

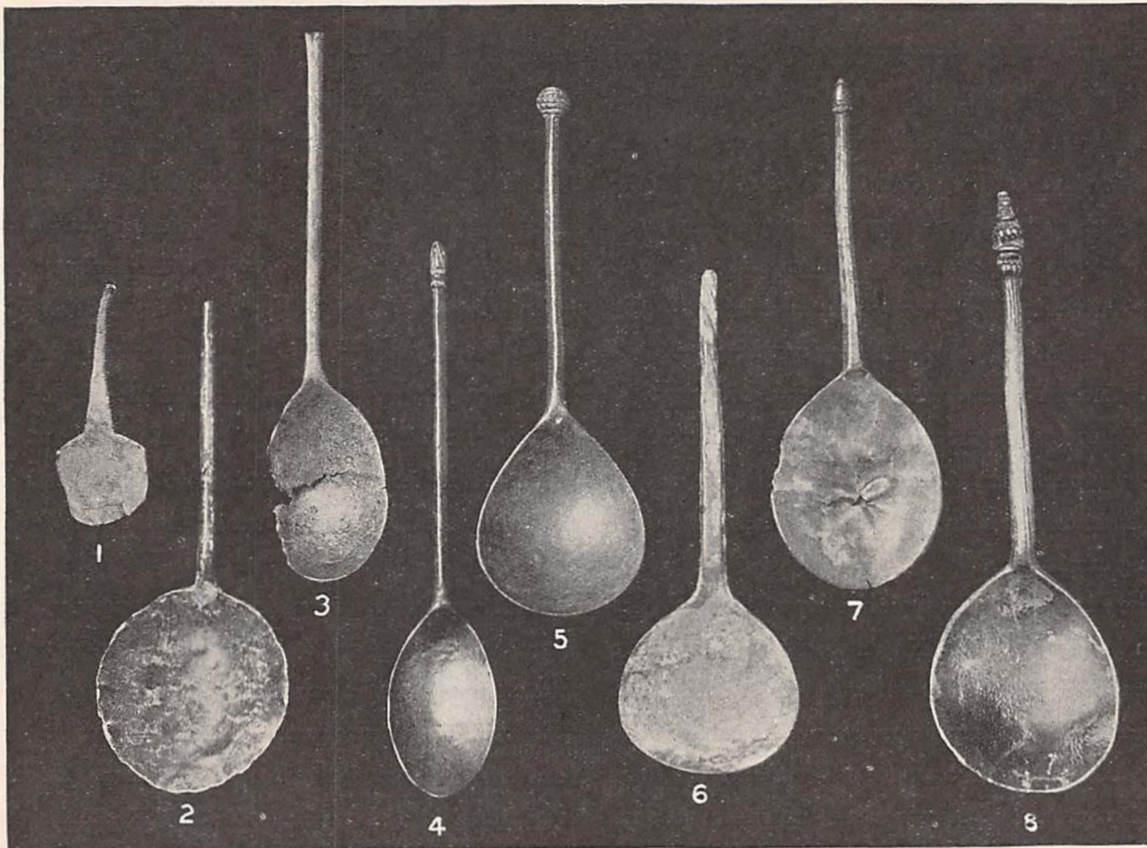
Some Continental Base Metal Spoons
By Chas. G. J. Port, F.S.A., of Worthing

