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SOME LIGHT ON PROVINCIAL PEWTERERS—PART II A NEWLY DISCOVERED COMPANY OF METALMEN OF GLOUCESTER

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TO preface the story of pewterers' guilds which have been discovered in the last few years the following notes will be found of interest.

It was reported to the Society of Pewter Collectors by a member, Mr. Ernest Hunter, that he had discovered a reference to a guild of pewterers in Kendal, Westmorland. Mr. Roland J. A. Shelley, F.R.Hist.S., the well-known collector and President of the Society, who lives in Lancashire, was asked to endeavour to find out whether any further information could be obtained in the locality. His efforts met with success and he was able to disclose his findings to the January, 1935, meeting of the Society members. In brief, he ascertained that in 1661 the pewterers of Kendal, who had previously been associated with other trades, broke away from the Hardwaremen, Armourers, etc., and formed a Company on their own.

A copy of the Constitution was produced by Mr. Shelley.

It appeared that the Kendal pewterers were also workers in brass, and the names of some 29 possible pewterers submitted by Mr. Shelley probably included some craftsmen who were partly or solely braziers. It is believed that the Pewterers Company of Kendal came to an end some time prior to 1744.

The success achieved by Mr. Shelley in the above investigation seems to have spurred him on to further triumphs, for in January, 1936, he read a paper before the Society concerning his discoveries relating to the Pewterers of Wigan.

It had hitherto been believed that, although pewterware was made sporadically at Wigan, there had been no guild established there. Mr. Shelley, although unable to trace any guild documents, found sufficient evidence that a guild had existed, and was able to hand on to fellow collectors details of some 194 pewterers, only a few of which had been previously recorded. Since the writing of this article, Mr. Shelley has published his booklet *Wigan and Liverpool Pewterers*, which gives particulars of some 361 pewterers and much other interesting information. This booklet was reviewed in the January issue of *APOLLO*.

He was also able to produce evidence that the so-called "York" flagons which were believed by Mr. H. H. Cotterell to have been made exclusively in Yorkshire, were also made by a Wigan pewterer and therefore, presumably, in Wigan.

So much for the position up to date. The present writer

has had the good fortune to find traces of yet more provincial guilds and the information is published here for the first time.

Gloucester has yielded some valuable information relating to a Company of Metalmen, consisting of the goldsmiths, *pewterers*, braziers, coppersmiths, wire-drawers, cardmakers, pinmakers, and plumbers. This guild was incorporated in the year 1607. Even Mr. Cotterell appears to have been unaware of such a Company since no mention of Gloucester (other than the names of a few pewterers whose provenance was Gloucester) appears in his book.

The first reference to a company here, which included pewterers, was found in a volume on the English Craft Guilds, printed and published in America in 1927,¹ and corroboration of the information was made by the writer from the Public Record Office, London, where, in the "Historical Manuscripts Commission Reports" was found an extract from the "Ordinances for the Government of the Company of Metalmen of Gloucester, newly incorporated by the Mayor, Aldermen and Council on 29th May, 1607". It was stated that these ordinances showed the names of the 21 persons who petitioned for its formation, but unfortunately these (the names) did not appear in the Commission reports.

The historical document to which reference is made is one of the valued possessions of the Corporation of the City of Gloucester, and contact was made, through the Town Clerk, with Mr. Roland Austin, the Records Officer of Gloucester, who kindly assisted in supplying further extracts from the text of the "Ordinances" and the names of the 21 founder members. The names are quoted below, together with part of the text in which they appear.

The whole extract and the names are reproduced in their original spelling.

"WHEREAS also, it hathe alwaies beene founde necessarye and expediente for the common commodity and for good order to be observed and kepte within the saide Cittie that all occupations and mysteres which before have not beene under anye uniforme order or governmente shoulde be reduced into some companie and that the persons usinge and exercisinge the generall trades artes mysteries and occupations of golde smithes; pewters; braiseiers; coppersmithes; wyer drawers; cardmakers; pynne makers; and plumbers have muche

