ET B

An American pewter collection

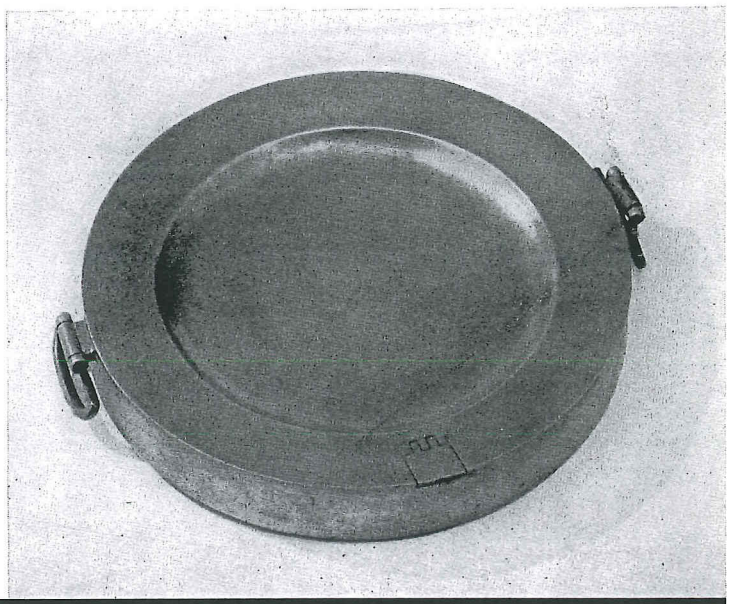
By DR. ROBERT MALLORY III

35TH ANNIVERSARY ARTICLE

Bowl and chalice by John Harrison Palethorp (Philadelphia, w. 1820-1845). Diameter of bowl, 5 inches; of chalice, 7⅝. Mark on bowl, PALETHORP'S PHILADA; on chalice, . . . ALETHO . . . , in rectangle. Beautifully made pieces by a pewterer of the Britannia period who left few examples of his work.

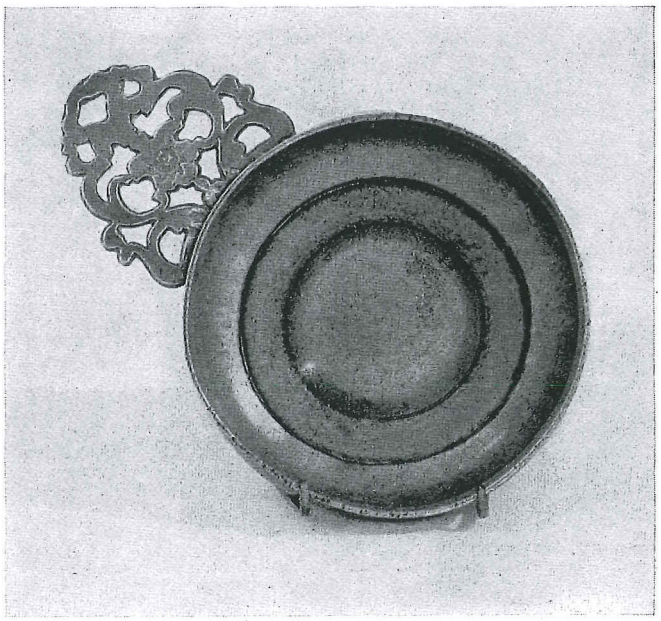
Unmarked chalices, one plain and the other beaded; both almost ex actly the same in design and dimensions as the chalice of the Aarons burg communion service attributed to William Will in ANTIQUES fo April 1950 (p. 274). That chalice was 7 15/16 inches in height; her the plain one is 7 13/16 inches tall, the beaded example, 7 15/16 and cup sizes are identical. *Photographs by Taylor and Dull*

Hot-water plate with strongly impressed scales-and-name touch (Laughlin 538, 539) of William Will (Philadelphia, w. 1764-1798).



Drum-shape teapot by William Will; not previously recorded. This pot, which came to light recently in the disposition of effects of an old New Jersey family, is almost identical with one by the same maker published in ANTIQUES for January 1928 (p. 28). Only the marks differ; on this, the mark is Laughlin 537, and on the other it is Laughlin 542a. Over-all height, 5⅞ inches.