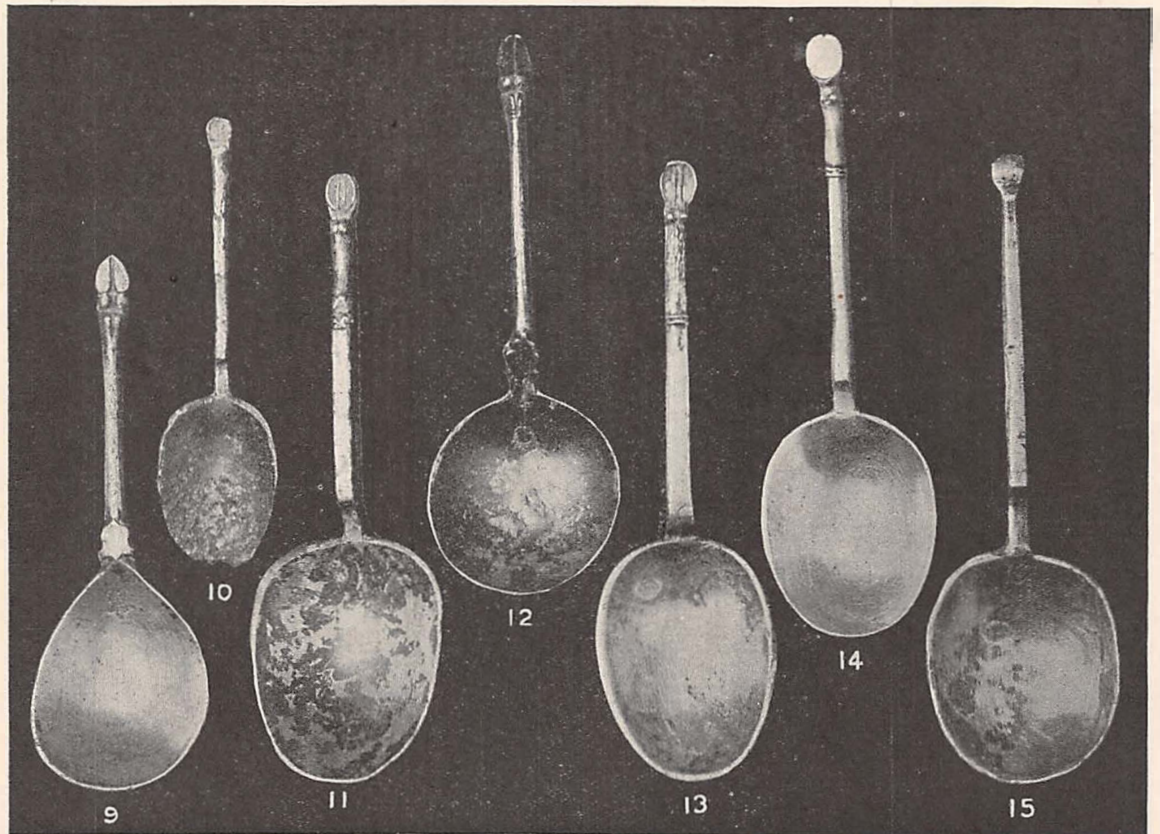
Part II.

PART I. of this article appeared in THE CONNOISSEUR of December, 1912, when the writer illustrated and described some twenty spoons and made a few remarks on the subject generally.

As THE CONNOISSEUR of that date may not, in all cases, be available to the present readers, a short résumé is desirable. *Old Base Metal Spoons*, by the late Mr. Hilton Price, Dir.S.A., is practically the

only work on the subject of English base metal spoons, although they are referred to in a few books on silver and pewter, but none of them deals with continental spoons outside those found in England. As far as the writer knows, very little on the subject has been published on the Continent. Latten is an alloy composed of about 73 per cent. of copper, 25 per cent. of zinc and 2 per cent. of iron. It is





generally supposed that practically all latten spoons used in England before about the end of the sixteenth century were imported from the Continent.

Makers' marks are found on some of the oldest mediæval spoons. Spoons with round bowls are, with one exception only known to the writer, peculiar to the Continent. In many cases the absence of makers' marks and the recurrence of the round bowl add to the difficulty of fixing the period which, in regard to the earlier spoons, must be taken as approximate.

It may be remarked that practically all the earlier and most of the later spoons have been discovered during excavations.

