

# English Porringers Post-1650: Part 2

## Peter Hayward & Mike Marsden

Part 1 appeared in the Autumn 2015 Journal. This second and final part looks in turn at bowls, brackets, ears and mark-location and how these relate to dating and provenance. There is a summary of all these features at the end, including statistics indicating the relative popularity of each feature. First, though, there is some additional information on issues covered in Part 1.

### List of porringers and their makers

Inevitably, after publishing the list of the 218 porringers in our survey additional and corrected information has emerged on some of them. The new information is summarised in the Annex at the end of this part. We have added four new porringers which we had not been able to inspect or were unaware of before Part 1 was published but which are of sufficient interest to warrant their addition, but deleted five others, three because they were duplicates and two because they are not English.

In Part 1 we recorded one Edinburgh pewterer, Thomas Inglis III (PS5078). He issued an invoice to the Earl of Breadalbane in 1702 that included porringers, candlesticks and an ink standish. We were a little surprised to find porringers of Scottish origin, but Peter Spencer Davies suggests Inglis is unlikely to have made these wares. The Inglis family were gentry who would have had good contacts in London, and Thomas Inglis probably bought these wares from a London pewterer for selling on to his circle of gentrified customers. There are numerous other examples of English pewter that appear in household inventories of Scottish nobility and gentry.

### Attaching ears to bowls

In Part 1 (pp 8-9) we quoted the WCOP ordinance of 1556/7 that ears were to “*be cast in the mowlde to gether w<sup>t</sup> the body*” and suggested it meant casting the ear on to the bowl rather than literally casting the two together in one mould. We said this partly because there is no subsequent ordinance permitting ears to be cast on to the bowls, even though this became standard practice, and partly because we thought casting the two together would make turning the bowl after casting more difficult. We were probably wrong because we now have evidence that bowls and ears can be and were cast together.

Fig. 1 is an extract from Diderot’s *Encyclopédie*, published between 1751 and 1772. It clearly shows a mould for casting the bowl and ears of a porringer (écuelle) together, so the need to turn after casting cannot have created insuperable difficulties. Pewter can be turned on a lathe rotating

at quite a slow speed. If there is no bracket under the ear, it is certainly possible to turn the outer surface of the bowl right up to the ear, and Albert Bartram thinks that a skilled pewterer could probably also turn right up to the rim by deflecting his tool as the ear came past. Nevertheless, the porringers in this survey show that by 1650 the vast majority of English pewterers were casting ears on to the bowl.

## PORRINGER BOWLS

### Terminology

As explained in Part 1, the Pewter Society meeting in October 2014 felt strongly that the Michaelis classification of bowls was too complicated to be usable. The subsequent meeting in April 2015 unanimously endorsed the set of simple descriptions shown in Fig. 2. They pick out the main features in a self-explanatory way, without trying to classify every nuance of bowl shape. Straight and bellied are by far the most common sides, and flat (with or without foot rim) and bossed the most common bases. Curved sides are mainly pre-1650.

The additional descriptions “miniature” or “deep bowl” might be appropriate where diameter or depth are out-of-the-ordinary. Curved bowls can also have rim flanges, but there were none in our survey.

