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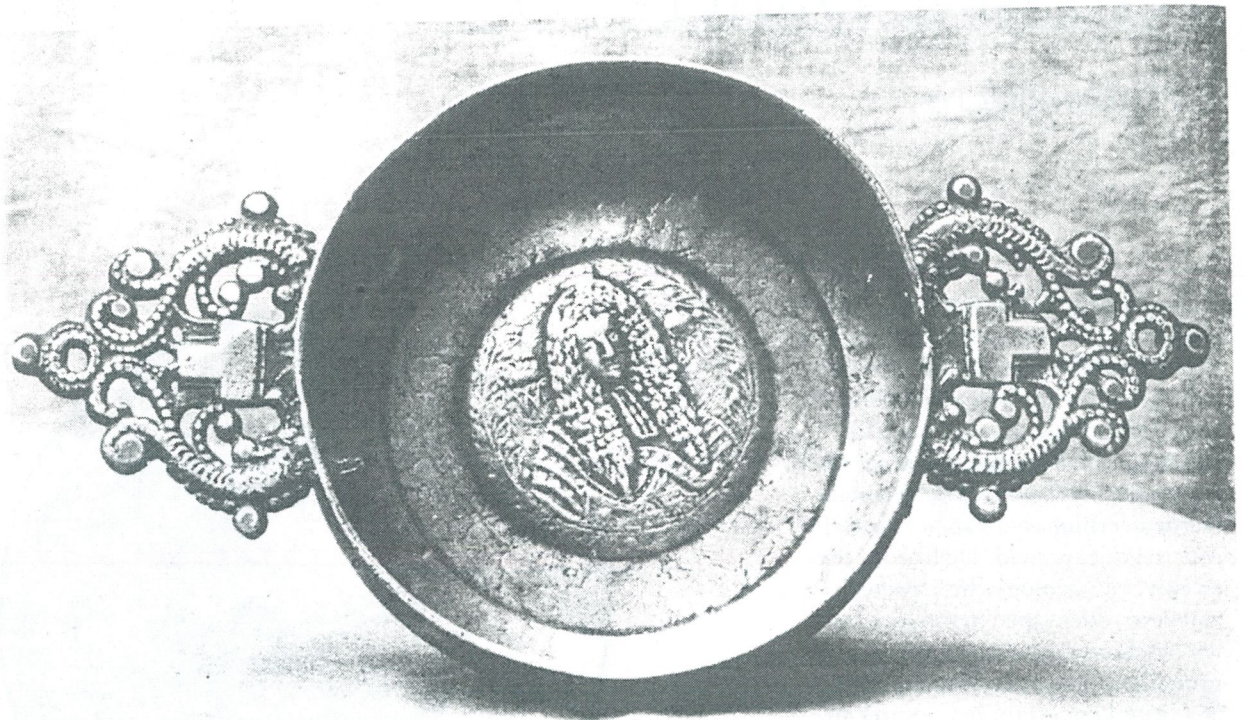


Fig. 1—TWO-HANDLED PORRINGER (Type I)
This is the bowl to which the lid pictured on the Cover belongs. Diameter, 14 centimeters.

Some Pewter of England

Porringers with Busts of Sovereigns

By ADOLPHE RIFF

Conservator of the Museums of Strasbourg, France

AMONG the pewterware produced by the different countries of Europe, there exists a group which, with good reason, is much sought after by collectors: this group consists of the porringers with decorated lid and handles, dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

In France, where this style of receptacle was more particularly developed, the pewterers of Bordeaux, Lyons, Rouen, and Strasbourg produced fine specimens, decorated sometimes with medallions, sometimes with Louis XIV or Louis XV ornamentation.* In Great Britain, also, similar pieces were produced, but they seem to be rather rare: at any rate we do not find any of them reproduced in Howard Herschel Cotterell's fine work, *National Types of Old Pewter*.

