

SOME NOTES ON THE RECENT
 PEWTER EXHIBITION IN CLIFFORD'S
 INN HALL PART I.
 BY H. J. L. J. MASSÉ

THE Exhibition held in Clifford's Inn Hall, Fleet Street, which recently closed, has been the first of its kind devoted seriously to Pewter. Some ten years ago the writer organised a small exhibition to illustrate some remarks made on the subject to the Art-Workers' Guild, which then used to meet in Barnard's Inn Hall, and on that occasion was able to collect a very small series of exhibits, so small in fact that they were all shown with space to spare upon a table 10 ft. by 2 ft. 6 in.

In the course, however, of these ten years material accumulated from different sources at home and abroad, together with a further knowledge of where various good specimens of pewter could be found, made it possible to contemplate a larger exhibition, and an appeal to a wider audience.

It was not possible to get more than a few specimens of Roman Pewter, but those shown were of interest, both historically and artistically. The pieces were formerly in the well-known Bateman Collection, and came from Icklingham and Wangford, both in Suffolk. As the tradition attaching to these pieces goes, the Icklingham specimens were found arranged in a circle, some few inches below the ground, the centre of the circle being marked by a helmet and



ROMAN TAZZA FORMERLY IN THE BATEMAN COLLECTION S. G. FENTON, ESQ.
 SMALL DISH, WITH ARMS OF NEW COLLEGE IN FOUR PLACES H. G. MOFFATT, ESQ.
 SMALL DISH, MUCH CORRODED BY SEWAGE A. BILLSON, ESQ.

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other accoutrements in bronze. It is supposed that the vessels which were found in a circle were those used at a picnic some 1500 years ago, and that, owing to some alarm, the party left their plates and dishes and retired to a safer place. Circumstances seem to have prevented their return to fetch the pewter.

Roman remains in Britain are to most people of especial interest, and it may here be said that there are some fine specimens of Roman pewter in the British Museum, particularly the Appleshaw pewter, found by the Rev. R. G. Engleheart, and described in *Archæologia*, vol. lvi., with notes as to their composition by that well-known expert, Mr. W. Gowland.

From those Norman remains to the fifteenth century is a long cry, and it is a matter of regret that so few genuine specimens of English pewter of the Middle Ages were forthcoming. If only the Pewterers' Company had had specimens to lend of the many types of vessels specifically mentioned by Mr. C. Welch in the History of that Company, what interest would have been aroused. Of mediæval work, however, there were specimens, both of them small dishes with a small circular depression in the centre. The one was found in Walbrook some years ago, and was corroded and perforated in places by the continued action of sewage; the other, somewhat larger, but similar in shape, bore the arms, stamped in four places on the rim, of New College, Oxford. This latter piece was without any maker's mark, whereas the other bore a pewterer's hammer, stamped upon the upper surface of the rim.

Next in point of date was a dish made by a pewterer, George Grenfell, whose name or touch does not occur

on the touch-plates of the Pewterers' Company, as he was a liveryman in 1579, some fifty years before the date of the first touch on the five touch-plates which have fortunately come down to our time. This dish was dated by the help of the list of Freemen, in "Pewter-Plate," published by the special permission of the Pewterers' Company.*

From the evidence supplied by the lender of the plate, the initials J. E. S., stamped in small punches on the back, were those of the original owners of the plate, and who were married in 1647.

To go on through the whole exhibition chronologically would be tedious, but it may be noted that the next pieces historically interesting were a collection of rosewater dishes, of the time of Charles I. The smaller ones, two in number, were dated 1628, and have been at the Church of S. Catharine Cree, London, since that date. There are four in all, one of which is now electro-plated for Sunday use, and all have a raised boss in the centre with enamelled centre-pieces of gilding metal. The larger dish formed one of a set of six which were sent to York for royal use in the Civil War, when silver was as scarce on the tables as it was in the pockets. Humble

though pewter is, there is a quiet dignity in these ceremonial dishes that is lacking in more pretentious modern work.

From that date down to the early part of the nineteenth century, the pewter shown might be said to



HANAP OF A GUNSMITHS' OR LOCKSMITHS' GUILD
(FROM THE COLLECTION OF A. B. YEATES, ESQ.)

* This list is particularly valuable in this way, as there are in it the names of many Freemen of the Company who, though they had touches, never registered or stamped them on the touch-plates at Pewterers' Hall.