Five-inch flower-handle porringer of the type described as Rhode Island by Laughlin (ANTIQUES, May 1930, p. 437), with the IK sunburst touch attributed to Josiah Keene (Providence, w. 1801-1817). The handle is apparently from the same mold as that on a 5⅝-inch porringer originally illustrated in L. G. Myers' *Some Notes on American Pewterers,* and very similar to, though not identical with, that on Laughlin's Fig. 349.



MANY LOVERS OF AMERICAN PEWTER seem to feel that marked examples by early makers have all been recorded, exist only in the well-known collections, and can not be acquired today except when such a collection comes on the market. However, in forming our own small collection over the past five years, my wife and I have learned that if one searches diligently and is constantly on the lookout, it is still possible to acquire a group of surprisingly interesting pieces. True, some of these will come from established collections, and many will be examples already reported in the works of Ledlie I. Laughlin, J. B. Kerfoot, L. G. Myers, and Carl Jacobs, or in such publications as ANTIQUES, *The American Collector,* and the *Bulletin* of the Pewter Collectors' Club of America. But occasionally an unrecorded item will be found, or a form new to a particular maker, or it may be possible to associate a recorded maker with an unidentified mark. Instances of such gratifying discoveries are among the pieces I have selected for illustration here.

There are twenty-five pieces with the much discussed Love-bird touch in the collection. I have not included any of these among the items shown because they were described in ANTIQUES for January 1956 (p. 56).

The pewter at the head of the contents page in this issue is making its second appearance in ANTIQUES: it was first published in June 1940 (p. 300). The flat-top tankard and pair of beakers by Peter Young (New York and Albany, w. 1775-1795) originally formed the communion service of the Baptist Church of Cheshire, Massachusetts.

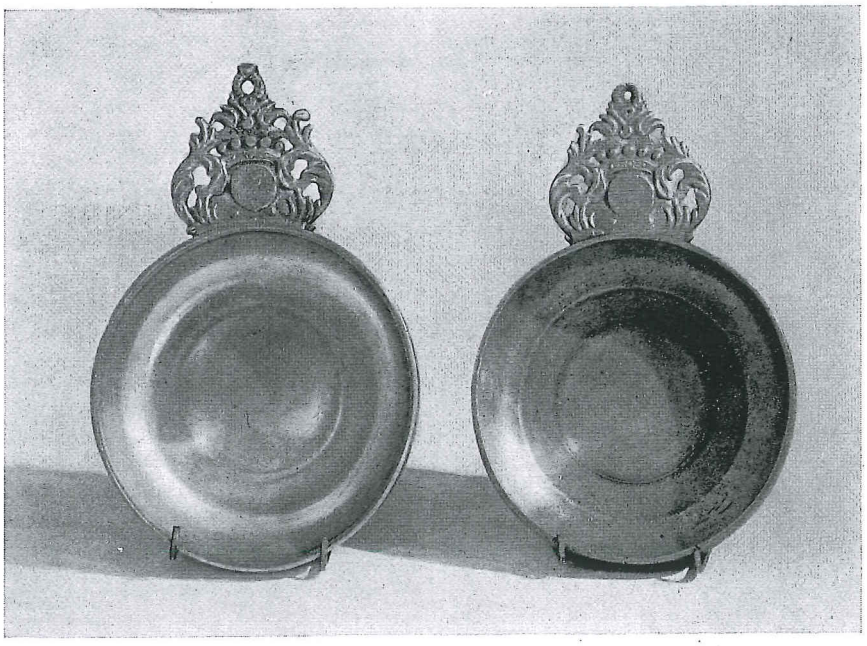
Footed pear-shape teapot by William Will; mark Laughlin 539. One of three such teapots known to be by this maker, it was first recorded in ANTIQUES for June 1940 (p. 300); the other two were published in March 1927 (p. 190) and April 1938 (frontispiece), respectively.

Quart tankards by New York makers, both with crenate lip and ram's-horn thumbpiece. The flat-top tankard with the bud terminal bears the initial mark (Laughlin 499) of William Kirby (w. 1760-1793), and the dome-top with fish-tail terminal that of Frederick Bassett (w. 1761-1780) (Laughlin 465).