chevisance and mutull dealinge amonge themselves and some of them have not heretofore been of anye companie and so throughe defaulte and wante of composition betweene the persons exercisinge those occupations or mysteres as well the same occupations and trades as the persons usinge the same within the saide Cittie of Gloucester are of late much decayed and therefore desire to be incorporated and to be ordeyned and made one companie or fraternitie and to be called by the name of the Companie and Fraternitie of Mysterie or occupation of Metall Men of the Cittie of Gloucester KNOWE YEE nowe and these presentes do testifie that in the Council Chamber of the said Cittie at a generall assemblye there holden the nyne and twentyeth day of Maye in the yeares of the raigne of our Soueraigne Lorde James by the Grace of God of Englande, Scotlande, Fraunce, and Irelande, Kinge, defendoure of the faith etc. that is to saie of Englande, Fraunce, and Ire-



TWO FINE GEORGIAN PINT TANKARDS by Bristol makers, circa 1740.
Left: By Richard Going. Right: By Allen Bright. Roland J. A. Shelley Collection.
Pint tankards are more difficult to find than quarts

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lande, the fyorth, and of Scotland, the fortyethe by us the saide Maior and Aldermen and Common Councill of the saide Cittie it was then and there with one assente and consente, concluded condented unto and agreed and for us and our successors allowed and graunted to and for the weal of the saide Cittie that our well beloved neighbours herein named:— Thomas Hill, George Custance, Richarde Heathe, Johane Hill Widowe, Nicholas Foxe, Willyam Collins, Henry Pryor, John Pantte, Edward Owen, Francis Tewe, Phillipp Greene, Robert Cuggley, Humphrye Taylor, Richarde Browne, John Browneinge, Robert Hillyarde, Thomas Edge, Thomas Cuggley, Robert Brothers, Walter Prycharde, and John Hawkeswell and such others as shalle have served seven years as apprentices with any of the saide 21 persons, shalle be taken and reputed as the onlye Companye of metal-men in the saide Cittie"; and that they may elect on the Monday sennight next after Epiphany yearly a Master of the said company and two Wardens of the same, to hold office for one year; which Master and Wardens shall have power to enquire into all defaults, deceits and trespass made by the members of the said company, and to correct and punish the same.

The said Master and Wardens are invested with full powers for the government of the said company and the said company may assemble themselves as often as necessary in some fit place in the City to be called the Guild Hall of the Fraternity of the Metal-men of the City of Gloucester; and the said Company shall be a body corporate and be called and known by the name of "The Company and Fraternity of the Mystery and Occupation of Metal-men of the City of Gloucester."

Here follows a list of rules and regulations containing clauses relating to good behaviour, rights of search, etc., but nothing specifically for any one trade, nor are any particular trades or professions mentioned.

It is to be regretted that the respective trades of the petitioners for the formation of the company are not shown, but it seems evident that Willyam Collins, at least, was a pewterer.

Cotterell includes a William Collins who was mentioned in Gloucester records of 1636 and this was most probably the Wm. Collins whose name appears in the "ordinances."

We are thus able to add to the already recorded information the fact that this pewterer was operating, at least, between the dates 1607 and 1636.

The only other name amongst those included above, of whom a possible connection can be traced to a recorded pewterer is that

of Edward Owen. Cotterell records Edward ap Owen who was a master of Ludlow in 1578, i.e. 29 years before the date of the incorporation of Gloucester metalmen.

It is not a far throw from Gloucester to Ludlow, and it is possible that Edward Owen, although a Gloucester pewterer, joined the Ludlow Guild as being the nearest *at that time*, and it is not beyond the bounds of reason that he, with his knowledge of the inner workings of guilds by virtue of having already attained the rank of master, was instrumental in introducing the benefits to his fellow workers in metalcraft in Gloucester in 1607.

Although, so far, no trace has been found of any earlier association of pewterers in Gloucester, it is established that pewterware was made there prior to 1607. Beggars Badges were in use in the city in 1556, although the writer has been unable to trace any such badge still in existence.

A record in the Chamberlains' accounts for the City of Gloucester in 1555-56 reads as follows:—

" . . . also in money paid to John Paynter for making of a molde for the begger's bages, and pewter and workmanship of the same to a pewterer, by the commandment of the Maister Maire. xiii^s vi^d."

