimensions of this pair are as follows: Extreme height,  $14\frac{1}{2}$  inches; height to lip,  $11\frac{7}{8}$  inches, with a lip diameter of  $4\frac{3}{4}$  inches and a  $6\frac{3}{4}$ -inch base; the weight being  $7\frac{3}{4}$  pounds each.

The date on these flagons—1634—is another link in the chain of evidence which enables one to date pieces by type, and to many collectors I think it will come as a mild surprise that this type goes back quite so early, for it has hitherto been fairly generally regarded—for want of corroborative evidence to the contrary—as *circa* 1650, so that these pieces antedate the accepted theories by some sixteen or twenty years.

The name Wootton is also full of local interest, for the family were extremely well known in the district, with their home at Boughton Place, Maidstone, where was born Sir Henry Wootton, poet, diplomatist, and man of affairs in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. A further instance of the impress they have left on the district is found in "Lady Wootton's Green" at Canterbury; indeed, the family were inextricably interwoven with the affairs of the city at the period.

Turning to the other items in the collection, the pair of later flagons have the date 1792 incised on their under sides, but bear no maker's marks. Their dimensions are: Extreme height, 12 inches; height to lip, 9 inches, which has a diameter of 4 inches, and the base a diameter of 6 inches; the weight being  $3\frac{1}{2}$  pounds each.

The pair of paten-plates bear the marks of a well-known London maker, Timothy Fly, who was admitted to the freedom of the Company of Pewterers in 1710, and was made master in 1739. They are  $9\frac{1}{4}$  inches across, and on opposite sides of the front of the rim bear the initials

I.M. and W.G., who were probably churchwardens at some time between the years 1710 and 1740 or so. Probably some reader of these notes, with facilities for looking through the lists of churchwardens at this period, will be able, at no great expenditure of time, to extract the requisite information and forward it to me, c/o The Editor, THE CONNOISSEUR.

Such representative and unique examples of early Carolean pewter, it was felt, were worthy of this special note in the pages of this magazine.—HOWARD HERSCHEL COTTERELL, F.R.Hist.S., etc.

### The Porcelain of Yuan-Shih-Kai

THOSE interested in China and things Chinese will remember the famous Yuan-Shih-Kai, the Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs, who became the first President of China after the Revolution in 1911, and then attempted to seize the throne and promote himself Emperor; but probably only a few of the collectors of Oriental ceramic art are aware that scattered about are a few specimens of Chinese porcelain made for and specially base-marked with Yuan-Shih-Kai's seal.

Born in Honan, he had held viceregal posts in many of the provinces. For a Chinaman he had extraordinarily advanced ideas; he was a militarist and strict disciplinarian, ambitious to a degree, and best known at that time as the creator of China's first modern army.

As Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1910, he was dismissed by the feeble Prince Regent (brother of the Emperor Kwang-Hsu); on the outbreak of the Revolution, however, in 1911, the Prince Regent, realising that the army might be loyal to Yuan if he were in power, appointed him