Pewter Exhibition in Clifford's Inn Hall

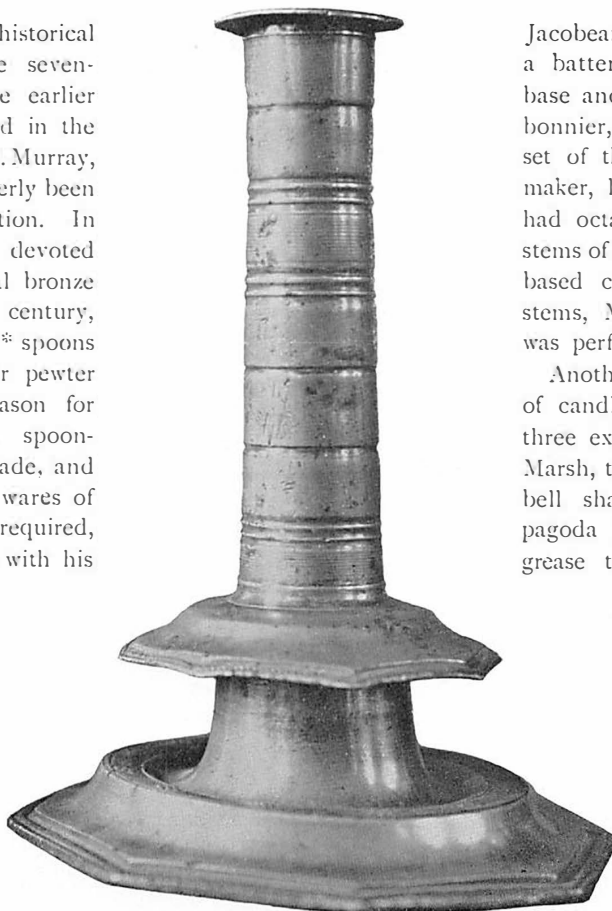
be in a fairly regular historical sequence. Spoons of the seventeenth century, with some earlier ones, were well represented in the collection lent by Mr. H. W. Murray, many of them having formerly been in the Cecil Brent collection. In the same case, which was devoted to spoons only, were several bronze spoons of the thirteenth century, and several brass or latten* spoons of the same date as their pewter fac-similes. The sole reason for their inclusion was that spoon-making was a separate trade, and that the maker made his wares of the metal that might be required, and marked them all alike with his maker's mark.

Plates of all sizes and qualities were in evidence, from the boar's-head dish, 28 inches in diameter, dating from the early seventeenth century, to the small 6-inch plate lent by the Pewterers' Company.

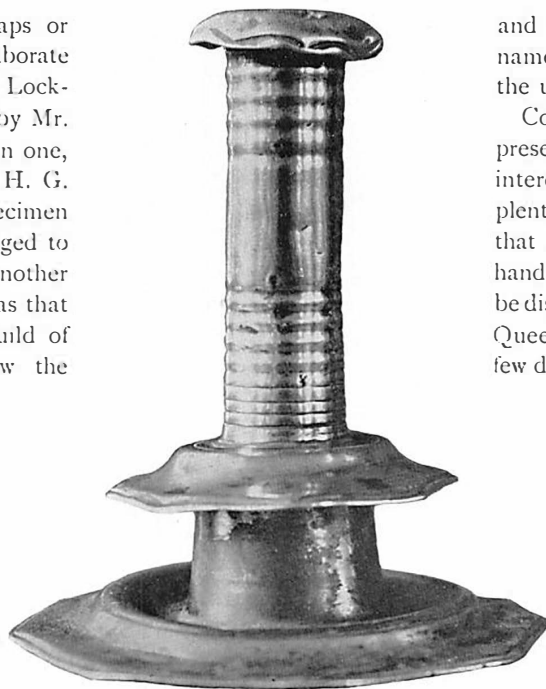
Of the eighteenth century foreign pewter the most dignified specimens were the various hanaps or Guild cups. A particularly elaborate one was that of a Guild of Locksmiths and Gunsmiths, lent by Mr. A. B. Yeates; and a very plain one, lent by Mr. J. Cahn. Mr. H. G. Moffatt contributed a fine specimen dated 1724, which once belonged to a Guild of Shoemakers. Another somewhat similar specimen was that belonging formerly to the Guild of Tobacco Twisters, and now the property of the Art-Workers' Guild.