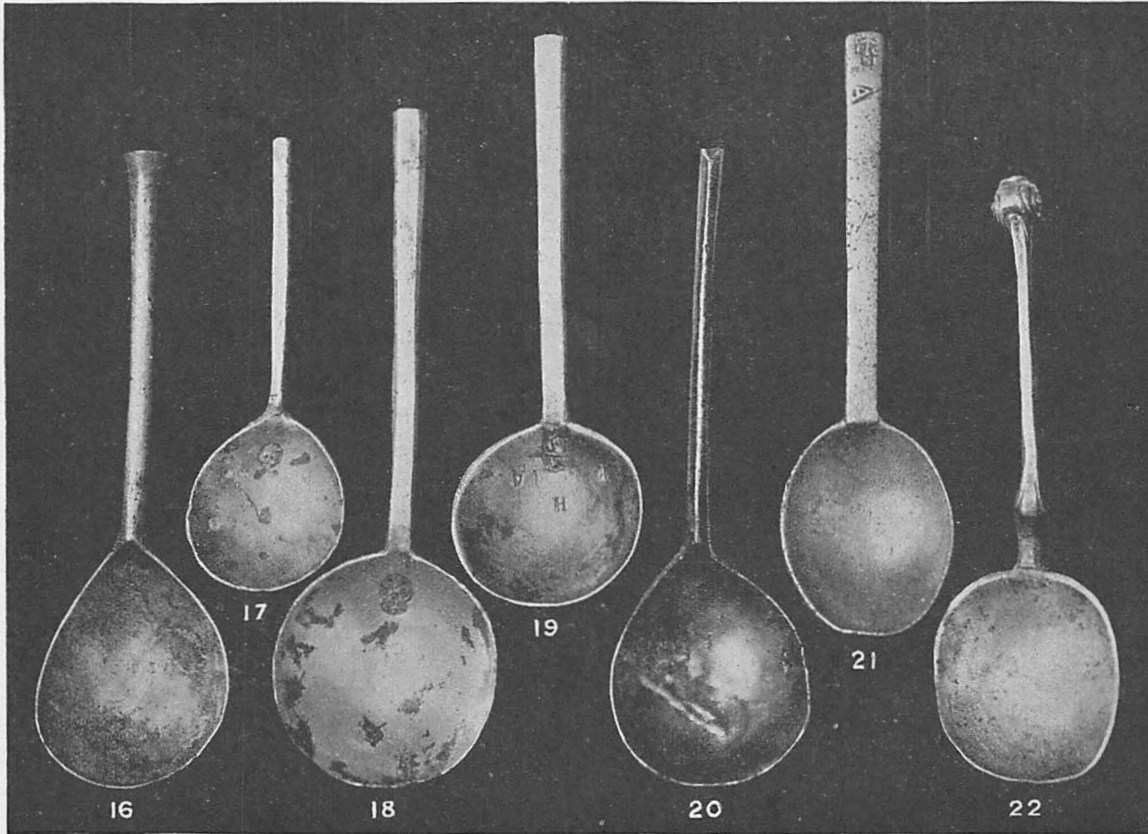
The question of the age of the early mediæval spoons is an interesting one. No date, as far as the writer knows, earlier than the fourteenth century, has been suggested. Now, the question arises, were metal spoons used between the Norman Conquest and the fourteenth century? The writer sees no reason to suppose they were not. If so, they were probably latten

and, under ordinary conditions of burial, a couple of hundred years would make no difference in their condition; but, as far as the writer knows, not a single spoon has been found differing from those ascribed to the fourteenth century onwards. The only conclusion he can come to is that many of these early spoons may well be a hundred or two years older than the period to which they have hitherto been assigned.

The question of the provenance of the continental spoons is a difficult one. As shown in Part I., spoons travelled as far as from Italy to England and in adjacent countries, like France, Holland and what is now, since 1831, Belgium, there was probably a considerable exchange of trade, including spoons. When purchased in England, little or no information as to the country of origin can be obtained.

Several important types of continental spoons are omitted here because they are either similar to English types or, having been imported into England, have already been described in Mr. Hilton Price's book.

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All the examples illustrated are in the writer's collection and are reproduced about half-size. Makers' marks are given where they exist.

No. 1. This fragment of a latten spoon is quite interesting. The stem is extremely slight for a mediæval spoon and the shoulders of the bowl show that it was originally circular. It was found in France in its present condition and it seems probable that, having served its useful purpose, it was, some half a dozen centuries ago, converted into a child's plaything.

No. 2. Pewter spoon found in Italy, another interesting and puzzling piece. It certainly was not made by an ordinary spoon-maker, being much too crude and unfinished. The stem and round bowl give no information as to its age, which appears to be considerable, and in all probability it will always remain a mystery.

No. 3. This latten spoon was in the collection of the late Mr. George Dunn. The type of stem is new to the writer, the form of bowl is rare and the weight

is under half an ounce. It is undoubtedly a very early piece.

