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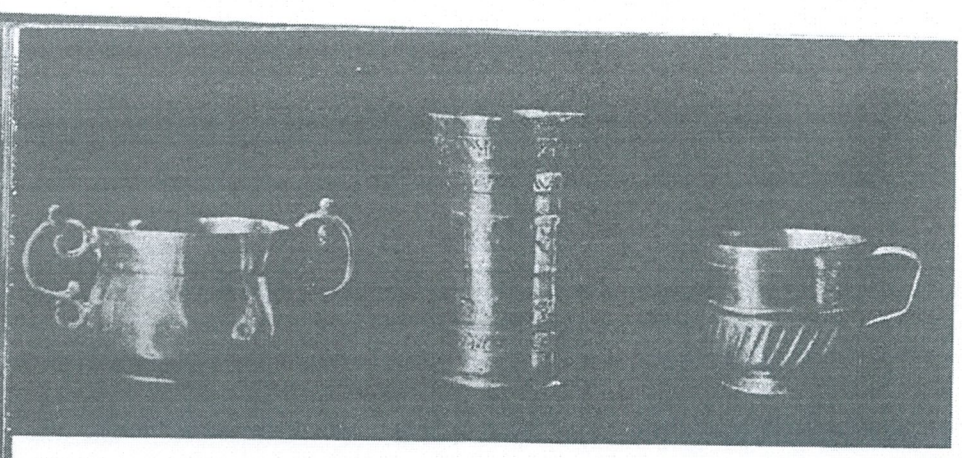

OLD ENGL

NOTES

By
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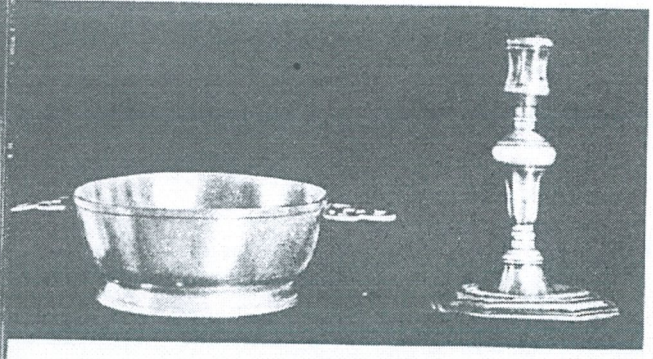
Editor's Note—This is the series of articles on antiq silver, pottery, glass, and native accessories, which



As a collector, I have been asked to write about pewter plate; and I would like first to make some general remarks, and then to describe the examples illustrated on these pages.

The commencement of my collection was due to interest in old silver, a passion beyond my purse, and pieces of pewter following silver patterns are those I have sought.

The Romans, when in Britain, mined tin and lead, and made pewter jugs and dishes, the latter often fifteen inches in diameter and ornamented with incised lines. There are examples in the British Museum found on a common in the Eastern Counties of England. These were near the surface, arranged in a ring, as though a feast had been in progress and the participants suddenly disturbed by enemies or wild beasts.

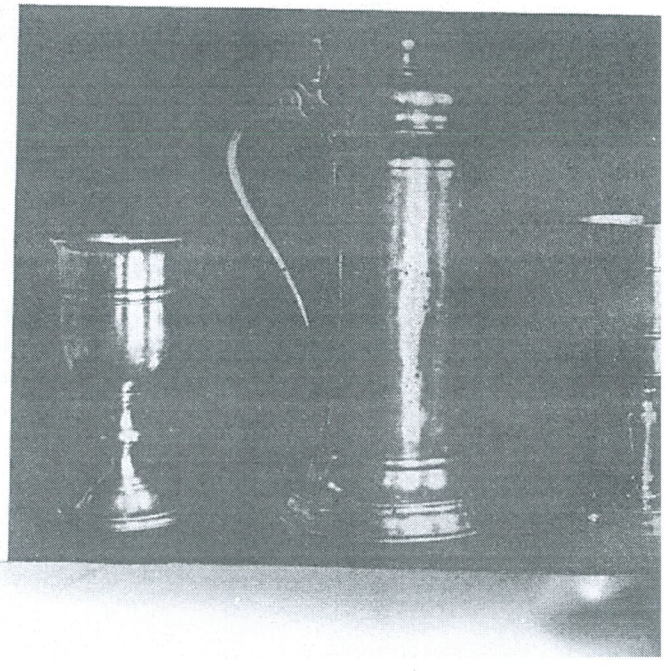
In Gothic times, with the exception of the chalices placed in the stone coffins of church dignitaries, we have no evidence that pewter was much used.