Colonel Young exhibited the handsome bowl of a Tailors' Guild, 1679, which had been mounted on a later foot.

Candlesticks of



JACOBEOAN CANDLESTICK
(FROM THE COLLECTION OF A. F. DE NAVARRO, ESQ.)



CANDLESTICK, JACOBEOAN
(FROM THE COLLECTION OF T. CHARBONNIER, ESQ.)

Jacobean times were exemplified by a battered specimen with square base and stem, lent by Mr. Charbonnier, of Barnstaple. An excellent set of three,* not all by the same maker, lent by Mr. E. W. Gimson, had octagonal bases and baluster stems of various types. Of octagonal-based candlesticks with tubular stems, Mr. de Navarro's specimen was perfect.

Another essentially different type of candlestick was represented by three exhibits of Mr. S. Chisenhale Marsh, the bases being more or less bell shaped, or in one instance pagoda shaped, with a saucer-like grease tray and baluster stem.

Their colour was due to a long immersion in the mud and water of a moat, from which they were rescued many years ago.

A fine specimen of a plain shaped candlestick with a dodecagonal base was lent by Mr. H. G. Moffatt. This exhibit also bore the arms of New College, Oxford,

and an incised date 1680. The name J. Grimes is also scratched on the upper surface of the base

College pewter, had it only been preserved, would have been specially interesting. There was at one time plenty of it, and it is to be supposed that it was allowed to pass into the hands of college servants, and so to be dispersed if not for ever destroyed. Queen's College, Oxford, has some few dozen pieces, not later than 1740

or thereabouts, and it seems to have been in use at the 'high' table.

Corporation pewter was represented by a large dish, 26 in. in

* One of these was dated 1674, and its interest, apart from the shape, consisted in the fact that it was the work of a maker whose touch was not on the touch plates.

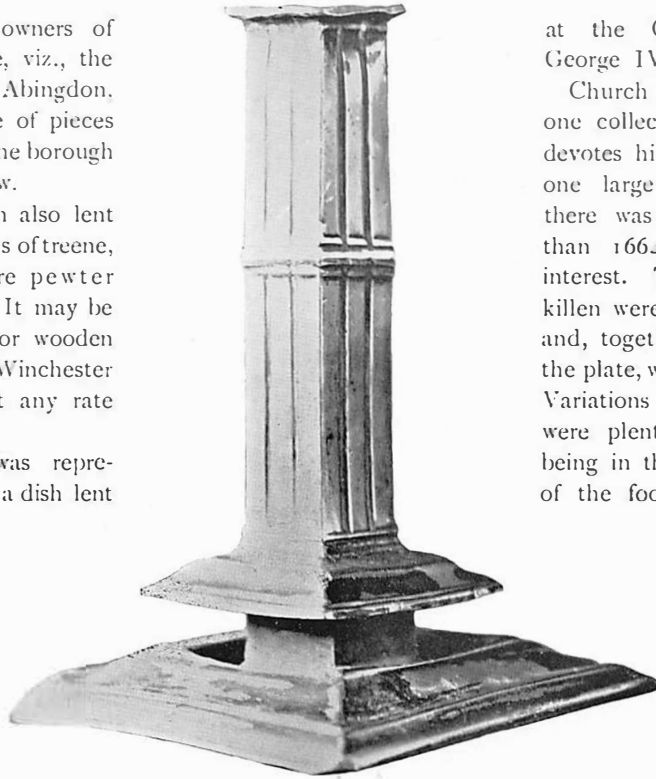
* From the French *laiton*.

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diameter, lent by the owners of much more of the same, viz., the Mayor and Corporation of Abingdon, Berks. A gross or more of pieces was ordered in 1725, as the borough minute-books clearly show.

The same Corporation also lent some of its many specimens of treene, which were in use before pewter plates became general. It may be here noted that treene or wooden platters are still used at Winchester in College for meals, at any rate for dinner.

Staple Inn pewter was represented by two plates and a dish lent by Mr. W. Churcher. The Worshipful Company of Pewterers lent some of the pewter plates still used for luncheon on Court days, together with some specimens of the pewter used



JACOBEBAN CANDLESTICK
(FROM THE COLLECTION OF T. CHARBONNIER, ESQ.)

at the Coronation banquet of George IV.