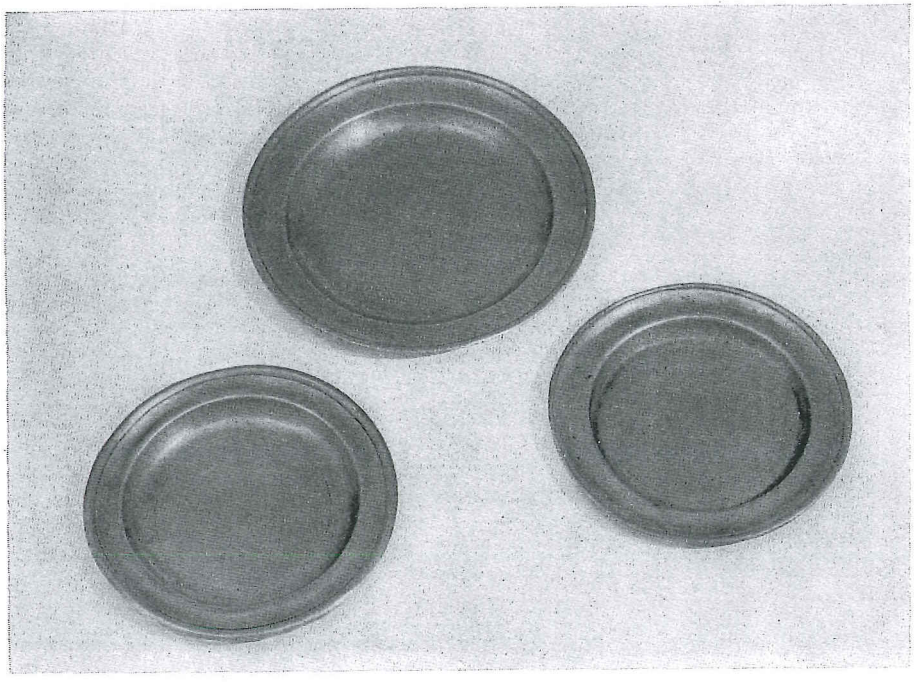
Quart mug by Nathaniel Austin (Charlestown, Massachusetts; w. 1763-1807); an excellent example of the work of this maker, with its distinctive handle and touch on the terminal. This type of strap handle, to judge by known marked examples, was used only by the pewterers of New England.

A touch of unusual interest, found on a nine-inch plate in the collection. Crudely cut, it shows a pendent lamb, a fleur-de-lis, and the name Michel, and is believed to be the mark of André Michel, recorded as a tinsmith and pewterer who worked in New York from 1795 to 1797.

Pint and quart cans by Henry Will (New York and Albany, w. 1761-1793); simple in design and without the banding supposed to be typical of New York pewter of the period.



Crown-handle porringers from the same mold but by different makers; two other porringers with handles from this mold, and involving still a third maker (John Danforth, w. 1773-1793), are shown in Jacobs' *Guide to American Pewter* (Figs. 9 and 10). The porringer on the left (5¼ inches in diameter) has the mark attributed to both Joseph Belcher (Newport, w. 1769-1776) and Joseph Belcher, Jr. (Newport and New London, w. 1776-1785); the five-inch specimen on the right is by Josiah Danforth (Middletown, Connecticut, w. 1825-1837). The working dates of these men suggest that the mold was used by Joseph Belcher, Sr., and then passed into the Danforth family, though it could have been transferred when Joseph Jr. left Newport and his first wife about 1784. Crown-handle porringers were discussed by Percy E. Raymond in ANTIQUES for January 1948, p. 60.



Plates by New England pewterers. The largest (7⅛ inches) bears a double impression of the mark (Laughlin 285) of John Carnes (Boston, w. 1723-1760); the six-inch plate with rounded cavetto (left) has the rose and initial touch of Jacob Whitmore (Middletown, Connecticut, w. 1758-1790); that with the sharp drop is by David Melville (Newport, w. 1776-1793), marked with Laughlin 318 and 322.