In the course of our studies on pewterware in France,† we came across an analogous English bowl as an example for comparison, and since the Editor of ANTIQUES was so kind as to bring to our attention three similar pieces,

we are today in a position to introduce to collectors a little group with decorations in relief, which deserves attention for the quality of its execution. Most of the known items in this group are illustrated here. Reference to two additional porringers is made for the sake of completeness.

For the better comprehension of our brief study, we shall first give a summary description of the characteristics of each porringer type considered.

TYPE I. (*Cover illustration*) A porringer lid: crowned busts on the right and left. In the centre four shields bearing the arms of England, Scotland, and Ireland, alternating with monograms.* Around these, within the space between two concentric circles, the inscription: *HONI:SOIT:QUI:MALY:PENSE*. Above the whole, a crown held by two angels; beneath, the monogram *H. M. R.* † Three little handles, each in the form of two angels in relief holding a crown.

*These shields are: top and bottom, the three lions passant, and the French fleur-de-lys (the latter added in 1340 in recognition of Edward III's claim to the crown of France) representing England; at the left, the lion rampant of Scotland; at the right, the harp of Ireland.

†The initials have been variously read; as *I. H. M. R.* and as *H. R. M. R.*

*Adolphe Riff, *Les Étainiers Strasbourgeois du 16^e au 19^e Siècle*, 1925.

†Adolphe Riff, *L'Orfèvrerie d'Étain en France (French Pewter)*.

I. *Les Écuellies à Bouillon (Porringers)* 1925.

II. *Les Aiguillères en Casque (Helmet-shaped ewers)* 1926.

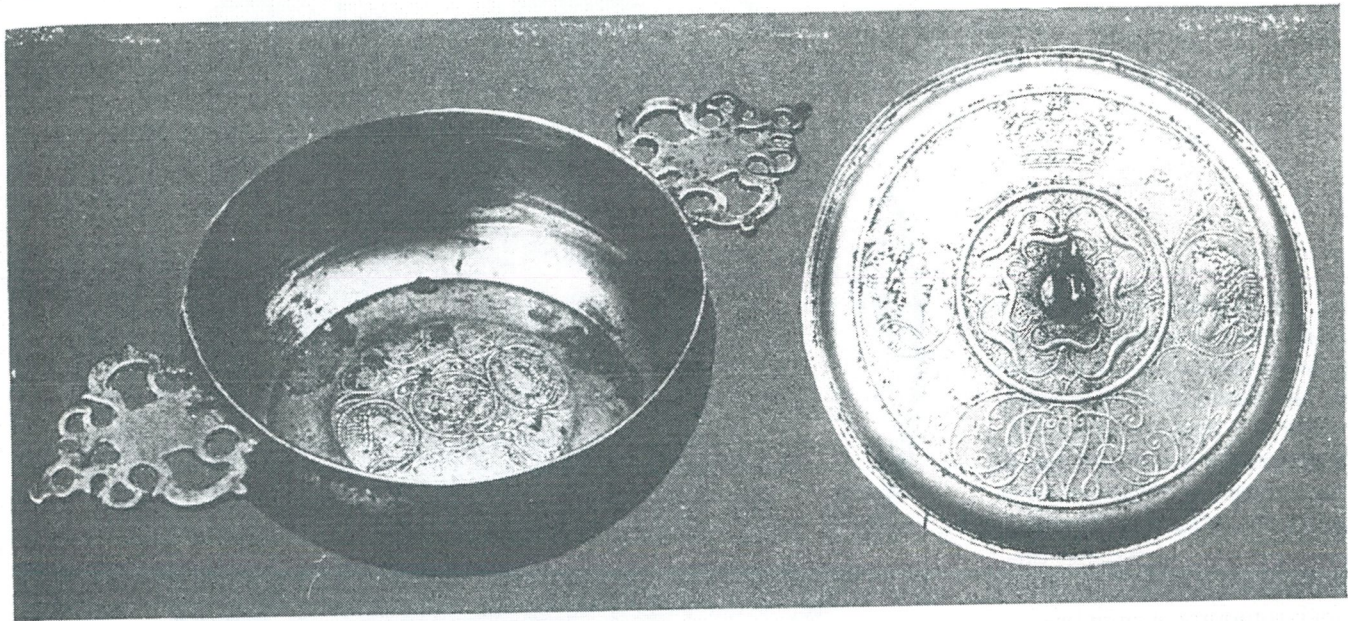


Fig. 2 — TWO-HANDLED PORRINGER AND LID (Type II)

