

An Unusual Pewter Collection

A www.pewterbank.com website email correspondent contacted us to ask about a piece in his most unusual pewter Collection.

In his work he travels widely through the world and he likes to collect a piece of pewter, often a reproduction, from the country he is visiting.

He permits us to share these photographs of his collection.

The letters assigned to pieces in the photographs are the initials he uses for the Country from which the piece was sourced.

The two following photos of the collection are similar. The second giving a little more detail of the drinking vessels.



AT	AUSTRIA
AU	AUSTRALIA
BE	BELGIUM
BG	BULGARIA
BO	BOLIVIA
BR	BRAZIL
CA	CANADA
CH	SWITZERLAND

CK	COOK ISLANDS
CN	CHINA
CR	COSTA RICA
CY	CYPRUS
CZ	BOHEMIA (Czech Rep)
DE	GERMANY
DK	DENMARK
EN	ENGLAND

ES	SPAIN
FI	FINLAND
FJ	FIJI
FR	FRANCE
GR	GREECE
HI	HAWAII
HK	HONG KONG
HU	HUNGARY

ID	INDONESIA
IE	IRELAND
IS	ICELAND
IT	ITALY
LU	LUXEMBOURG
MA	MOROCCO
MT	MALTA
MY	MALAYSIA

NL	NETHERLANDS
NO	NORWAY
NZ	NEW ZEALAND
PL	POLAND
PT	PORTUGAL
RO	ROMANIA
RU	RUSSIA
SC	SCOTLAND

SE	SWEDEN
SG	SINGAPORE
TH	THAILAND
TR	TURKEY
TW	TAIWAN
US	USA



AT	AUSTRIA
AU	AUSTRALIA
BE	BELGIUM
BG	BULGARIA
BO	BOLIVIA
BR	BRAZIL
CA	CANADA
CH	SWITZERLAND

CK	COOK ISLANDS
CN	CHINA
CR	COSTA RICA
CY	CYPRUS
CZ	BOHEMIA (Czech Rep)
DE	GERMANY
DK	DENMARK
EN	ENGLAND

ES	SPAIN
FI	FINLAND
FJ	FIJI
FR	FRANCE
GR	GREECE
HI	HAWAII
HK	HONG KONG
HU	HUNGARY

ID	INDONESIA
IE	IRELAND
IS	ICELAND
IT	ITALY
LU	LUXEMBOURG
MA	MOROCCO
MT	MALTA
MY	MALAYSIA

NL	NETHERLANDS
NO	NORWAY
NZ	NEW ZEALAND
PL	POLAND
PT	PORTUGAL
RO	ROMANIA
RU	RUSSIA
SC	SCOTLAND

SE	SWEDEN
SG	SINGAPORE
TH	THAILAND
TR	TURKEY
TW	TAIWAN
US	USA

1801 Pewter Tankard from Cheb (Western Bohemia)



Lid engraved with date 1801 and initials -G·M-. Inside the lid there are 3 pewter marks of Cheb (Eger in German). Height 29 cm. The thumb lift is very typical for Cheb (see other examples below). The auctioneers declared that tankard was original, but was probably cleaned some years ago.

Cheb is a city in the Karlovy Vary Region of the Czech Republic, Western Bohemia. Apparently Cheb was an important centre for Bohemian pewter hollowware production. The beginning of the city is closely connected with an important trade route connecting Bohemia and Germany. It ran from Žlutice to Cheb. Another important factor in the development of the region was ore mining from the 13th to 16th century in the Slavkovský Mountains (gold, silver, pewter). Pewter mining was especially of European importance and brought both an economic and a cultural boom to this part of the country. Pewter mining reached its height in the first half of the 16th century, then slowly started to decline and this process was completed by the Thirty Years' War. The search for new sources of income resulted in the boom in the crafts and guilds. Numerous specific crafts appeared in the region (pewtering, shearing, tanning, millinery, etc).

Tankard bought in November 2012 from Antikvity Praha s.r.o. Vyšehradská 2, Praha 2, 128 00 IČ, auctioneers at the Castle Zaluzany in the Czech Republic. The auctioneers estimate was 250 to 300 Euro.

Other examples of Cheb pewter found on the Web

Spouted pewter jug

Lid engraved with town mark and maker's mark, J. Becher, Bohemia, Cheb, dated 1794, height 26 cm



Spouted pewter jug

A Cheb pewter-maker mark on the lid, initials of the owner and date 1847, Bohemia, Cheb, height 26 cm



One of the pieces he most enjoys is in the photograph above to the left hand side marked IT 1633. Shown below are more photographs of this piece a real work of art and skilled craft. The mark below shows that it was made in the 20th century and not in 1633. The label gives the store it was purchased from. Unfortunately they have not responded to this website's request for more details of where it was made. It is a fine piece.