Examples of the XVIth century in pewter are very rare. There are flat-lidded measures of the period, and at Hampton Court there are two small Elizabethan dishes marked "E. R." with the royal crown. Again, there is the inkstand given to St. Bartholomew's Hospital by a Master in Tudor days. A friend of mine has in his collection the body of a Tudor hourglass salt or cup. In a well-known museum, there are dishes said t have come from a monastery of the XVIth century; and i my collection of pewter spoons I have examples which ma be ascribed to the same period.

> The widespread use of pewter in America is coincident with the earliest colonial settlements as revealed by invoices of importations from England no less than the inventories of estates of deceased colonists.
>
> There are good reasons to believe that no pewter was made here until after 1700. Until well into the first part of the XVIII century the role of the pewterer was chiefly part of the repairer of the soft and easily damaged metal.
>
> Import taxes before the Revolution encouraged the native craftsmen to turn out a plentiful supply of pewter as a useful substitute for the more costly silver. The heydav of pewter continued until a cheap form of britannia and Staffordshire earthenware, enlivened by historic and romantic scenes, flooded the market. Nearly a century then passed before the subtle beauty of pewter was widely appreciated again.
>
> *Joseph Downs, Curator of American Wing, Metropolitan Museum of Art.*

The plate shown in the group on page 33 was dug up with several others when additions were made to Guy's Hospital. It has the mark of the Tudor Crown & Feather, and was formerly in Mr. Hilton-Price's collection. He considered it might have belonged to the eldest son of Henry VII, who used the single ostrich feather as his crest or badge.

The beaker in the center of the photograph on page 32 has bands of Gothic ornament round the upper part and, although much worn, one can trace a broader band of heraldry round the center, wherein the Tudor Rose &



TOP of page: The two-handled posset cup can be dated from silver examples of the XVIIth century; the owner's initials M.D., with traces of the maker's mark between, are stamped on the base of the interior. The center beaker is of a much earlier type than the Dutch ones of the late XVIIth century. The Gothic bands of ornament and the heraldic character of the center enrichment seem to indicate the Tudor period. The small cup with its gadrooning is late XVIIth century.

Below this: The trefoil piercing of the handles suggests that this bowl is XVth or early XVIth century, and it is most unusual to find a circular foot or base. It is said to have been found at Reading. The candlestick may be either English or Dutch, and dates about 1700-1720.

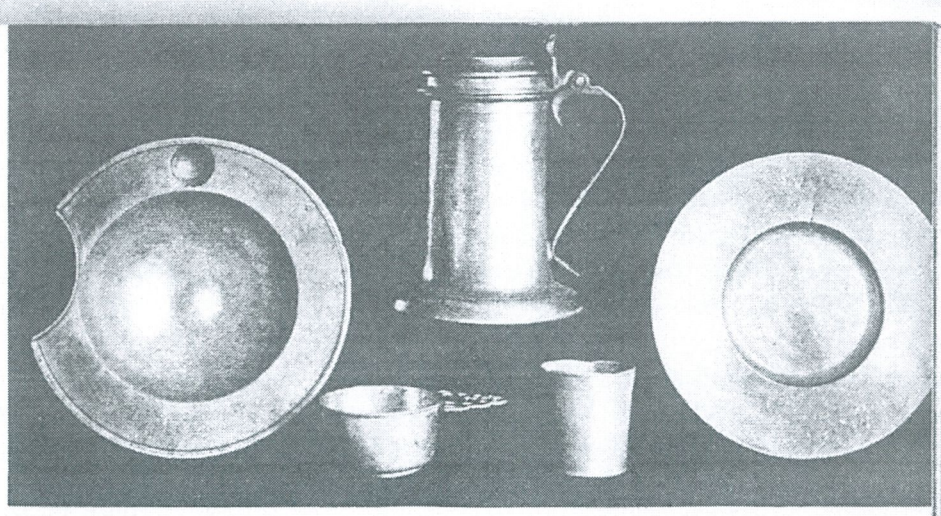
Right: The chalice on the left is quite late XVIIIth century, and may be Scotch. The flagon in the center is probably dated about 1680-90. The chalice on the right is one of a pair from Comber on Strangford Loch, near Belfast.