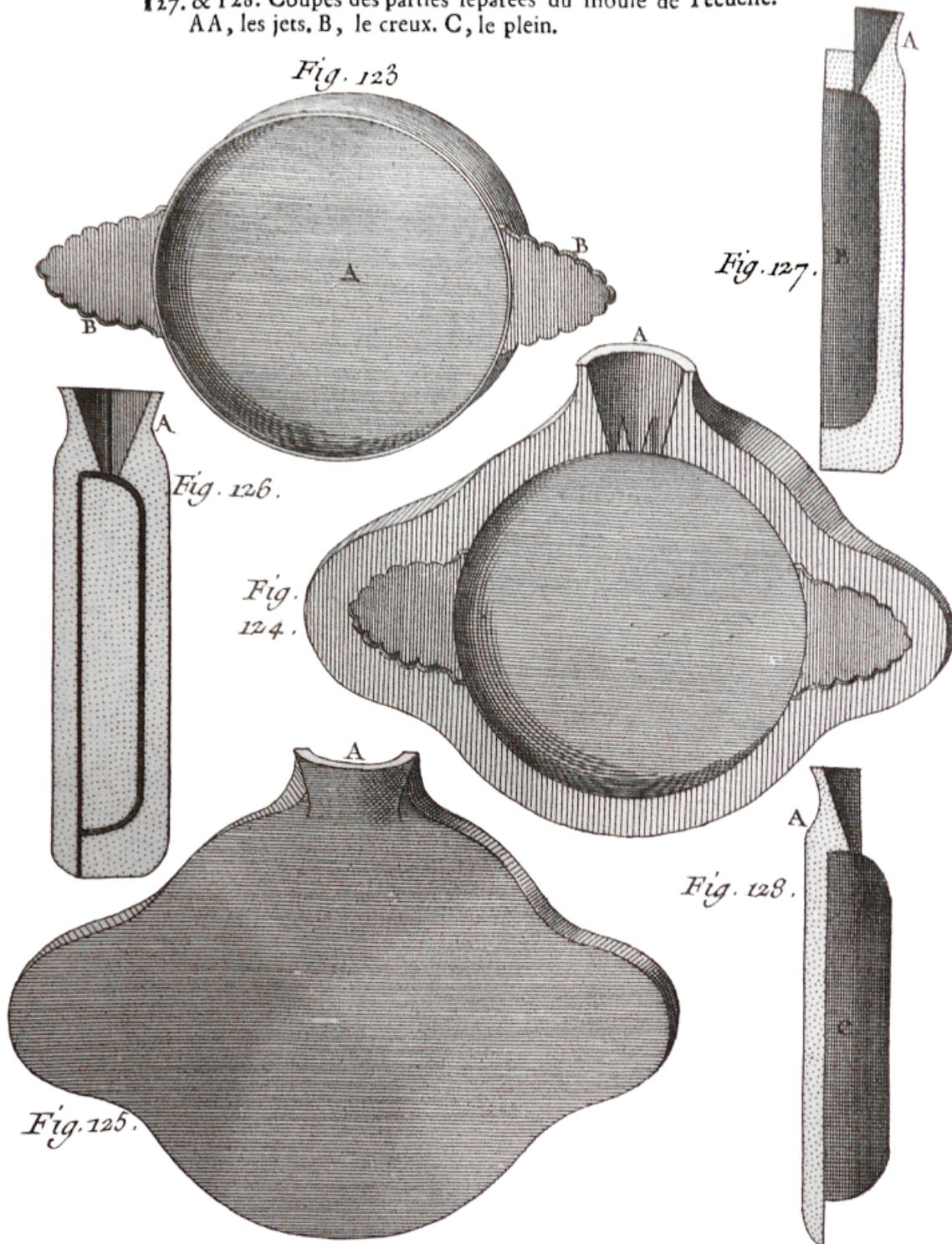
We will now look at each of the types of bowl side in turn, and then at the bases.