The monarchs represented are King William of England, Prince of Orange, and his wife, Queen Mary. The knob of the lid is in the form of a cock.

In the bottom of the bowl itself (Fig. 1): a circular medallion representing the bust of a personage in the wig and costume of the period; on his left the letter *W*, on his right the letter *R* (William Rex). Openwork handles, with beaded edges, representing two dolphins in relief facing each other. Underneath one handle a mark: a rose surmounted by a bishop's mitre and accompanied by the initials *H. S.* (Collection of Adolphe Riff, Strasbourg.)

TYPE Ia. A very similar bowl (Inv. No. 22521) at the Museum of Decorative Art at Dresden. The handle of the lid in the shape of a little cock: same mark.*

TYPE II. (Fig. 2) Lid: busts right and left in an oval. In the centre, a rose surmounted by a crown; beneath, the monogram *W. M. R.*† In the centre of the lid a small upright handle in the shape of a cock.

At the bottom of the bowl, a medallion showing the same busts as the lid; a small rose with foliage. Handles of irregular outline with openwork, but with a smooth surface. Mark: *I. W.* over a pair of scales. (Essex Institute, Salem, Massachusetts.)

TYPE III. (Figs. 3, 4, and 5) Lid (Fig. 4): busts to the left and right. In the centre, a rose; around, between two pearly circles, the inscription: *GOD: SAVE: P. GEORGE: AND: QUEEN: ANN.* The whole surmounted by a crown; beneath, the monogram *A. A.*‡ The upright handle, placed in the centre of the rose, is in the form of two little angels holding a crown.

At the bottom of the bowl (Fig. 5), a circular relief, a personage in a flowing cloak, holding in the right hand an olive branch, in the left, a sheet of paper on which appears the following inscription in eight lines: *TO-EUROPE-PEACE-I-GIVE-LET-NATIONS-HAPPY-LIVE.* Above, a monogram giving the word *RYSWICK.*

*Thanks are due to the director of the museum for this information.

†Two *R*'s, one of them reversed, may occur here — for *William Rex: Mary Regina.*

‡These initials have also been read as *G. A.*, but really appear to be two *A*'s, one of them reversed, though the loops may form a *G*.

Horizontal openwork handles in the form of two dolphins in relief. Mark: *A. W.* under a crown. (Collection of Mrs. A. W. Thayer, Dedham, Massachusetts.)

TYPE IV. (Fig. 6) Lid similar, but execution not quite so fine, especially the rose. The inscription reads: *GOD: SAVE: PRINC: GEORGE: AND: QUEEN: ANN.* (Collection of The Editor of ANTIQUES.)*

TYPE V. Similar bowl, but of clumsier execution, busts and rose, but without inscription. The rose surmounted by a crown. On the lid three small handles in the shape of cocks, which serve as legs when the inverted lid is used as a plate.

At the bottom of the bowl the same relief as that in bowl of type IV, and the same handles. (Reproduced in the magazine *The Connoisseur*, 1909, p. 121, with no indication as to whether the piece has a pewterer's mark.)

These porringers are intended to commemorate — their decoration leaves no doubt on the subject — the reigns of English sovereigns, notably that of Queen Anne and of King William III — whose rule was one of the most glorious for Great Britain.