'EWTER

RDENT COLLECTOR

Yeco TES, F.S.A.

ear in ARTS & DECORATION. he present article on old English euter will be continued in the anuary issue.



Crown alternate with the Prince of Wales' Feathers. This is the piece I prize most in my collection.

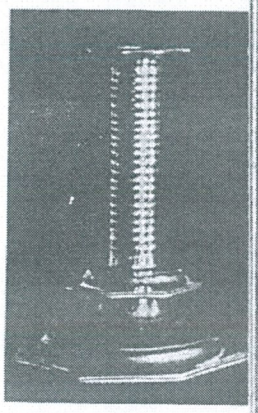
I must digress for a moment to speak about Spanish pewter. When the ships of the Armada were scattered by the gale around the coast of Scotland, the galleon *Florentia*, said by some to have been the treasure ship of the fleet, put in to Tobermory Bay, where, after exciting adventures, it blew up and sank. Several attempts have been made to salvage this vessel, its position is exactly known, and it has been reached on at least two occasions. About fifteen years ago, a syndicate working with divers met with some success and recovered various relics of silver, iron and pewter. I am fortunate enough to have a rose-water dish, a powder or water flask and three plates which were sold at auction at the time. The plates have this peculiarity, that the center is rounded throughout, rather like the steel helmets in the Great War. I wonder if this shape was to suit the rolling of the ship?

Until about thirty years ago, there were few collectors of pewter, and but little was known about it in England. Since that date, there has been the formation of the Pewter Collectors' Society, and now there are many interested collectors.

The scarcity of examples of early pewter is due to the strict regulations of the Pewterers' Company. It was a Trade Union, and its members were not allowed to mend a broken piece brought to them. They were obliged to put it in the melting pot and cast, perhaps with the same metal, a piece from the mold then in use. In the old Gothic Hospital at Beaune, there is a great quantity of pewter of the late XVIIIth century fashion, but it is recorded as the original metal recast three times.

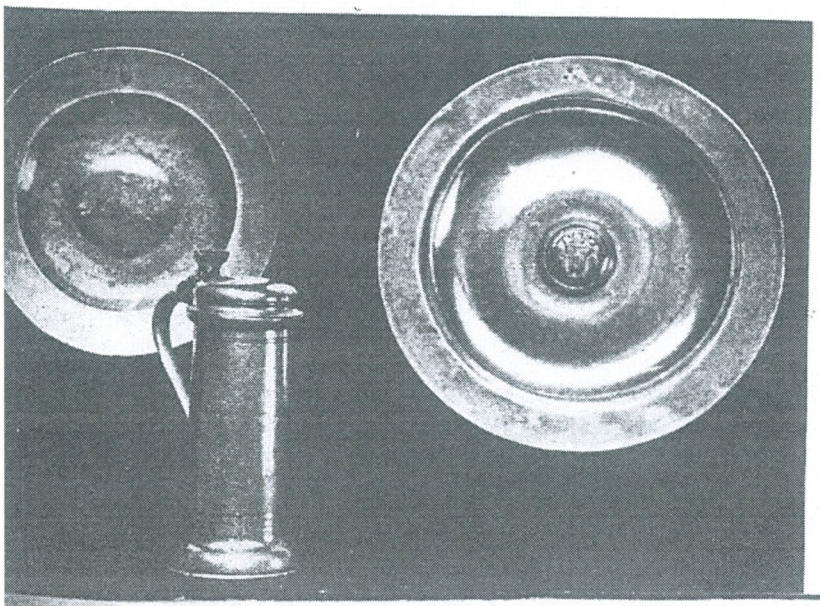
Most specimens now in collections have been discovered in wells, drains, or in old blocked-up cupboards or between floors.

As many people have asked me whether fine pieces contain silver, I must explain that the color of pewter is due to its consisting almost entirely of tin, a metal with almost the brilliancy of silver. In a lecture are recorded, as the result of much research, the following proportions: Best Metal:—112 parts of tin to 26 of copper. Second quality metal:—100 parts of tin to 17 of antimony. Public House Black metal:—60 parts of tin to 40 of lead.



