

## The Donald M. and Patricia Herr Pewter Collection

Pook & Pook is honored to present the pewter collection of Donald and Patricia Herr. The collection is well-known to The Pewter Collectors Club of America, which was and is a community of Donald's friends and fellow scholars. Amongst his peers, Donald Herr was ranked a true connoisseur. His collection is comprehensive in scope of forms, periods, and makers, with pieces of exceptional rarity and condition. The collection is also extensive. Pook & Pook will present approximately 89 items from the collection on June 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022, and will apportion the balance over two Americana sales in October 2022 and January 2023. Many of the items bear touch marks, unless listed as attributed. Many of the holloware pieces contain a remembrance of Dr Herr- a handwritten research note, a receipt, or other such document tucked inside. What follows is a brief summary of pewter objects from the collection to be presented on June 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>.

Donald Herr made significant contributions to the field of Pennsylvania German ecclesiastical pewter, conducting a ground-breaking study of pewter in Pennsylvania German churches. It should not come as a surprise that the spotlight items in the sale both feature ecclesiastical flagons.

The highly important Lancaster, Pennsylvania church flagon by Johann Christoph Heyne (Saxony/Lancaster 1715-1781), ca. 1770, is one of only two known examples in private hands. Herr found only fourteen Heyne flagons in his survey of churches. In *Pewter in Pennsylvania German Churches*, Herr states, "Heyne's splendid flagons with their strongly Germanic elements of cherub's head feet, flaring base, and upturned lid and spout, combined with cast hollow English handles, are pointed examples of the cultural assimilation of styles (Figure 164)."

An important New York flagon and chalice are attributed to John Will (Herborn, Germany/New York 1696-1774 or later), ca. 1760. Originally owned by the Round Top Lutheran Church, Bethel, Dutchess County, New York, Herr has connected the provenance. Of the chalice, Herr writes, "Chalices were among the finest forms created by American pewterers... Chalices attributed to John Will (Figure 111) have not been found marked, but they frequently accompany marked pieces by that maker.. These chalices frequently have two pairs of line decoration encircling the cup. They are almost nonexistent in museums and private collections, but six chalices of this form were found in the survey." This chalice is decorated with two pairs of lines and a set of triple lines, assembled from short cup, tankard lid, and possibly pewter salt components. The communion flagon is a masterwork of multiple molds soldered together, with the upper body using a pair of six-inch basins, and a beaker used for the top portion. The flagon features a "duck's head" handle terminal, the handle capped by a leaf, and having a typical John, William, and Phillip Will style. The thistle-shaped body is Continental in influence, while the foliate finial is drawn from British and Philadelphia silver coffeepots. In addition to founding a family of fine pewterers, Herr writes that John Will was "a pewterer of the highest order."

Among the six flagons offered is one included in an important communion service by Timothy Brigden, ca. 1810, and examples of the Hartford, Connecticut works of Thomas and Sherman Boardman, and Samuel Danforth.

Tea and coffee pots comprise several highlights of the collection, including two examples from William Will (Neuwied, Germany/Philadelphia 1742-1798), fourth son of John Will, and recognized by Ledlie I. Laughlin as "one of the outstanding figures in the history of American pewter. No other has left a more impressive evidence of ability, and few approached the craftsmanship which his pewter displays. Gifted

beyond most of his fellows, he unselfishly subordinated his business to a life of service to his community and demonstrated that he was not only a superior craftsman, but also a splendid soldier, a capable statesman, and an executive of unusual ability.” (*Pewter In America*, 2:51) The Philadelphia drum shape teapot, ca. 1775, bearing the touch of William Will, with its straight spout and beaded decoration, became a style popular during the Federal period (PCCA, *Collecting Antique Pewter*, p.14). Tall and elegant is an important Philadelphia coffee pot, ca. 1780, attributed to William Will, which stands 16” high. While few examples of this form exist, it has remained one of the most iconic pieces of American pewter. Visually stunning, the “simplicity and beauty of its form” is enhanced by six rows of beading. In the words of Donald Herr, “Without question, no Colonial American pewterer equaled the variety of forms or had greater ability to make new designs from existing molds than the Pennsylvania German pewterer William Will.” (*Pewter in PA German Churches*, p. 90)

Of the sale’s dozen tea and coffee pots included is one of the rarest forms of American 18<sup>th</sup> century teapot, a New York oval design, ca. 1745, bearing the touch of Francis Bassett I (active NY 1720-1758). A high-domed Philadelphia Queen Anne pear shaped teapot, ca. 1765, is attributed to Johann Phillip Alberti, the body engraved with floral garlands, birds, and urn, is inscribed “Gott Allein Die Ehre” (God Alone the Glory). A highly rare Philadelphia Queen Anne teapot, late 18<sup>th</sup> c., bears the Love touchmark. Only a few Love teapots are known. Other tea and coffee pot makers include Hartford, Connecticut Thomas Boardman), and Eben Smith, New York Boardman & Co., English Queen Anne examples, and a Beverly, Massachusetts lighthouse coffee pot with engraved eagle by Israel Trask.

