

THE OLD PEWTER AT THE FLEECE INN AT BRETTFORTON

After the first two photos (from the Pewter Society notice of a Summer meeting in June 2017) and the Wikipedia copied detail there follows the information Jan Gadd had in his papers without an article being written – or the information being assembled in some order for publication - (as far as known). Thus, this article is here to inform collectors of an unusual display of old pewter in at a charming location and to bring to light research by Jan Gadd in 1999.





FROM WIKIPEDIA

The Fleece Inn is a public house in Bretforton, in the Vale of Evesham, Worcestershire, England: the half-timbered building, over six hundred years old, has been a pub since 1848, and is now owned by the National Trust. The inn was extensively damaged by fire on 27 February 2004, and after repairs and rebuilding were completed the Fleece officially reopened on 18 June 2005. The pub holds an annual asparagus festival asparagus and auction while there are three Morris sides based at the pub: Pebworth, Belle d'Vain and Asum Gras. There is a regular folk night plus concerts and weddings in the medieval barn.

Owned by the National Trust, The Fleece Inn was originally built in the early 15th century as a longhouse (an early type of farmhouse accommodating both livestock and humans) by a prosperous yeoman farmer called Byrd. It later became a pub, which was rebuilt in the 17th century and remained in the Byrd family until 1977, when Lola Taplin bequeathed it to the National Trust. Lola was a direct descendant of Mr Byrd and lived her entire life at the Fleece. She died at 77, having run the pub on her own for the last 30 years of her life. The Inn suffered serious fire damage after a fire broke out in the thatch in February 2004, and the business temporarily moved to a nearby barn during the 14 month long restoration.

Reputedly Oliver Cromwell's pewter dinner service was exchanged on the way to the battle of Worcester and this is on display at the pub. Even if this account is not true, it is an example of 17th century Jacobean English Pewter ware.

A curious medieval tradition also survives at the Fleece, preserved in accordance with Lola's wishes. This is the practice of chalking "witch circles" on the floor in front of each hearth to prevent witches from getting in through the chimneys. There are also "witch marks" on the inside of the door, to keep evil spirits out.

Additional Note - There is a barn outside of pleasing character that was successfully used for lunch and meeting in June 2017.



Visit to the Fleece Inn, Bretforton April 21, 1999.

Jan Gadd

The visit was made in order to close-measure the pewter there and to try to establish if John Trapp II and John Greenbanck used the same moulds. Present too was a lady from the National Trust and a local gentleman who had made the perspex covers for the pewter shelves.

I was introduced to the pub in 1965 by a friend who knew of my pewter interest and visited it again from time to time when we lived in Moreton-in-Marsh. The place was miserably cold in the winter with sometimes only one fire going. The spinster lady owner drew the pints directly from the barrels stored in a stair case cupboard which was the bar. No heating there, of course, and the lady always wore knitted mittens with the fingers cut off. Her complexion gave witness to a long life spent in bitterly cold rooms. She had no knowledge or interest in pewter at all, but was very proud of the family historical aspects of the pewter collection and of the pub.

Judged by certain examined items on display, the collection was most certainly added to at one stage, possibly during the 1920s. Bretforton is very near to Broadway where Antonio de Navarro lived during this period. He was of course well known in the area and his pewter interest, collection and publications were no doubt commented upon in the local Evesham Journal. The then owner of the pub may have been stimulated to cast a fresh eye on the old family pewter?

It is now possible to make direct comparisons between 18" and 22" dishes by both IT and IG. It is clear from the table that they did not come out of the same moulds. It is an attractive theory to suggest that Trapp and Greenbanck co-operated one way or another because of their family relationship. The world of business is harsher than that and I cannot see both of them ordering expensive 22" moulds if they had such a

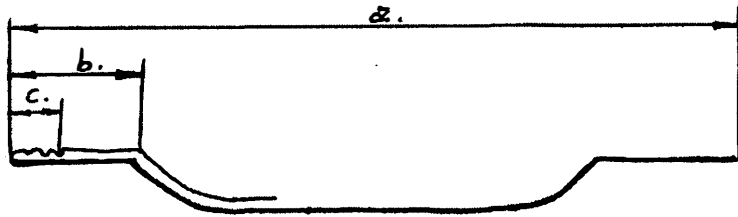
"partnership". Item No. 2 in the Fleece table is a 16½" dish by Sampson Bourne II. The reeding is turned and is probably older than any of the dishes by Trapp and Greenbanck.

I enclose some photos with numbers following the enclosed table.