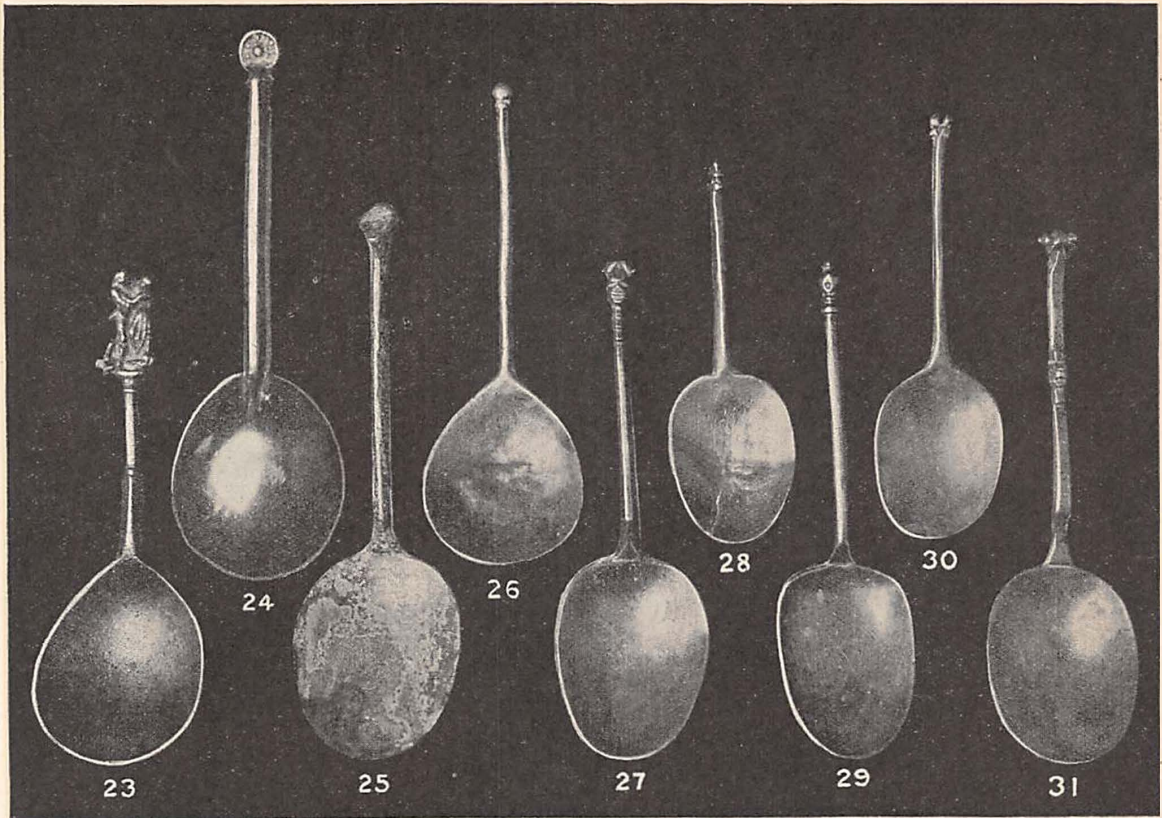
No. 4. Latten cone end, found in Northern Italy, with similar type of bowl to No. 3. The cone end fixes the period at the fourteenth century or earlier. There is a maker's mark on the back of the bowl; device indistinct.

No. 5. Latten ringed cone knop, with diamond section stem. French, fourteenth century or earlier.

No. 6. This latten spoon, found in Venice, is another mystery. It will be noticed that the upper part of the damaged stem is twisted—an exceptionally rare form in or about the fifteenth century. It would be interesting to know the kind of knop it had.

No. 7. Pewter, with latten acorn knop, stated to have been found in Venice. The combination of pewter and latten is very rare, the writer only knowing of three other instances—one each of finial, written and baluster types—all English spoons.

No. 8. A rare type of baluster knop with ribbed



stem. Mark : rose and crown and initials P. C. Found in Belgium. Sixteenth century.

Hoof knops seem to have been numerous on the Continent, both in pewter and latten, but only two English makers, both pewterers, are known. The latten are extremely light in weight and generally resemble No. 41. The pewter are much more varied in type and half a dozen are here shown.

No. 9. A cloven hoof with fig-shape bowl and a shield at base of rounded stem. Mark : rose and crown. Seventeenth century.

No. 10. A small example with square stem. Found in Belgium. Seventeenth century.

No. 11. A large spoon with shouldered bowl. Mark : at back of bowl, rose and crown. Found in Belgium. Seventeenth century.

No. 12. A fine example, with shield at base of stem. Found in Belgium. Mark : rose crown and initials H. T. Seventeenth century or later.