The six tankards include rare examples, with four from New York and two Philadelphia. From New York City or Hartford is a 3 ½ pint by Frederick Bassett, ca. 1770, an extremely rare large size for an American tankard. Also from New York are a quart tankard, ca. 1740, bearing the touch of John Bassett, having a flat lid with a crenulated lip, and a fish-tail terminal on the handle, a William Bradford quart tankard, ca. 1750, and a William Kirby quart tankard, ca. 1775. From Philadelphia are a Parkes Boyd quart tankard, ca. 1805, in a style found only in the Philadelphia area, the high dome and multiple fillets exhibiting a strong Scandinavian influence, and a William Will quart tulip tankard, ca. 1775, with typical handle and foot design.

One of the highlights of the selection of nine mugs is a rare Philadelphia 3 ½ pint barrel mug, ca. 1820, by Robert Palethorp Jr. This is possibly the only known example of this form by Palethorp. A Boston, Massachusetts pint mug by Robert Bonning (Bonyng) is engraved “The Gift of Mr. William Johnson to the Church in Southborough 1747,” its graceful tulip shape accentuated with a raised decorative band on the lower portion of its body. There are two mugs by William Will, one a pint mug, ca. 1775, with a ball terminal on its handle, the other a quart mug, ca. 1780, the handle with wrigglework initials ZM. A New York, New York quart mug, ca. 1780, by Frederick Bassett has a high raised band on the body. Other mugs include a New York by John Will, and a New York or Philadelphia pint mug, possibly by Johann Philip Alberti. Only one other marked pint mug by Alberti is known.

Three of the six sugar bowls are noted examples of style. The three bowls illustrated on page 12 of *Collecting Antique Pewter* include a smaller, early Middletown, Connecticut sugar, ca. 1770, by Thomas Danforth II, a larger Philadelphia sugar, ca. 1805, attributed to Parks Boyd, and a Cranston, Rhode Island sugar by George Richardson, ca. 1835, which completes the evolution to a more contemporary style. Two Philadelphia bowls attributed to William Will, ca. 1775, include a Federal style bowl decorated with elegant bands of beading, and another, a heavily lidded example, which includes a research note from

Dr Herr indicating the lid handle “appears to be the base of a salt.” The final sugar in this fine group is Philadelphia, late 18<sup>th</sup> c., attributed to Love, with faint crowned X mark. This is possibly the only marked Love sugar.

Among the twelve porringers featured are three with simple tab handles, a form made exclusively in Pennsylvania: two Chester County porringers bear the touch of Robert Porter (attributable), ca. 1780, and Simon or Samuel Pennock, ca. 1820, and a rare Yorktown example by Elisha Kirk, ca. 1785. Another highlight is a Hartford, Connecticut dolphin handled porringer, ca. 1805, by Samuel Danforth.

A rare Philadelphia beaker, ca. 1730, bears the touch of Simon Edgell. Fewer than a dozen signed pieces by Edgell are known. This is likely the earliest marked American beaker, purported to have been used by the Bowmansville Mennonite Church. Of the four beakers offered, another highlight is a Castleton, Vermont example, ca. 1820, by Ebenezer Southmayd.

A Philadelphia creamer, ca. 1805, attributed to Parkes Boyd, a New York creamer, ca. 1775, attributed to John Will, and a Philadelphia example, ca. 1775, attributed to William Will, and an Albany, New York, creamer, ca. 1780, attributed to Peter Young, are the four elegant entrants in the creamer category.

Two matched pairs of Philadelphia salts are attributed to Parkes Boyd, ca. 1805, and William Will, ca. late 18<sup>th</sup> c.

Seven basins and baptismal basins include both large 12 ½” and 9 1/8” Philadelphia examples, late 18<sup>th</sup> c., with Love touchmarks, and a large Philadelphia, late 18<sup>th</sup> c., Blakeslee Barnes. A Beverly, Massachusetts baptismal basin, ca. 1803, is by Israel Trask.