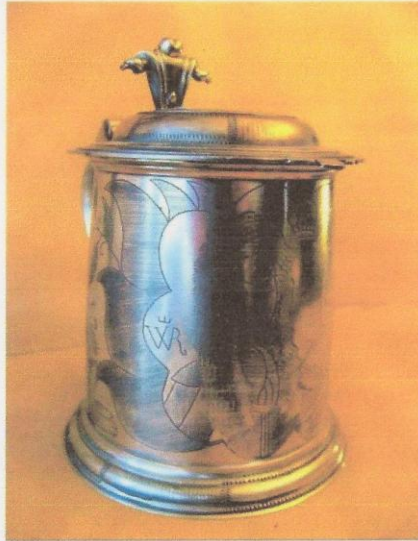




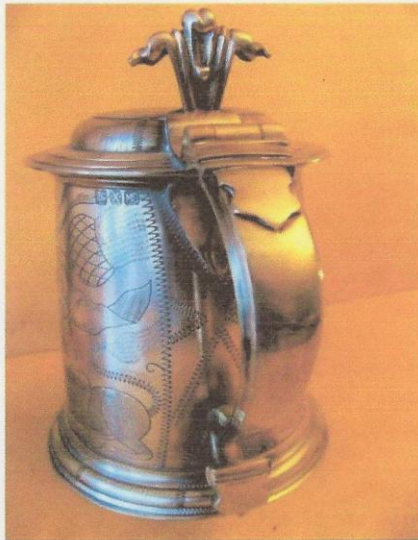


The piece below is fourth from the left on the top row of the first photograph. This is a piece that replicated a 1688 tankard that is in the V&A Museum. Inquiries discovered that the piece was actually made in Brazil (from work by an English Pewterer working in the Minas Gerais province in the period of the late 1960s and early 1970s. This piece was actually made in 1984 for a Swiss pewterer who sold it to the V&A - truly international.

Other articles concerning John Somers or Captain Cunningham will take you to other articles on this website that gives a great deal more information concerning both the original piece in the V&A and the Brazil Pewter connection.



Marks :
 RG - Renee Guggisberg
 X high quality pewter = lower than 10%
 MG - Minas Gerais - the state where pewter made in Brazil
 Base = N the 14th letter = 14 years after pewter production commenced (1968) = 1982 = the year the tankard was made.



Hand engraved William and Mary reproduction made for the Victoria and Albert Museum London by John Somers
 Pewter makers of Minas Gerais Brazil

Alfred Yeates personal collection records courtesy Pewter Society archives/ Librarian John Bank
 1982 Reproduction images sourced via John S Bank
 Compiled by CME Oct 2012

In November 2011 he is recorded as " last pewterer in Ticino (the only Swiss Canton where Italian is the sole official language) in the town of Lamone" "he is an artist and a craftsman".

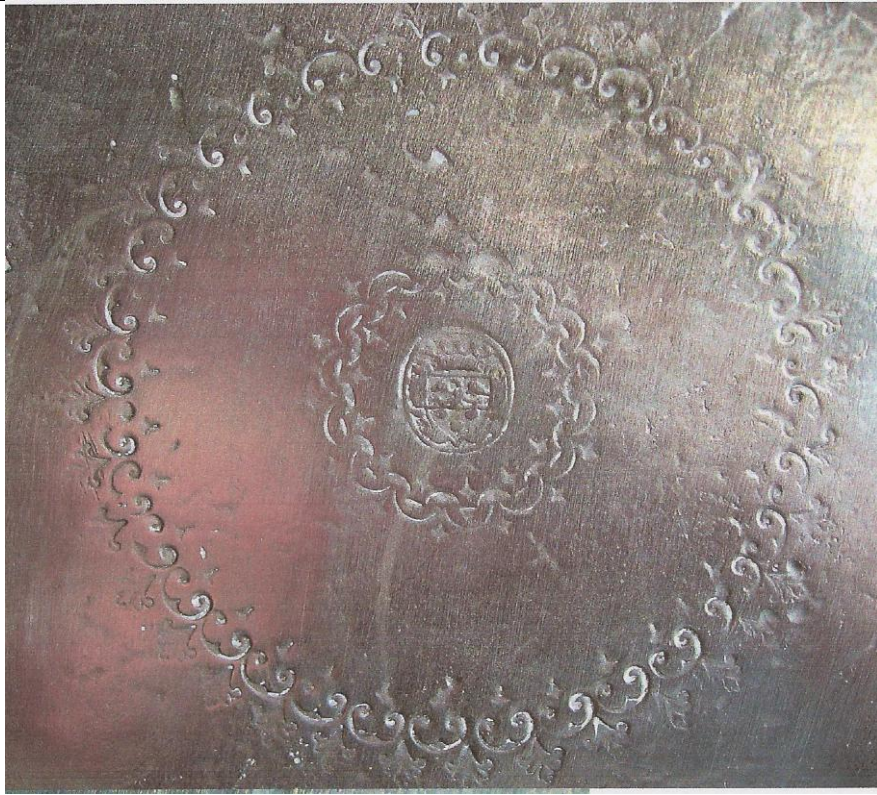
The mark to the base is a letter "N" indicating it was made in the 14th year of John Somers' business (started 1968) thus in 1982. The RG indicates it was made for Rene Guggisberg who sold it to the V&A shop.