While most collectors polish their specimens, there are some who do not remove the oxide patina, and there is this much to be said, that the blistering and original patina forms one of the best tests of a genuine piece. Pewter plate was polished in olden days, and it is this polished surface reflecting surrounding colors that gives it charm.

After the Restoration, when most Royalist silver had been melted down, pewter was (*Continued on page 42*)

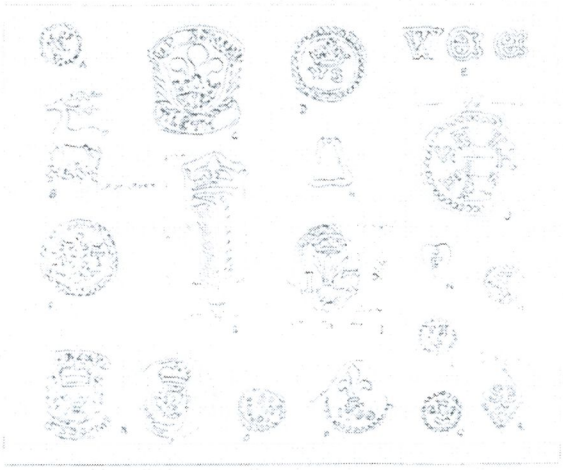


TOP of page: The center flagon is about 1637 and is well preserved. The sinking dish at left, with small sinking for [illegible], dates from between 1690 and 1720. The small beaker may be George II. The capping bowl is of unusual depth and has a pierced handle.

Below: This porringer may be about 1684. One handle is entirely new, as the old one was spoiled in clumsy reparation.

The candlestick is of the last half of the XVIIth century and is of sturdy proportion.

Left: The plate at left I have already referred to as having the Crown and Feather mark on the front, and a small bell touch on reverse. The piece at the right is a rosewater dish of the Charles II period, with a brass and colored enamel plaque fixed on the front. The church flagon dates from about 1680, and is a piece of great beauty of outline. The touch on the outside of the handle is worn away.



OLD ENGLISH PEWTER

(Continued from page 27)

in general use among the more wealthy families and the spoons, tankards, candlesticks and salts of this period form the basis of most collections.

With regard to the marks of "touches," one pewter gets usually the smaller the mark the earlier the piece. A small circle with beads or dots around it indicates the XVIth or XVIIth centuries. In addition, the so-called Silver marks — that is, four small shield-shaped punches containing "Lion Passant," initials, etc. — are generally found on XVIIth or early XVIIIth century examples.

It was the custom to stamp the owner's initials on plates and bowls, and on tankards and other good pieces, the letters are finely engraved. If the three letters of initials occur in a triangular shape, the top single letter denotes the surname, the lower left-hand one the man's Christian name, and the right-hand lower one the wife's Christian name. This method of stamping nearly always signifies a XVIIth century piece. Possibly the custom continued until 1725.

Some English pieces are unmarked. Most likely, they are those made in small country towns by journeymen pewterers, and such not associated with the Pewterers' Company. As was the case with the silversmiths, the principal country towns, such as York, Bristol, Exeter, etc., had Pewterers' Guilds of their own, possibly affiliated with London Company.

Foreign pewter is nearly always marked, and the common "Rose & Crown mark," with the addition of initials in the Crown, is never found on English pewter, though, without the initials, the "Rose & Crown" denotes a fine quality English pewter.

(To be continued in forthcoming issue)

MARKS [illegible] illustrated in [illegible]

IN OLD HERTMENT COMES TO THE

(Continued from page 23)

Mrs. Joseph Aronson, the youngest, makes the living rooms and bedrooms of her bungalow in three tones, including the furniture.

The designer's first quest was to get a sense of larger space, more freedom of movement, so in the living room the wall between there is a room. In its place, he built a wide bookcase, running space, that above the eyelevel. In the top, he inserted a row of lights, ing units to produce indirect illumination by reflection from the ceiling. This device curiously lifts the height of the ceiling and enlarges the size of both living rooms or either one. The bookcase on the sitting room side is of mica wood with white enamel trimmings. The dining room face of this same bookcase, however, is a smooth blue half-wall, a background for a small sideboard, and carrying out the deep blue color of both dining room and living room curtains. These curtains hang from the ceiling on a long horizontal, covering not only the windows in each room, but stretching beyond to the wall's turn, so that they form, when drawn at night, an unbroken surface across the south wall of the apartment, having the effect of joining the two rooms into one long one. In the daytime, these blue curtains are drawn aside, and bright yellow net curtains mark out the same architectural line along the walls, but let in the bright sunlight which their colors enhances. Ceilings are painted uniformly yellow, and the effect is produced of one large room, yet with sufficient detachment for the dining room.