Upton on Severn April 23, 1999 ... Jan Gadd

Sadware range of Greenbank and Trapp of Worcester

Table started in January, 1999, revised 18.02.99, 23-4-99

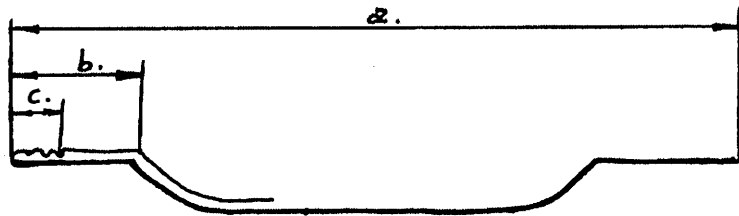


c. = distance from edge of plate to bottom of last reed in mould (exclude turned reeding).

Nom. size	Width a. mm	Rim b. mm	Reed c. mm	HMs by	Comments/collection
8¾"	225			IG	DH
8¾"	225	28	9	? SB II?	RFH (HMs = 4 lions)
14"	353			IG	DH
15"	383			IG	DH
15"	382	53	14	IG	JG
16½"	422	56	16	IG	DM
16½"	422	56	16	IG	RFH
16½"	421	71	(14 turned)	SBII	Fleece
18"	460	62	16	IG	Fleece
18¼"	463	61	20	IT	JG
20"	511			IG	DH
(20")	510	69	19		JR
22"	560	82	27	IG	JG
22"	560	83	29	IG	Fleece
22"	560	79	20	IT	Fleece

Sadware collection at the Fleece Inn, Bretforton nr. Evesham/Broadway.

April 21, 1999



c. = distance from edge of plate to bottom of last reed in mould (exclude turned reeding).

Nom. size inches	Width a. mm	Rim b. mm	Reeding c. mm	HMs by	Touch by	Comments	Item and photo No.
11½"	292	narrow	reeding	No HMs	"IS" with tree, OP5923, not identified	OP5923 shows "WW" in HMs. This could be yet another Shorey set of marks - check WW jourm.men/appr with Shorey.! The style of marks w. palmettes and also the crossbar on the "I" is similar to Shorey's engraver's work (Gadd 3.a.7. ho-ho).	1
16½"	421	71	(14 turned)	SB OP5464	SB, Sampson Bourne II, Worcester. Do.	HMs Nos 1 and 2 repeated twice - not recorded	2
18½"	466	68	(12 turned)	WG (not in OP)	WG OP1988 (also 5433/5633 and MPM p. 112 (fakes)	William Green, LTP 313. HMs and sharpstruck crowned rose not recorded. This is in my opinion a fake for many reasons: 1) Horse's hind legs too far from border compared to LTP and v. poor quality touch generally. 2) Sharp struck crowned rose does not belong to this period (better quality mark, however, - prob. somebody's genuine touch). 3) Poor quality HMs too w. all in stamp border. 4) Turned reeds and poor quality metal - unsaleable in London during this period! It would not surprise me if all OP numbers are fakes, based on the LTP by a pewterer who died or never used his touch? NO WAY, chaps!	3
20"	512	70	(12 turned ?)	EB black let. H&H No. 9.	Jonathan Ingles, OP2525, 1671 touch LTP 170	Good London label (w. stars) and HMs not recorded under Ingles. EB in HMs to be explained - check journeymen. Good quality HMs.	4
22"	560	79	20	IT OP5977, H&H No. 39	John Trapp II, Worcester, Do, Do.	"IT" is visible in touch. Crown is nearer to rose than depicted in OP and the proportions are generally wrong in OP - bl. drawings!! Photos don't lie!	5
18"	462	67	18	No. 2 (of 3) cr. rose, No. 4 buckle.	Obscure.	It is tempting to read No.1 as AF? The pewterer may have been identified?	6