Church plate, to which more than one collector at the present time devotes himself, filled a portion of one large wall case, and though there was nothing English earlier than 1664, was of considerable interest. The chalices from Enniskillen were of that date apparently, and, together with the flagon and the plate, were of Irish manufacture. Variations of this type of chalice were plentiful, the chief variation being in the mouldings of the rim of the foot, and in those of the tubular stem. A Flemish chalice from the Church of St. Martin, Blackheath, near Wonesh, was interesting as having been recently in use, and a Dutch one with baluster stem,



THREE CURIOUSLY SHAPED CANDLESTICKS WITH BELL-SHAPED BASES FROM THE COLLECTION OF
S. CHISENHALE MARSH, ESQ. THE FOURTH WAS EXHIBITED BY MESSRS. FENTON & SONS

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CHURCH FLAGON, DATED 1753
(FROM THE COLLECTION OF DR. H. TAIT)

lent by Mr. A. F. de Navarro, was also worth noting.

Among other church specimens of historical interest were a late Jacobean paten on a foot, with later added ornament in wriggled work; a font from the Church of Morteyne, in Bedfordshire; a tall flagon lent by Mrs. Gilbert Walker, and a still finer one, dated 1753, but really of earlier date, lent by Dr. Tait.

Church candlesticks were few, but a massive pair with elaborate ornament, presumably French, lent by Mr. A. F. de Navarro, attracted much attention, so too the fine specimen of a German pricket, lent by Mrs. Donkin.

Salt cellars were seen in endless variety, but the gem was a master salt of about 1650, lent by Mr. C. F. C. Buckmaster, the base of it closely resembling the paten with foot, mentioned above, from the collection of Mr. T. Charbonnier.

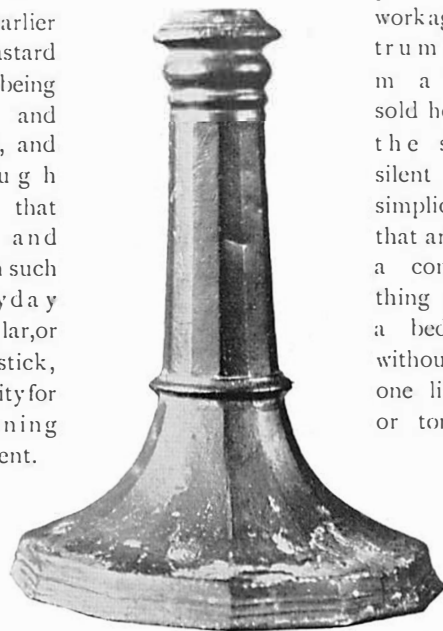
Inkstands were of three main types—the flat kind on feet, with flaps; the flat kind on feet, with open tops; the small kind with tiny drawers or trays. Of the first kind, the best was lent by Mr. Robt. Martin Holland, of the second the finest was that lent by the Pewterers' Company. In the third class, the specimens lent by Mr. Roland T. Mole, with two drawers, and the circular one with square base containing drawer, lent by Sir Thomas W. Snagge, were of equal interest.

An early inkstand, lent by Mr. A. F. de Navarro, was made to look like a reliquary. Of the "logger-heads" no good specimen was forthcoming and the type was perforce unrepresented.

Of tankards the earliest was a Jacobean specimen, quite small and plain, lent by the Rev. F. Meyrick-Jones. One a little later was lent by Mr. A. F. de Navarro. Other good ones were lent by Mr. H. Southam, Mr. W. H. St. John Hope, and one dated 1694 by the Pewterers' Company.

A German tankard, marvellously inlaid with thin brass and delicately engraved (obviously the work of a skilled gunsmith), was lent by Sir Samuel Montagu. Two *pech-krüge*, of different sizes, but similar in form, represented what was a once not uncommon type. With these the later student-tankards did not bear comparison.

The chief historic interest in the exhibition lay in the mute protest of the earlier the bastard now being abroad and pewter, and thoughmony that best, and exist in such everyday salt-cellar, or candlestick, necessity for unmeaning ornament.



CANDLESTICK WITH DODECAGONAL BASE,
OF DATE 1680, WITH THE ARMS OF
NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD
(FROM THE COLLECTION OF H. G. MOFFATT, ESQ.)

(To be continued.)