The six chargers and plate lots include a Philadelphia charger and deep dish, 18<sup>th</sup> c., bearing the DS touchmark, a Philadelphia Love deep dish and three plates, and plates from New York makers Frederick Bassett and William Kirby.

There are rare gems to be found amongst the functional items. A rare Philadelphia infusion pot, ca. 1805, bearing the touch of Parkes Boyd, and a Hartford, Connecticut nursing bottle, ca. 1840, by Thomas Boardman, appear straight out of page 20 of the PCCA *Collecting Antique Pewter*. A Meriden, Connecticut shaving box, ca. 1820, bearing the touch of Ashbil Griswold. A pair of New England candlesticks, ca. 1830, are of an unknown maker, but are widely regarded as the tallest American candlesticks made. Finally, a Lancaster, Pennsylvania canteen, ca. 1770, bears the touch of Johann Christoph Heyne. Its provenance indicates a wonderful find at a flea market in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

In the words of the Herr family, we present this collection as “a testament to Don and Trish Herr’s life-long enthusiasm for Pennsylvania German decorative arts... They assembled this collection over six decades with love, care, and hours of careful research into each piece. The Herrs connected the dots of provenance with countless trips to historical societies, phone calls to museums, and conversations with other collectors...These items represent heritage, craftsmanship, scholarship, and above all, cherished moments shared between Don and Trish and other collectors.”

Pook & Pook hopes that this description is of service, and invites PCCA members to contact us for any further questions.



<880.0281>

**Philadelphia pewter pear shaped teapot, ca. 1765**, attributed to Johann Phillip Alberti, the body engraved with floral garlands, birds, and urn, one side inscribed *Gott Allein Die Ehre* (God Alone the Glory), 6 3/8" h.

Provenance: Charles Montgomery; Edgar & Charlotte Sittig; Pook & Pook, The Pioneer Collection of Donald and Esther Shelley, April 21, 2007, lot 803.

**\$15,000-25,000**



John Will

<880.0280>

**Important Philadelphia pewter coffee pot, ca. 1780,** attributed to William Will, 16" h. While few examples of this form exist, it has remained one of the most iconic pieces of American pewter. For similar examples see Montgomery *A History of American Pewter*, fig. 187 and Herr *Pewter in Pennsylvania German Churches*, figs 35, 53 and 183. One was sold at Pook & Pook, the collection of Lester and Barbara Breining, November 12, 2011, lot 500.

Provenance: J. Levy 1989.

\$20,000-30,000





Francis Bassett I



Frederick Bassett, 3 ½ pint tankard



<880.0265>

**Lancaster, Pennsylvania pewter canteen, ca. 1770,** bearing the touch of Johann Christoph Heyne, 5 1/2" h. Similar examples can be found in *Laughlin Pewter in America*, fig. 250 and *Montgomery [A History of American Pewter]*, pg. 195.

Provenance: Jere Martin, May 9, 1997, found at a flea market in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.  
**\$6,000-9,000**



<880.0176>

**Highly important Lancaster, Pennsylvania pewter flagon, ca. 1770,** bearing the touch of Johann Christoph Heyne, 11 1/4" h. Only one other example in private hands is known. See *Laughlin Pewter in America*, figs. 786 and 790 and *Herr Pewter in Pennsylvania Churches*, figs. 164 and 165.

Provenance: Cochran, Boonsboro, Maryland, September 20, 1997.  
**\$40,000-60,000**





<880.0172>  
**Highly rare Philadelphia  
Queen Anne pewter teapot,  
late 18<sup>th</sup> c., bearing the Love  
touchmark, 7 ¼" h. Only a few  
Love teapots are known.  
Provenance: Pennypacker  
Auctions, Andrews Collection,  
October 25, 2000.  
\$8,000-12,000**



Simon Edgell c. 1730



<880.0262>

**Rare Philadelphia 3 ½ pint pewter barrel mug, ca. 1820**, bearing the touch of Robert Palethorpe Jr., 6 ⅝" h. This is possibly the only known example of this form by Palethorpe. A similar water pitcher by Parks Boyd is illustrated in Montgomery *A History of American Pewter*, fig 7-5. Provenance: Jack Schneider; Lester Breining; Greg Kramer. **\$4,000-6,000**



Timothy Brigden, communion service c. 1810



William Will



William Will