The above-mentioned John Paynter (or Peynter as his name is variously spelt) is unlikely to have been a pewterer or mould maker himself and was probably some sort of a Beadle of the Corporation, for his name appears on various occasions in the City records about this time as receiving sums of money for doing odd jobs quite unconnected with metalcraft; for example in 1556-57:—

" . . . also paid to John Peynter for the making of two papurs sett abowte the sowthe seier (soothsayer?) standyng upon the leades at the High Cross, by the commandment of the Maister Mayor vid^d."

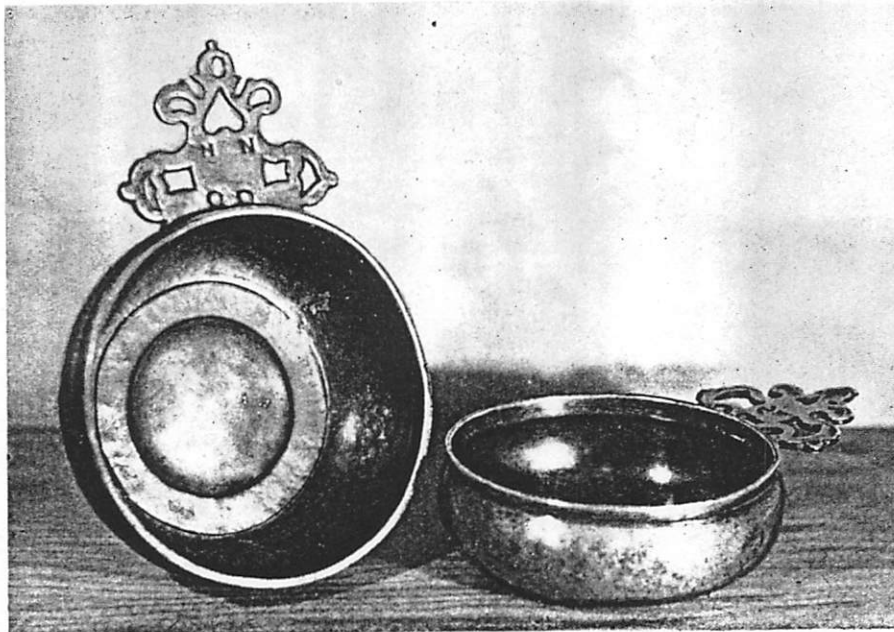
Meagre as this new information may be, it adds just another small chapter to the history of pewterers and their associations.

(The writer has also traced references to guilds which included pewterers in Hereford, Shrewsbury, Doncaster and Chester, and it is hoped to write further on these guilds at a later date.)

¹ *The English Craft Gilds: Studies in their Progress and Decline.* By Stella Kramer. Printed and published by Columbia University Press, New York. 1927.

BOOKS RECEIVED

- CHINESE ALBUM. By CECIL BEATON.
- AN INDIAN ALBUM. By CECIL BEATON. (Batsford.) 12s. 6d. each.
- MEDIEVAL CATALOGUE. No. 7. (London Museum.) 10s. paper cover, 10s. 6d. bound.
- WELSH FOLK CRAFTS AND INDUSTRIES. By IORWERTH C. PEATE. (National Museum of Wales.) 3s.
- CIVIC AND MEMORIAL LETTERING. By PERCY J. DELF SMITH. (A. & C. Black.) 10s. 6d. net.
- MEDIEVAL CATALOGUE. London Museum Catalogues No. 7. Paper covers, 10s.; Board, 10s. 6d. (Lancaster House, St. James's, S.W.1.)
- PIERO DI COSIMO. By R. LANGTON DOUGLAS. (University of Chicago Press.)
- WESTERN ASPECTS OF GANDHARA SCULPTURE. By H. BUCHTHAL. From the proceedings of the British Academy. (Oxford University Press.) 9s. 6d. net.
- PAINTING AND PAINTERS. Lionello Venturi. (Scribners.) 21s. net.
- LONG ROAD HOME. The Romance of Romney. HORACE SHIPP. (Sampson Low.) 8s. 6d. net.



TWO EARLY PORRINGERS. *Left*: 5 ins. dia.—touch of Henry Hammerton, circa 1720. *Right*: 4½ ins. dia.—by "I. B.," unknown maker, circa 1700. Author's Collection