

# PEPPERS, SPICE POTS, CASTORS & SIFTERS

Sources used – Pewter of The Western World 1600 – 1850 by Peter R G Hornsby  
Pewtersellers.com – permission of Carl Ricketts  
Private Collections

*In this 'Collecting' article this website does not set out to write the history or the detail of the subject. What is attempted is to tempt you the reader into taking an interest in the subject – no more – by showing you examples - giving just a little simple information. If your interest develops then the UK Pewter Society and the Pewter Collectors' Club of America (PCCA) offer in-depth articles on many subjects in this year's and previous years' publications. Therein also resides a wealth of collecting experience. This website is simply for encouragement that the reader might take interest and progress themselves further with it. Any prices quoted mean only that they are one off 'heard of' sales and may not reflect today's value in any which way.*

## SPICE POTS

Spices were needed as strong flavours to hide some of the more unpleasant tastes of the meat served which might have been, old, smoked, heavily salted. Cinnamon and ginger were the most widely used spices. In the early 1700s there were small spices boxes while in the later part of the 1700s and 1800s baluster shaped pots with screwed or loose lidded tops were usual.

## SIFTERS OR CASTORS –

For sugar likely the holes were larger than for pepper or spices. Sugar was more easily used than say pepper. For sugar the baluster shapes are often larger and some were engraved or cast decorated

Early European types might be bayonet fitted rather than screw threads. Pre 1800 examples are scarce.

## PEPPERS

A very large range of smaller 'castors' were made for pepper. There are very many different shapes. They were so commonly used and mostly unmarked that dating and identifying makers is usually impossible. Here again art works of table scenes at a given date enable some attempt at dating but only in as much to say that that type was in use then, not when it was made, how long it was used for, or who made it.

## SPICE POTS



**1600-1650**

***German Salt or spice stand 2 ½ inches tall  
Perhaps spice as would two salts together be needed?***



Only a handful of marked spice pots are known. This one by William Davison II of London is an early 18<sup>th</sup> century form with baluster body and slip-on lid. In wonderful, undamaged condition, with modest wear, and a warm medium-grey lustrous patina from regular polishing. 4 ¼" high.



Probably English 1700-1720 4" high



Dutch or English from the 1700s.



Baluster Spice Pot Dutch or English 4" high from the 1700s.



Plain Baluster Spice Pot likely Dutch c 1800

## CASTORS



Outstanding example of a rare and very large (7 $\frac{1}{8}$ " high) urn based castor c1760-80 with nicely detailed and pierced screw-off lid. Very few castors are 18<sup>th</sup> century, so this is an exceptional example of what have become almost impossible to find types. The foot is hollow up to the urn section, and inside has beautiful concentric turning lines. The body is engraved with a crowned 'C', which usually denotes a high status item, In excellent condition, with light-grey original surface patina.



Very few castors are 18<sup>th</sup> century, and although it has dark even oxide over the entire body, this is still a very rare and desirable English example c1770-1800 of what have become almost impossible to find types. The lid piercing, and acorn knob are especially attractive features. It has a few minor blemishes from wear 5 $\frac{5}{8}$ " high. Castor 2



Unusual example of an urn bodied pounce pot or castor c1800-1830, with a more rounded form of screw off lid, which is original to the castor and works perfectly. This is a well made and heavily cast piece, in very good condition, with light-medium grey lustrous patina. 5" high.



Exceptional and very rare pair of tall George III period urn bodied castors. Very few castors are 18<sup>th</sup> century, this is a matching pair with minor differences due to the individuality of craftsman manufacture. Each has a hollow base, and their screw-on tops have slightly different knobs. In excellent condition, with light to medium-grey original surface patina.



Very large 7½" high castor by Englefields, London c1900 whose *Crown & Rose Cast Pewter* mark is struck under the base. In superb condition, with light grey lustrous original surface patina.



Good example of a rare 6" high urn based castor c1760-80 with nicely detailed and pierced screw-off lid. 18<sup>th</sup> century castors like this are now almost impossible to find. The foot is hollow up to the urn section, with nice turning lines inside. This is a well made and heavily cast piece. In excellent condition, with light-grey original surface patina.