Nom. size inches	Width a. mm	Rim b. mm	Reeding c. mm	HMs by	Touch by	Comments	Item and photo No.
18½"	465	72	(12 turned)	Obscure (4 identical)	WR	This is probably another fake? The WR-initialled crowned rose as a touch does not relate well to anything allowed in London at the time (which time?), and it shows all the blurry features of a badly faked mark. The WR initials were similarly used by Shorey, possibly to celebrate old William Rex, but this one just sits there with no other names or features - another de Nabarro cast-off?	7
18"	460	62	16	IG OP5619, H&H No. 26'	Do, Do	Photographs clearly show a rope border, not illustrated in OP.	8
22"	560	83	29	IG OP5619, H&H No. 26'	Not the same as above?	A letter "R" or "B" is clearly visible on the left hand side in the lion touch. The crowned rose touch matches the above, but the initials in the touch are a mystery. (Red hot phone-line between H&H will solve the mystery in no time?)	9
9½"	246	32	6	No HMs	James Nicholl, OP 3392A	Crowned rose not recorded. Unusual owner's touches "S" over "I" "S". Rather nice narrow reeding of late 1680s/1690s vintage.	10
10½"	266	28	single (bowl)	No HMs	James Hitchman, OP2340	The third touch shows a rose and crown with two fleur de lys' and a stylised rose to the right (six + one dot) and is not recorded.	11
10½"	268	29	single (bowl)	No HMs	John Shorey, OP	These bowls (Nos 11 and 12) were apparently "London standard issue" at the time. London label not recorded	12

see photos below that Ian Gadd took in 1999 on film corresponding to the numbers above in the end column

ITEM AND PHOTO NUMBERS

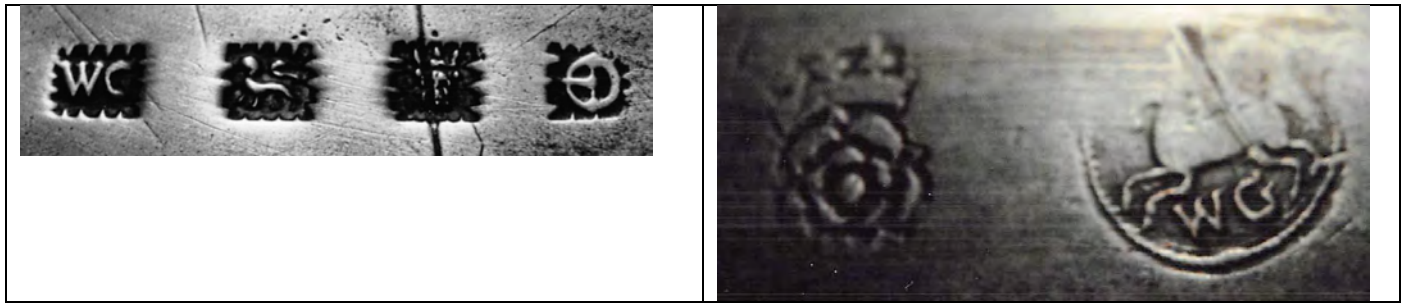
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No 2.