### Straight-sided bowls

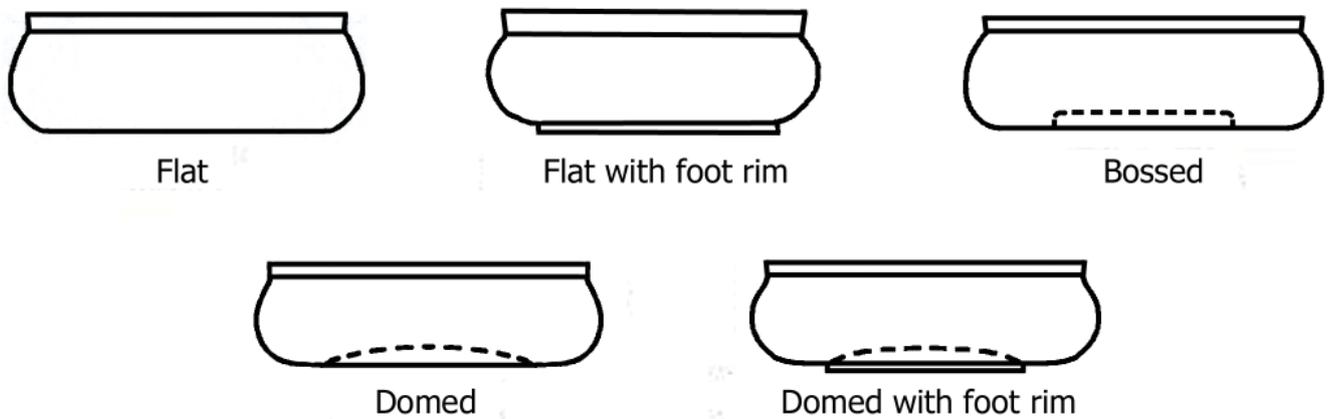
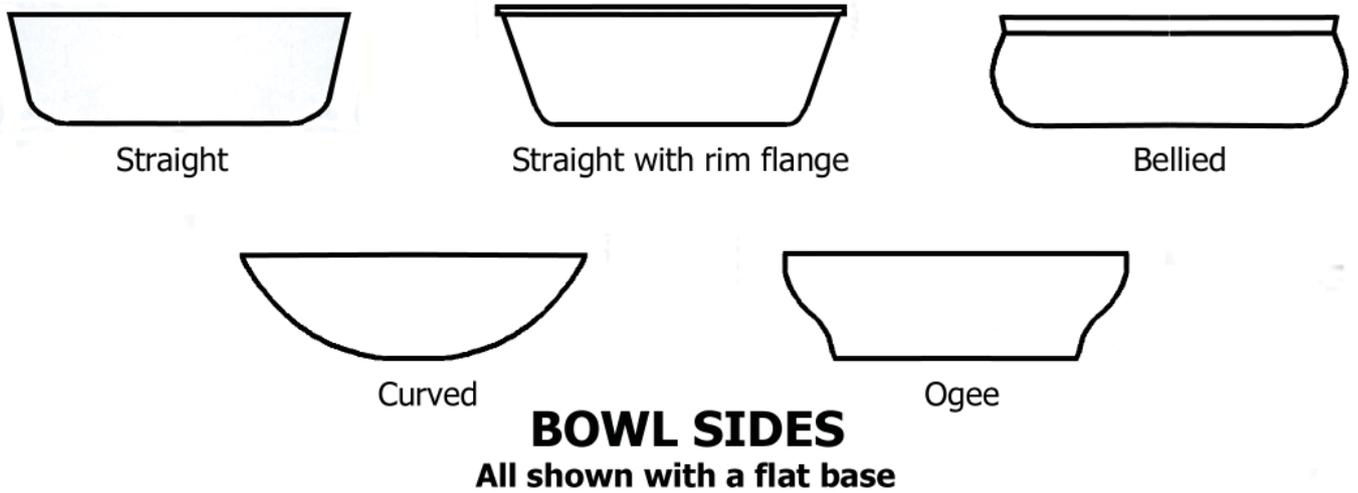
We recorded 58 straight-sided bowls, and they exhibit considerable variation (Fig. 3). Some bowls are quite deep, others quite shallow. The sides may be vertical or they may slope significantly. It would probably more accurate to describe them as “substantially-straight sided” as it is rare for the sides to be straight over the whole of their height, but they usually have a distinct straight portion before starting to curve gently and then more sharply. This sharp curve between the side and the base is what distinguishes straight-sided and curved bowls, because the latter tend to be a continuous curve that merges imperceptibly into the base. There are two examples – P202, Fig. 4 and P89 – which have this sharp curve even though no part of the side wall is strictly ruler-edge straight. They are probably at the limit of what could reasonably be classed as “straight-sided”.