No. 13. A shouldered bowl with short rat-tail.

Mark : rose and crown at back of bowl. Found in Belgium. Eighteenth century.

No. 14. Another type. Mark : rose and crown with three initials D. D. ?. Eighteenth century.

No. 15. A spoon, hoof type, with rounded bowl and drop in stem. Mark : crown over heart. Seventeenth century.

The following half-dozen pewter spoons are types that do not appear to have been made in latten and very rarely in silver.

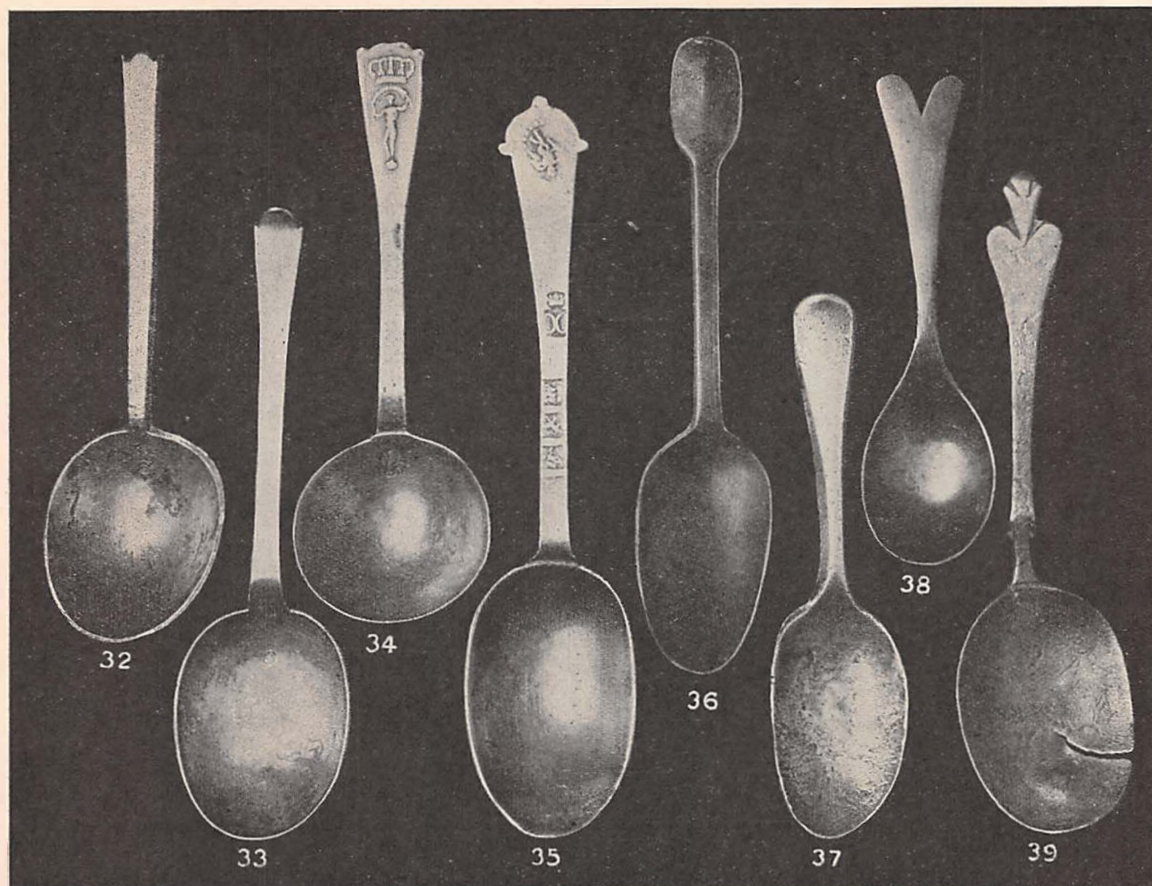
No. 16. Round stem stump end. Found in Belgium. Mark : rose and crown. Seventeenth century.

No. 17. Small stump end, square stem with slightly chamfered edges. Mark : a double-headed eagle. Seventeenth century.

No. 18. A fine hexagonal stem. Mark : crown over device (?) and two initials, ? and R. Probably German. Seventeenth century.

No. 19. A round bowl with flat hexagonal stem. Mark : rose and crown containing initials B. A.