The inscriptions of two bowls (types III and IV) mention, in fact, Queen Anne (1702-1714) and her husband, Prince George of Denmark; while the monograms *W-M* of two other bowls (types I and II) can only refer to William III (1689-1702) and to his wife Mary. Two of the bowls have at the bottom a medallion relative to the Peace of Ryswick (1707), the most important historical event of the reign of William III. One of the porringers (type V) bears neither inscription nor monogram, but, in its general character and by the medallion at the bottom of the bowl, it is related to the preceding models.

The bowls date, then, from the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth. From the point of view of artistic execution, they are of unequal quality. Two of them stand out sharply from the others.

*Of this piece only the lid is preserved. It was found in Pennsylvania.



Fig. 3—Two-Handled PORRINGER (Type III)

Here the lid knob is in the form of two small angels supporting a crown. Width, including handles, 11 inches.

by a more careful decoration, a finer relief, a better general execution. These are: first, model I, with the busts of William and Mary; and, next, model III, with the busts of Prince George and Queen Anne. The other bowls, a little less fine, have the characteristics of copies inspired by the models already cited.

The manner in which the creator of the type succeeded in grouping all the ornamentation—the two busts, the crown, the rose, the foliage, the inscription, and the monogram—on a circular surface, denotes a very ingenious decorative sense. It will be noticed that this design type was preserved by the other pewterers, who only modified the details of its arrangement. In this manner, in spite of a certain unity of decoration, the bowls are different from one another, and our five pieces belong to five different types. Even types III and IV, which are fairly similar, possess differences: for instance, in the inscriptions *GOD SAVE* and *GOD SAUCE, P. GEORGE* and *PRINC GEORGE*, and in the crossed branches under the busts.

The attribution of our porringers to the workshops of pewterers of the period raises serious difficulties, in spite of the numerous recent researches concerning the marks, which have much advanced our knowledge of the subject. Of the three marks, *A.H.*,

I.H. and *H.S.*, which we have quoted, only the last has been identified by Mr. Howard Herschel Cotterell, the English pewter expert, as that of Henry Smith of London, who obtained his *freedom* in 1724.

Mr. Cotterell, to whom we address our sincere thanks for his kind information, expresses his astonishment that this pewterer should manufacture a bowl with the bust of William III, instead of showing the bust of the reigning sovereign. Sharing his surprise, without being able to explain the fact for the moment, we can do no more than mention that the pewterers were traditionalists, and that they often used, for a long time, the molds of their predecessors. There exist numerous examples of this.

This fact would, perhaps, also explain why the medallion referring to the Peace of Ryswick is found on a porringer (type III) of Queen Anne; whereas this historical incident is connected with the reign of William III. It may, however, be, as is sometimes the case with French porringers, that the lid and the bowl may have been mixed up or replaced in the course of wear, without



Fig. 4—THE LID OF THE PORRINGER OF FIGURE 3
The busts represent Queen Anne and Prince George.

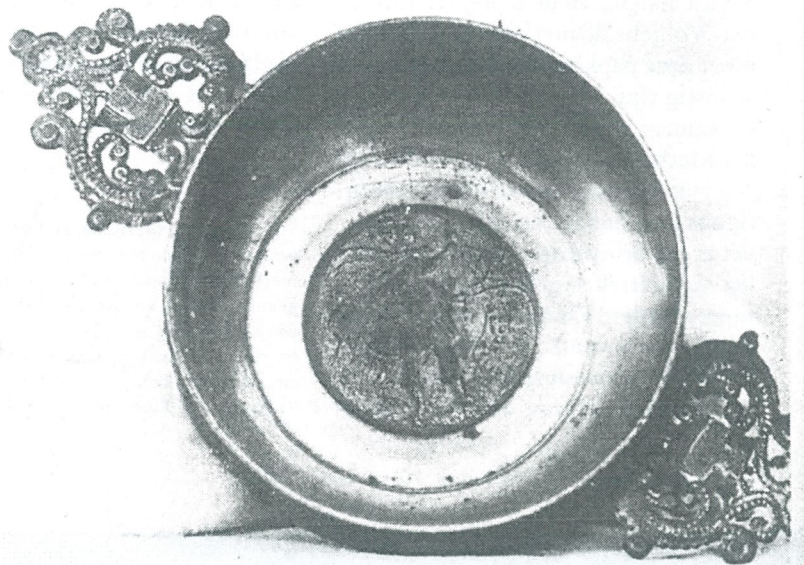


Fig. 5—INTERIOR OF THE PORRINGER OF FIGURE 3

attention being paid to matching the decoration of the two parts.