The diameter of straight-sided bowls can vary consider-

123. Elévation d'une écuelle. A, le fond. BB, les oreilles.  
 124. & 125. Parties séparées du moule de l'écuelle. AA, les jets.  
 126. Coupes du moule réunies de l'écuelle. A, le jet.  
 127. & 128. Coupes des parties séparées du moule de l'écuelle.  
 AA, les jets, B, le creux. C, le plein.



**Fig. 1: Part of plate IV from the section "Potier d'Etain" in Diderot's 18<sup>th</sup> century encyclopaedia (courtesy of Robert Werowinski).**



**Fig. 2: The new descriptions for bowl shapes.**

ably. 60% are associated with a flat base (35 out of 58, of which 9 have a flat base with foot rim), but the bossed base is not uncommon either, accounting for 34% (20). The remaining 3 have a domed base.

Ian Robinson suggested straight-sided bowls died out c1675, but the evidence from our survey shows they continued well beyond this. Of the 17 identified makers of straight-sided bowls for whom we have a confirmed date range, six did not set up shop until after 1675, and one of those, Lawrence Child (PS1650), did not start until as late as 1695, so straight-sided bowls certainly had not ceased by then. Indeed, the evidence suggests they continued into the first two decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Seven of the 17 makers were still active in 1700, six in 1710, five in 1720 but only one by 1730. Of the five who were active in 1720, two (Lawrence Child I and Samuel Lawrence,

PS5748) also made bellied bowls, so they changed bowl shapes during their working lives. We cannot therefore safely assume they were still making straight-sided bowls in 1720. There are no surviving bellied bowls for the other three who were still active in 1720, Benjamin Cooper I (PS1923), John Kenton (PS5472) and John Jackson I (PS5117). However, all three had been in business by 1680 and only a single porringer survives for each of them, so again we cannot safely assume they were still making straight-sided bowls in 1720. On balance, the evidence suggests the straight-sided bowl probably died out around 1715. There is an exception. Graduated bleeding bowls continued to be made with straight-sided bowls until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but the straight side here is for obvious functional reasons as the graduations would be difficult to see on a bellied bowl.



**Fig. 3: Examples of straight-sided bowls, shown in their correct relative sizes.**

Because we have not looked at pre-1650 porringers, we are not able to say when the straight-sided bowl first appeared. One of the makers we have recorded, Francis Miles (PS6457), died in 1656, so it is reasonable to assume this bowl shape started pre-1650.

A few straight-sided bowls have a thickened rim, including some of those in Fig. 3. However, only four have a flange at the rim, and in each case the flange is decorated. All four bowls are flat-bottomed, and they are:

- Two miniature porringers (ie small, but not so small as to be toys), P226 and P185, with hatching on their flanges and flange widths around 15% of the radius. P226 is unmarked and has a unique ear (see Fig. 34 below), and P185 by John Jackson I is missing its ear.
- Two full-sized porringers, P30 and P218. Their flanges are rather narrower relative to the bowl size, but are both decorated with ropework, and both bowls have foot rims. P30 (Fig. 5) is by William Mabbott (PS6088) and P218 has an illegible mark.



**Fig. 4: An unmarked porringer whose side is not quite ruler-straight. Image: Pewter Society Library.**

### Bellied bowls

Whilst bellied bowls are all broadly similar in shape, there are differences in bowl depth, the height of the rim, the sharpness of the distinction between the rim and the belly and the way the bowl side meets the base (Fig. 6). Each of these features exhibits a range of variations, and that is why the attempt by Michaelis to use them as a basis for classification proved unsatisfactory.

