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3,100 guineas, though it was bought at the James Stuart sale in 1839 for 56 guineas.

* * * *

Some mystery is attached to the bust of George Washington, attributed to Jean Antoine Houdon, which has gone from London to America. This bust had previously been in the Locker-Lampson family for at least a century. Commissioned by the State of Virginia to execute a statue of her famous son, Houdon went to America in 1785, where he took measurements and a mask of the General, receiving \$4,800 plus his expenses. The task he completed in Paris, and in 1796 the marble statue was despatched to its proper destination in America. In August, 1787 a plaster bust of Washington by Houdon was exhibited in Paris. We learn that Godfrey Locker-Lampson sold his bust for £500, though it was valued by a French expert at £65,000, but we are not told whether anything like this latter sum was ever given for it.

* * *

People are rummaging in search of anything by William Blake; for the demand is insistent, and the prices at auction remarkable. At the recent sale of the Morse collection, 8 drawings sold for £574, and a painting of the *Nativity* in tempera on copper, for £1,029. The latter, with the *Devil Rebuked* (1,800 guineas), went to America.

* * *

A Congress of Heraldry and Genealogy is to be held at Barcelona, the second fortnight in November, when, I understand, there will be a special exhibition of grants of arms, family trees, shields of arms, seals, and heraldic literature, as well as badges of chivalry.

* * *

An International Maritime Exhibition is to be held at Antwerp from May to October next year. There will be valuable collections of naval and merchant service relics, including probably one of the most remarkable arrays of ship and boat models. The British Pavilion is to be extensive. Writing of ship models reminds me that a beautiful reproduction of the warship *Merbonour*, on a scale of 1 inch to 6 feet, has been presented to Eton College. The *Merbonour* was laid down in an English yard, in 1589, to embody all the lessons learned in repelling the Armada. Recently a silver Continental nef, 20 inches long, fully equipped with three masts, sails, and sailors, and weighing 120 ounces, sold for £46; a bone model of a three-masted sailing ship, 14 inches high, for £10 10s.

* * *

We have lately had several exhibitions of Eastern art — Indian, Chinese, and Japanese — which have been largely attended. Certainly Eastern antiques of all kinds are very much in favor, their popularity stimulated, perhaps, by the wonderful discoveries made by university and museum exploring parties in Near and Far Asia; perhaps, by the shipment of many Chinese art objects out of that disturbed country; or, by the dispersal of collections from Russia. Whatever the cause, there are, all over England, fine displays of Oriental porcelain, metalwork, ivory carvings, and textiles, and these find numerous appreciative buyers. In Bond Street many rare specimens are shown, and also, near Berkeley Square, a gallery has been opened for the sale of ancient and modern Eastern art. I noticed particularly an elaborate Japanese dragon vase in bronze, over 6 feet high, a Japanese pagoda lacquer shrine, inlaid swords, and exquisite carvings in ivory, and hard and soft stones.

Continental Notes

By ROBERT M. VETTER (*Amsterdam*)

THE PEWTER EXHIBITION AT ALENÇON (ORNE)

LA société historique et archéologique de l'Orne, presided over by H. Tournouer of Château de St. Hilaire, Colonard, recently acquired the ancient Hotel Libert at Alençon to utilize its



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seignorial chambers as a regional museum and place for exhibitions intended to complement the society's activities in the investigation and conservation of Normandy antiquities. Here

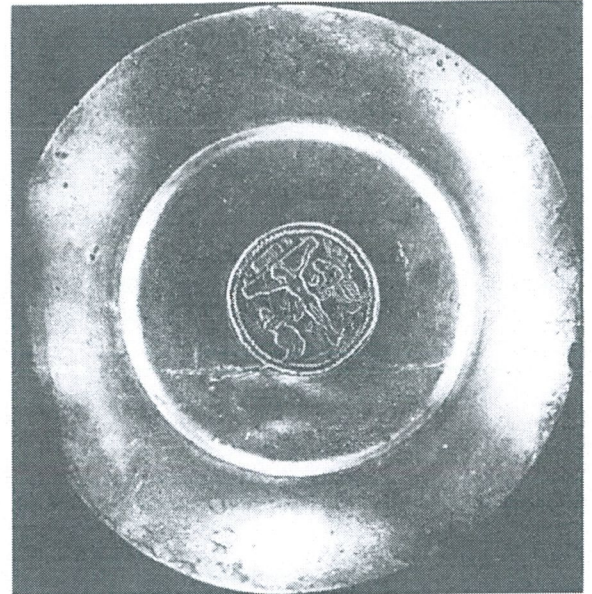


Fig. 1 — PEWTER PATEN (c. 1500)
 Reverse showing medallion of the Crucifixion.
 Tournauer collection

has already been held one exhibition of *point d'Alençon*, the famous lace of the district; and others are planned for furniture, brass, forged iron, and Normandy pottery.

Attracted by the never-failing spell of pewter, I paid (under truly tropical conditions) a flying visit to this ancient city, where I was cordially received by Monsieur Besnard, who is largely responsible for the organization of these little exhibitions.

I carried with me the articles on old Continental pewter which have been appearing in the pages of *ANTIQUES*; for I was anxious to compare notes with the local amateurs. In only one instance did I find the articles at fault: Figure 35 in Part II of *European Continental Pewter** and all flagons with lids sunk into the enlarged lip are not Flemish but of the Bretagne. I wish herewith to correct this error.

The exhibition, besides some sporadic contributions, consists chiefly of the collections of Messieurs Authier of Argentan, Bournisien of Bellême, Dulong de Rosnay of Château de Frazé, and Docteur Feutelais of Le Mans. The latter showed a very important array of medical pewter.