In the living room, the chimney breast was lengthened horizontally, and then marked with a long surface of the mica wood of the bookcase. The wood was cut from the center of the logs, and the natural white streak was left to form a kind of vertical panelling in the wood veneer—an effective, effective decoration.

On her dressing table, Mrs. Stroock keeps a photograph of her great-grandmother framed in a round, gilt Victorian frame, to add piquancy to surroundings that would probably have seemed strange and harsh to the old lady, and not a little shocking in their nudity. One could swear by the white frills in her bonnet that she doesn't approve.

GARDENS FOR CHRISTMAS CHEER

(Continued from page 28)

with copper-lime dust late in the [illegible] *Symphoricarpos* is propagated by seeds, cuttings and suckers.

One of the most satisfactory plants you can acquire is the dogwood (*Cornus florida*), species. This small tree is practically ideal, as it flowers exquisitely in spring, with dense heads of small, pale absinthe-colored blossoms, and flares up gorgeously, with brilliant leaf and scarlet berry, in the fall. The flower buds are conspicuous and the stems vividly colored all winter, which makes up for it's being deciduous. Propagation is by seeds, best sown in the fall, by cuttings of mature wood, and by layers. Dogwood thrives nobly in almost any soil and degree of light, and is easy to take care of.

Another useful and ornamental species is the *Cornus Kousa*, which blooms radiantly in June and has vivacious pinkish berries.

Deciduous berry-bearing shrubs have their superior points, as too much foliage is as bad as too much of anything else, and their bare glistening branches punctuated by bright clusters of berries have a dramatic effect against sky and a cold sky. But evergreens you must have, too, especially the berry-bearing kind, because you'll need all the color you can get to make your winter garden really gay and Christmassy. One of the best of these is the *Ilex crenulata*, a prominent member of the Tea Family. The berries are really hard-coated seeds surrounded by fleshy disks, and are a brave red in color.

Think of waking up on Christmas morning to look out your windows and see the joyful colors of holly and dogwood berries, the starry white of *Symphoricarpos racemosus*, grouped against a cluster of soaring Japanese yews!

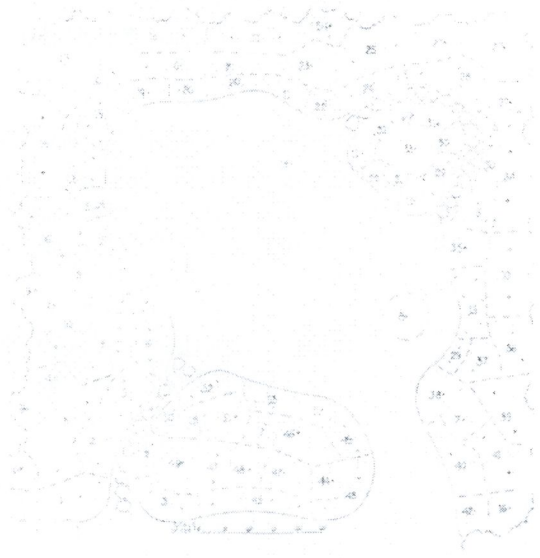
Note: The accompanying plan assumes a site of about one hundred feet square, but is adaptable to many other layouts and areas. Sites such as this would be likely to have some background of trees on the same or nearby properties, which could be considered and utilized in your planting arrangement, for it's a good idea to make your neighbor's trees add to your planting picture if you can. You will note that, having adopted a square site, we promptly proceed to disguise the square form as much as possible, in order to get greater and more varied depths of planting, an open space of better form with a longer vista, and more suave outlines. The hard lines on the plan which limit the planting are not permanent. The will show the limit of cultivatio among the trees and shrubs un they are able to smother th weeds.

—Harold A. Caparn, L.A.

