ENJ

antiques (U.S.A.)
Sept. 1949.

New York Pewter Teapot . . .

THE Metropolitan Museum of Art has recently acquired a pewter teapot by William Kirby, who was working from 1760 to 1793, the only New York example of this period known. The other two in this style are by William Will of Philadelphia, one of which is shown on page 185 of this issue. In Ledlie I. Laughlin's *Pewter in America* this Kirby teapot is illustrated with a pewter handle, added about the middle of the last century. This has now been replaced by an eighteenth-century wooden handle from a similar English teapot. Though according to Laughlin pewter teapots were advertised in 1755 by Robert Boyle, the earliest marked examples extant date from about the Revolutionary period.

William Kirby was the son of Peter Kirby, whose name appears in numerous records as a pewterer, though the only example which can probably be attributed to him is a 4¼-inch porringer in the collection of Mrs. J. Insley Blair.

William Kirby must have been quite successful, since he owned

property on Dock Street, First Street next to Trinity Burying Ground, Crown Street, and Pearl Street. The touch which appears on the teapot is found also on a quart mug, a pint basin, and several tankards. When the importation of inexpensive English pottery began to drive pewterers out of business, Kirby turned to trade and opened a china and glass store about 1794. His name is listed in the city directories only until 1804, but a deed shows he was still alive in 1811.