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Probably Dutch. Seventeenth century. On the bowl appear the three initials, one above and two below, of the owners. Very common on English spoons of this period but rarely found on continental.

No. 20. Diamond section stem with fig-shape bowl. Mark: crown over hammer on the side of the stem—a very unusual place. Found in Belgium. Probably sixteenth century.

No. 21. This is an interesting spoon for several reasons. The stem is quadrangular, narrow at the back—a rare form—with short rat-tail. Both the maker's mark—a crown over hammer and initials P C N—and the owner's initial A are on the top of the stem—an unusual place to find both. The elliptical bowl indicates the extremely short transition stage between the earlier fig-shape and the later shouldered bowls which occurred about the middle of the seventeenth century.

No. 22. Pewter, with volute knop and rounded

bowl—a rare type. Mark on back: rose and crown. Seventeenth century.

No. 23. A latten spoon, which has been described as a "betrothal" spoon but whether the figures are embracing or dancing is difficult to say. The writer has never seen another example. Probably seventeenth century.

No. 24. A curious latten spoon, photographed from the back. The front is absolutely flat, without decoration of any sort. The stem is quadrangular, the back being very narrow and it has a kind of rose decoration in the circular knop. Seventeenth century or earlier.

Nos. 25 to 31. These latten spoons are probably all Italian. Nos. 25, 29 and 31 have rat-tails. None is marked and they belong to the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

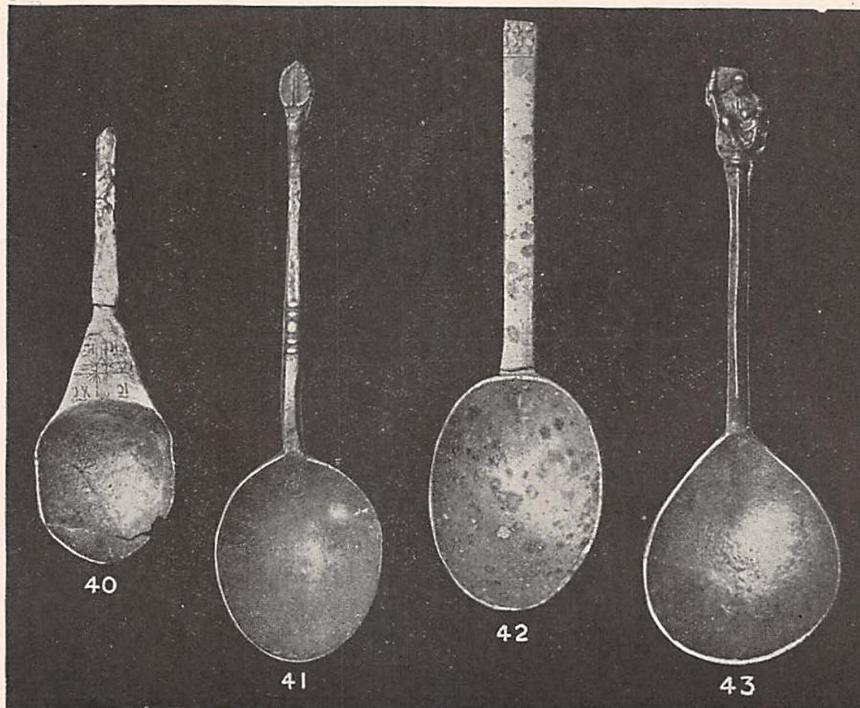
Nos. 32 and 33. Two interesting early examples in pewter of the split-end or "trifid" type. No. 32 is marked on the bowl, crown over device and four initials

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A. A. I. ? . No. 33 has on back of stem hall-marks—1, lion rampant in shield with crown above ; 2, a stork ; 3, the letter N ; 4, a maker's mark. Both Dutch of the latter half of the seventeenth century.

No. 38. A latten fish-tail type, the only one the writer has come across. It is difficult to date.

No. 39. Another curiosity in latten. The base of the stem suggests Italy. Eighteenth century.



No. 34. Another example in pewter of the split-end, with drop at the base of stem. Under the figure are the initials G. H. Mark: a female figure and H. M. Sch. . . . Dutch, early eighteenth century.