PLANTING LIST

Space
No.

1 Viburnum prunifolium, Black Haw. B
2 Viburnum acerifolium, Maple leaf viburnum, Dockmackie BB
3 Viburnum opulus (americanum) Cranberry Tree. B
4 Viburnum lentago, Nannyberry, Sheepberry. B
5 Symphoricarpos racemosa, Snowberry. B
6 Viburnum dilatatum, B
7 Rosa rubrifolia, Redleaf Rose. B
Ilex opaca, American Holly. B. The English Holly is more handsome, but not hardy in the latitude of New York
8 Ginkgo biloba, Maidenhair Tree. Y
9 Sorbus aucuparia, European Mountain Ash. B
10 Cydonia japonica, Japan Quince. S
11 Prunus maritima, Beach Plum. BF
12 Ilex verticillata, Black Alder, Winterberry. Not as showy though, usually recommended
13 Berberis vernalensa, Warty Barberry, evergreen. B
14 Berberis thunbergi, green and red. Japan Barberry. R
15 Berberis sibirica, Spine Bush. B
16 Cornus alternifolia, Blue Dogwood. B
17 Cornus florida, White Dogwood. B
18 Calicarpa purpurea, Beautyberry. V
19 Cotoneaster horizontalis, Spreading Rockspray. R
20 Cotoneaster dielsiana, Diels's. B
21 Photinia villosa, R
22 Lonicera tatarica, Tatarian Honeysuckle
23 Cornus mas, Cornelian Cherry. B
24 Lonicera morrowi, Morrow's Honeysuckle
25 Aronia arbutifolia, Red Chokeberry. B
26 Crataegus oxyacantha (c. p. Paul's Double Scarlet Hawthorn. R
27 Rosa rugosa, Ramanas Rose. B
28 Vaccinium corymbosum, Highbush Huckleberry. BB
29 Rosa setigera, Prairie Rose. R
30 Crataegus oxyacantha (c. p. Double White Thorn. B
31 Aronia nigra, Black Chokeberry. B
32 Lonicera bella, Bush Honeysuckle. B
33 Crataegus cordata, Washington Thorn. B
34 Cornus Kousa, Kousa Dogwood. Pink
35 Hamamelis mollis, Witch Hazel. B
36 Rosa rubiginosa, Sweetbriar. R
37 Malus halliana parkmanni, Parkmans' Crab. P
38 Crataegus coccinea, Scarlet Thorn. R
39 Elaeagnus longipes, Edible Oleaster. R
Pleasant tasting fruit
40 Berberis thunbergi, Silver Thorn. V
41 Crataegus crus-galli, Cockspur Thorn. R
42 Forsythia suspensa, Regel's Privet. B
43 Malus spectabilis, Double Pink Flowering Crab. V
44 Cornus paucinata, Gray Dogwood. S
45 Malus f. scheideckeri, Scheideckers Crab. I
46 Chionanthus virginica, White Fringe. B
47 Malus medwedewskiana, Redvein Crab. R
48 Malus toringo f. p. Bechtel's Crab. V
49 Symphoricarpos rhomalis, Snowberry. R
50 Malus atrosanguinea, Carmine Crab. R
51 Cornus alternifolia, Outer Dogwood. S
52 Mahonia japonica BB A very handsome evergreen shrub when it grows well
53 Cornus florida rubra, Redflowering Dogwood. R. Less vigorous and productive of berries than the white form.

Many perennials have berries. Some of them are Cornus canadensis, Bunchberry; Gaultheria procumbens, Wintergreen; Trillium, Solomon's Seal; Actaea, Baneberry; Arctostaphylos uva-ursi, Bearberry; Arisaema triphyllum, Jack-in-the-pulpit; Gaultheria, Mitchella repens, Partridge Berry; Podophyllum peltatum, Mayapple; Pardanthus, Blackberry Lily; Bunchberry, Wintergreen; Baneberry, Clintonia, Mitchella, Jack-in-the-pulpit, Lily-of-the-valley, Mayapple, Trillium, Solomon's Seal are good in shade. They may be set towards the edges of the planting, or shrub may here and there be omitted to make room for them.

B — BLACK, BB — BLUE-BLACK, P — PURPLE, R — Red, V — Violet, S — White, Y — Yellow. Colors are those of berries.