We have already remarked that these bowls date from the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth. They thus belong to a relatively limited period, and it is interesting to notice that it is also at this period that the best specimens of decorated porringers were manufactured in France, where, at that time, this style of porringer seems to have been particularly fashionable. Moreover, that moment in France was the apogee of pewterware, for the rapid rise of earthenware and porcelain during the eighteenth century was soon to bring about the decline of pewter. The same was doubtless the case in other countries of Europe. Our English porringers, however, are distinguished from similar French pieces, in which one finds another shape, and, from the point of view of decoration, neither the medallion at the bottom of the bowl nor the busts of sovereigns.

A more thorough study of this group of porringers with busts of sovereigns—naturally other specimens must exist—is called for. Such a study will doubtless permit still more precise conclusions and identifications. For the time being, we simply wish to call the attention of collectors to a few examples of pieces which are among the finest and most interesting specimens of pewterwork in Europe.

Note: These curious commemorative porringers, which have no other counterpart in English pewter, present something of a mystery. Aside from their un-English form, their touch-marks seem almost to defy identification. Edwards J. Gale of Boston, a careful student of pewter, thinks that the maker's initials *A. W.*, borne by the example of Type III illustrated, may be those of Abraham Wiggin, *pro-*

man of the London Pewters Company in 1707. At the same time he suggests the possibility that this and similar porringers may have been made not in England but on the Continent—perhaps in Holland. Evidence in favor of this suggestion exists in the form of a much damaged remnant of a porringer—now in the office of ANTIQUES.

It is here reproduced (Fig. 7). The pattern of the bowl of this piece displays a circular portrait medallion, of whose surrounding inscription only the following words are decipherable: *PRINSE VAN ORANIEN ENDE GRAEF VAN . . .* Clearly this is a Continental specimen. Other reasons for attributing these porringers to some Continental workman might be advanced—the form of certain of the lid knobs, for example; but the subject is sufficiently complex to demand consideration by the experts of many countries. Now that M. Riff has offered so much material on the subject, the task of amplification should prove attractive.—The Editor.



Fig. 6—LID OF PORRINGER (Type IV). Here again the reign of Queen Anne is commemorated.

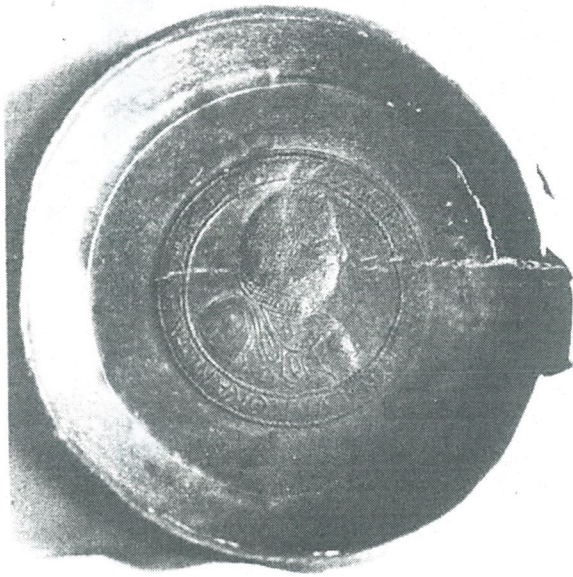


Fig. 7—BOWL OF PORRINGER WITH BUST OF WILLIAM OF ORANGE