No. 35. An exceedingly well-marked pewter spoon of the round-end type, with rat-tail and decoration at the back of the bowl. Maker's mark, an angel blowing a trumpet. Inscription indistinct ; also a fine crowned X mark and four hall-marks—1, four initials, H. M. ? C. ; 2, an angel blowing a trumpet ; 3, a lion rampant ; 4, a ship in full sail. Dutch, circa 1750.

No. 36. Latten fiddle-end, a curious type of French spoon. First half of eighteenth century.

No. 37. A very weighty Dutch pewter spoon with double drop. Probably late. Nothing like it seems to have been made in England.

The next four spoons are ecclesiastical.

No. 40. A Greek Church sacramental spoon in silver is illustrated here, as the writer does not collect silver spoons and another opportunity of describing this interesting piece may not occur. It is engraved with a cross and the letters I.C. X.C. (Iesus Christos) above and others below indistinct. It was found in Bermondsey and is probably not later than the sixteenth century. In the Greek Church the Sacrament is administered to children.

No. 41. A latten hoof knop, having the letters I H S in beaded circle in place of the maker's mark. Italian, seventeenth century or earlier.

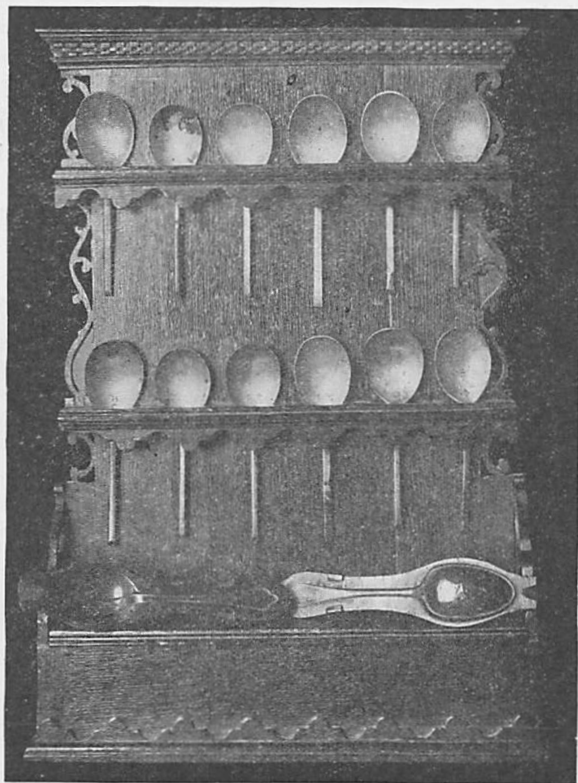
No. 42. A pewter spoon of Puritan type, with I H S and small cross in square at the top of the stem. Middle of seventeenth century.

No. 43. This latten spoon is a puzzle, no similar one being known to the writer. The knop is a seated

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figure, presumably St. Thomas. The stem is diamond section and suggests that it originally had some covering. On the back of the bowl is engraved "Thom." There are two hall-marks. One appears to

photographs of English pewter portrait spoons. It is generally presumed that types of base metal spoons *followed* the silver, but it certainly was not so in the case of portrait spoons. Mr. C. J. Jackson, F.S.A.,



be a cup with two roundels on each side; the other might be a spear and one roundel. It is difficult to date.

Spoon-racks are not common. The writer takes this opportunity of illustrating an English example in oak of the latter half of the eighteenth century. The "slipped in the stalks" spoons in it are, of course, much earlier. An English spoon-mould in gun-metal, *circa* 1690, is also shown.

It has been suggested that it is very desirable that particulars of types of English base metal spoons *not* mentioned in the late Mr. Hilton Price's book should be brought together with a view to publication. Curators of museums and collectors having any such spoons are earnestly requested to assist by communicating with the writer.

At the same time, it would be interesting to obtain

in his *The Spoon and its History*, illustrates one only continental in silver, and, in spite of enquiries in many directions, the writer has only heard of one other, said to be of Charles II. On the other hand, the writer in his collection has no less than seven in pewter, all English, and knows of two or three others. Why are they so rare in silver and common in pewter? The only possible explanation seems to be the question of manufacture. Pewter spoons were made in moulds, the metal being melted and poured in, while silver, the writer is informed, are always cut out and stamped from sheets of cold metal, a process that presumably does not lend itself to the high relief of portraits. The writer is of opinion that illustrations of all known pewter portrait spoons would prove extremely interesting, and again asks for the assistance of readers of *THE CONNOISSEUR*.