NO. 3



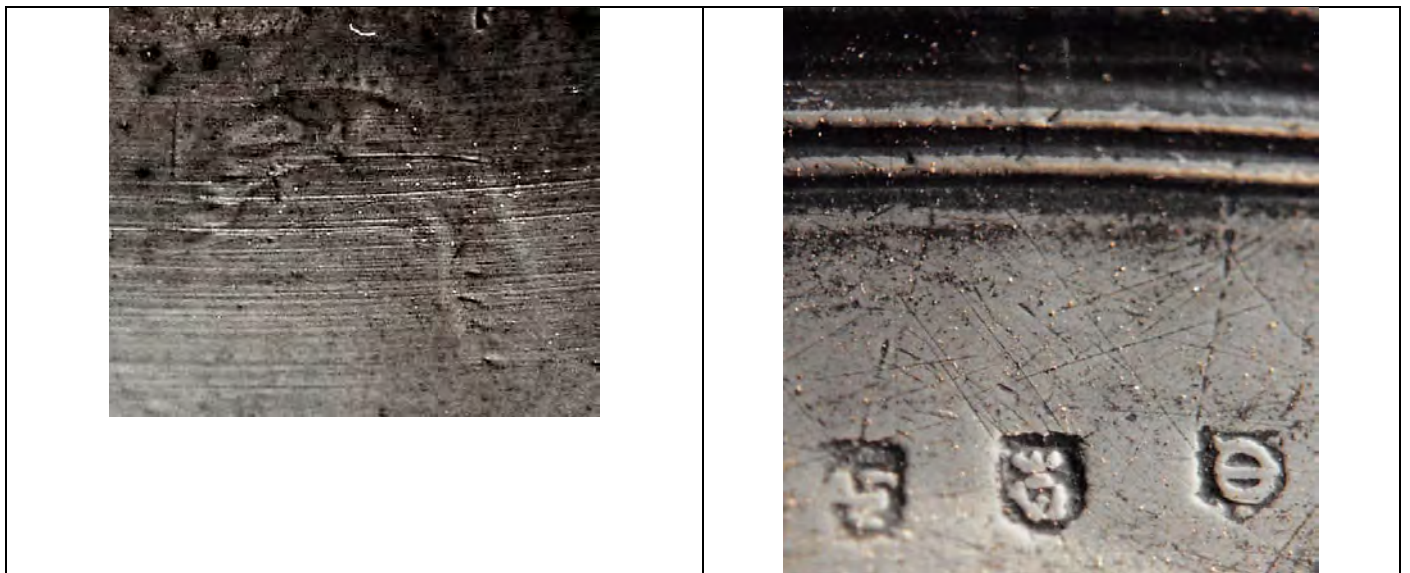
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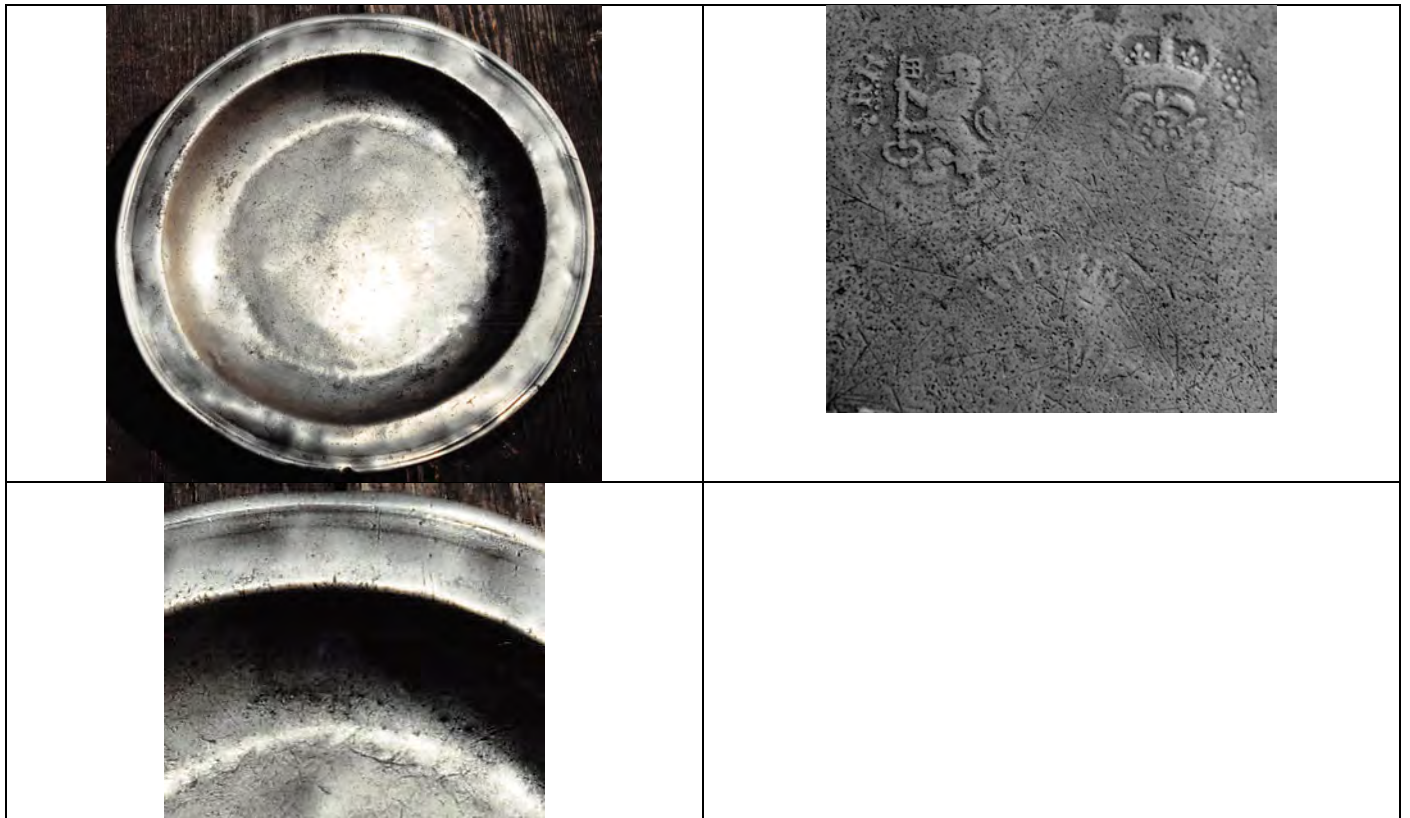
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NO. 10



NO. 11



NO 12