.....
.....
Whilst this collector does have reproductions he does have a good number of older pieces especially plates which were sourced mainly in Belgium.

One email was as follows -

I have been browsing your amazing and helpful site of pewter.
I have a collection of over 100 pewter items, including some 80 tankards (from 40 countries) and 17 plates.
I have managed to trace the country of origin of most of them, but I have problems with two plates.

One of them is a large (39.6cm - 15.6 in) plate, with no marks on the back, but there is one in front in the middle, and I send you pictures, wondering if you can help me.



The plate centre referred to and an enlargement of the centre marks.....unfortunately unable to help

The other one is a huge (43 cm - 16.9 in, weight 3.8 kg - 8.4 pounds) plain plate. I have scanned the marks on the back, asking again for your help. The date I had been able to work out from the image at my end. As it says 1990 that would imply that it was unlikely to be made before then.



I have done some (much) more Google search and found the answer for my larger plate. It reads

"Potstainiers Finstain GF hutois"

"There is an emblem with a Castle in the centre, with three main towers, with flags flying on top of each tower. Beside each side of the castle are the letters: "T" and "F". There is another icon that looks like some sort of Shield with the letters "GF" on the inside, with a man standing on it, and it looks like he's pouring metal."

So the plate was made in Belgium.

I have a number of pewter plates with a Crowned Rose mark, with the initials TP, which I find nowhere. In addition there is a mark also with TP, showing an Angel or a Saint with a Church, and again I find nothing like it in the list of "angel" marks.



"I had a reply saying that these were not marks from Holland, and this gave me the address of the Belgian (Flemish) Pewter Society (Vlaamse Tin Vereniging – secretary Philippe Probst secretariat@vlaamsetinvreninging).

So I contacted them in turn and the search was fruitful, as I received the following information:"

Indeed, your marks are from Belgium. They are the pewter marks of Tossanus (Toussaint) Portelange (1782-1845). This pewterer was active in the city Sint Truiden (Saint Trond). The person on the mark with the church is not an angel but the Saint "Saint Trudo".

.....

.....

The collector tells us that -

"I do not mind having in my collection nice and good reproductions from museums. I have a reproduction of a 16th century pewter tankard from the Museum of Applied Arts of Budapest, or of a beautiful plate from the Drammens Museum in Norway dated 1651 (on my earlier photos by mistake I show that it is Swedish), or of a finely chiselled plate from the Hungarian National Historic Museum dated 1732, or of a beautiful 12in high tankard from Italy (until recently I thought it was Swiss) dated 1633 (I wish it was not a copy, but who can tell ?). I have seen hundreds of pewter tankards, but this is the only one where the whole bottom is fully engraved inside. I am collecting pewter from all over the world, from places as far as Australia, China, Cook Islands, Fiji, Costa Rica, Hawaii, Hong Kong, Iceland, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore or Thailand."

This article is here to encourage all those interested in old pewter to collect it in whichever way gives you most pleasure.

This is not here to encourage other collectors to ask this website about the marks on their pieces - clearly in this instance the owner himself did diligent internet searches on his own behalf and thus solved most of the puzzles himself.

This website's interest is mostly Old British Pewter and has little knowledge of that of other countries finding the topic of Old British Pewter - huge, involved, and very engaging, in itself.