**A large urn based earlier cast pewter 'sugar' castor.**

This weighs about 10 ozs or 280 gms and is unmarked. It stands about 6 ½" tall and has an urn or central diameter of about 3" with a footrim diameter just a fraction less. It could perhaps have been a large pepper though the holes are a bit big or a spice pot. It has a nice patina and the odd small dent and ding indicating good but fair use.



**A Pewter Castor c 1800**

A castor about 1800 5 ¼" high in very good condition, free of repairs and dents, finial intact, top screws free, weighs over 6 ozs.



Fine straight sided sugar castor mad in Paris  
1680-1740



Baluster Sugar Sifter or Castor Paris France 1680-1740



Baluster Sugar with beaded foot France c  
1700



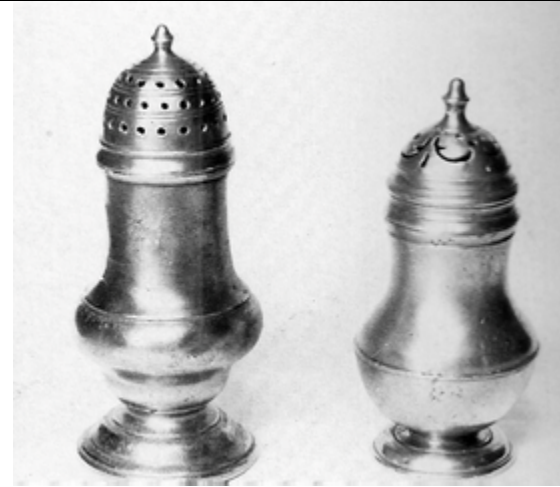
Possibly Dutch 5 3/8" high 1700s



European Sugar Castor 1700s 6" high



Sugars and Peppers European 1700s.



A pair by Henry Joseph c 1780 4 1/8" and 4 3/4" high



Unusual 5 7/8" tall Sifter early 1800s



English Urn Shaped Sifter 7" high 1700s



Urn Sifter 6" high Europe likely



English Regimental Sifter c 1800



Two American Sifters 5 and 5 1/2" tall

## PEPPERS



An Antique Pewter Pepper Pot from about 1825 perhaps. A dark tobacco brown pewter patina, the lid does unscrew, it stands over 4 ½” with a footrim diameter of 1 7/8” and weighs over 3 ozs. An honest pewter pepper pot of simple cast form.



An Antique Britannia Metal Pepper Pot of Unusual but effective shape. Made by Wilkinson and Sons of Birmingham in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. It stands over 4” with a footrim over 2” and weighs about 4 ozs. The top screws off, a little loose but works.



**An unusual shape of Victorian Pewter Pepper Pot** this stands over 4 ½” tall with a footrim of about 2” weighs just about 4 ½ ozs. The top screws on and off and the inside looks quite clean.



An Antique Pewter Pepper or Spice Pot of good size. Probably made in the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century. This has a good pewter patina stands over 6” high has a footrim (which is narrower than the body) of 3” (it was repaired at some time where the stem meets the body) and weighs 14 ozs. The top unscrews nicely.



A Vintage Pewter Cruet Set. Salt Pepper and mustard complete with blue glass intact all set on a small tray. Definitely a small set with the tray being only 3 ¾" in diameter and the pepper to the top of its little finial only just under 2 ½" and the whole set weighing only 6 ½ ozs.



Despite their appearance and convincing oxide, these table condiments are of 20<sup>th</sup> century manufacture. Marked under the base with the Englefield 'Rose & Crown Made in London' touch, with MADE IN ENGLAND, and the logo of the Association of British Pewter Craftsmen (from 1915?). This is a matching pair although the screw-off top of the right hand one is not pierced, which allows it to be used for products such as dry mustard powder. In excellent condition, with light to medium-grey original surface patina.. 5" high.



4 ½" High sifters or peppers English 4 ½" tall 1800s.



American 1800s 3 7/8" high



1800s likely English 4 7/8" high



Barrel Shaped European 1780-1800



American perhaps Thomas Danforth III  
1780-1810 6" high



PEPPER English or Dutch 1780-1820 4" high

It is easy to be confused between peppers and sifters, as can be seen.