For the rest, the Normandy cider flagon, in all its varieties and sizes, dominated. I could also shake hands with nearly every other French regional type, including flagons from the Channel Islands. Some German and Dutch pieces seemed to be acquisitions of recent date, whereas some English ones probably belong to the large stock of ancient Continental pewter imports.

The *clou* of the exhibition was a Lyons water container and basin, beaten from the sheet, and of unusual dimensions. The work of François Briot and his followers was not represented, and *l'orfèvrerie d'étain* generally only by *écuelles* (porringers), several of doubtful quality. It is a pity that the numerous imitations were not kept apart from the genuine pieces — an easy task if the whole had been offered for sifting to some pewter expert such as France possesses in the person of Monsieur Riff at Strasbourg. However, I made a study of these frauds, and can say that the French pewter *truqueur* favors the engraving, chasing, and repoussé of properly innocent and plain household pieces. I am well aware that this silverlike treatment of everyday pewter was sometimes applied in the old times; but most of it is of quite recent date, and, though it shows the ease and traditional ele-

* See *ANTIQUES*, Vol. XI, p. 197.

“What is so rare—



As a day in June,” said the poet. He might well have said “as the antique collection at Plummer’s.”

Take for example, the rare old Chelsea vases, 11 inches high, decorated with birds and flowers, shown above, that can be had for \$500 the pair. Or the fine old Spode basket (after Old Dresden baskets by Kändler) 9" long, 6" wide and 3 1/2" high; priced at \$125.

These pieces amply illustrate the varied and interesting assortment of antiques available at Plummer’s. The lover of antiques will be delighted with our arrangement—covering the entire third floor—A veritable museum of rare old items. While it consists mainly of china and glass-ware there is also a wide assortment of miscellaneous pieces.



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gance of French workmanship, I must condemn it most emphatically.

The French pewter industry may very well be divided into two portions, one that answers to stringent guild rules and equals the best English wares as regards material and workmanship, and a provincial one employing inferior material and slovenly finish, and frequently leaving its product unmarked. These unmarked inferior pieces may be assumed to be of nineteenth-century manufacture from old molds, for the needs of peasants and conservative *petits bourgeois*.

I naturally searched for Mediaeval pieces and objects of historic

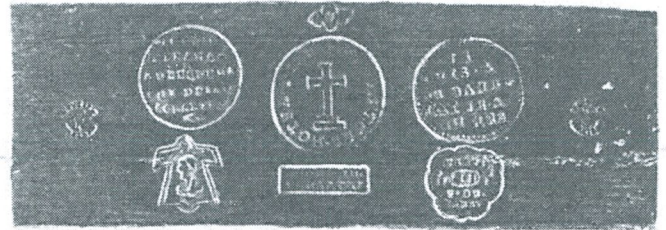


Fig. 2 — CHARTRES PEWTER TOUCHES

The text of these touches is, from left to right: a, *Voelle Chartres*, probably a nineteenth-century touch; b, *Je suis Abraham Auberquerry Pot [ter] d Etain a Chartre [s]*, the wording of this touch, *I am Abraham Auberquerry pewterer at Chartres*, is certainly very unusual; c, *Hotel Dieu Chartres*, a house mark of the Chartres hospital probably used by one of the pewterers; d, *Je suis A. de Bar. l'aine a Ch[ar]tres (I am A. de Bar., senior at Chartres)*; e, *Roullin a Chartre [s]*; f, *Etin Fin 17. de Barr*; g, a repetition of a.

interest, but with small reward. What seemed to be the most interesting item was a small touch plate. As I am always anxious to bring such rare documents to public knowledge, I had it photographed (Fig. 2) in the hope that some reader may own a piece bearing one of the touches shown. Such a specimen would throw some light on the possible date of the small plate.

Current Books

STAFFORDSHIRE POTTERY FIGURES, By Herbert Read of the Victoria and Albert Museum. Boston and New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1929. xv+221 pages; 6 plates in color, 70 in black and white. Price \$15.00.

AN invaluable new work which, in a sequence of seventy and more colored and monochrome plates, unfolds the history of English Staffordshire pottery figures. It is the only book of our acquaintance containing more than a mention of these innumerable figures of the Victorian period, which, either as originals or in the form of reproductions, are so frequently encountered in the antique shops of America.

Accompanying his illustrations, the author gives a brief, but entirely adequate historical and critical text, which dissipates many long-held misconceptions, establishes several important facts of recent discovery, and, above all, supplies a sound critical foundation for the appraisal of Staffordshire figures in general and in particular.

PERIOD FURNISHINGS. An Encyclopedia of Historic Decorations and Furnishings. By C. R. Clifford. New York, Clifford and Lawton, Incorporated, 1927. Fourth Edition, revised and amended. 246 pages; copiously illustrated. Price \$10.00.

IT would be difficult, if not impossible, to find a more satisfactory *mul-tum in parvo* in the field of period furnishings than this book, whose fourth edition is now before us. Chiefly pictorial though it is, its multitude of illustrations are well supported by textual notes, summaries, and chronological tables. Its period range is from the early Babylonian period to day before yesterday. This, of course, implies much compression of material; but the feat is exceptionally well accomplished. As an inexpensive, comprehensive work of ready reference, *Period Furnishings* deserves high recommendation.

OLD BUSINESS CARDS OF PHILADELPHIA. By Harrold E. Gillingham. Reprinted from the Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, July, 1929. 26 pages; 20 illustrations. Brochure.

A VALUABLE addition to our information concerning early trades and tradesmen and their methods of advertising. Whether or not the craftsmen of Philadelphia were more enterprising and more artistic than