Bellied bowls superseded straight-sided ones. Of the 36 identified makers of bellied bowls for whom we have a confirmed date range, only four were active before 1680: William Wood II of Birmingham (PS10406, c1665-1726d), Jonathan Ingles of London then Southampton (PS5067, 1670-1705d), John Waite of London (PS9706, 1673-c1702) and Thomas Tidmarsh I of London (PS9386, 1677-1728d). As all continued in business into the 18<sup>th</sup> century, they do not provide firm evidence that bellied bowls had already appeared by 1680. However:

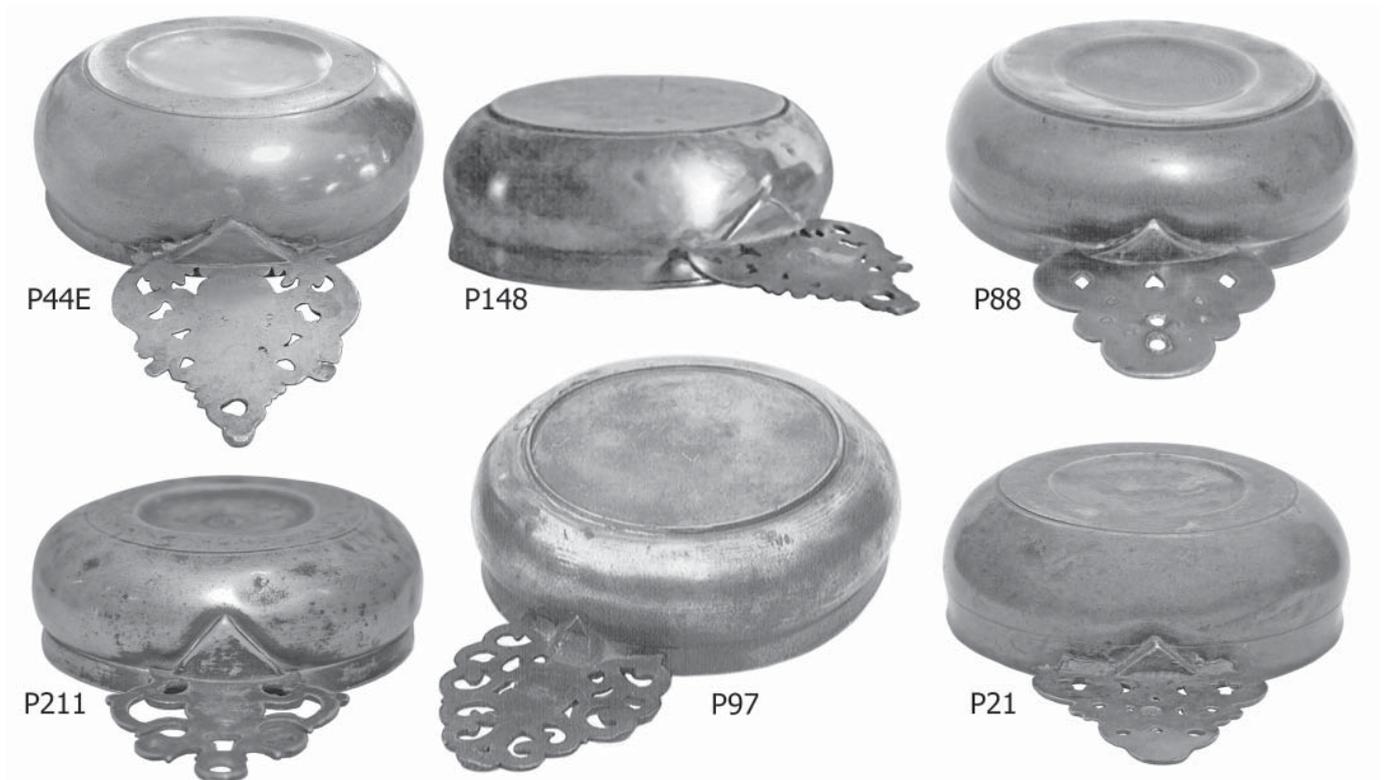
- by 1690, 9 of the 36 were active;
- “bellied porringers” are mentioned in the WCOP sizing of 1691 but not that of 1674;
- Bristol search records record “porringers” in 1683 but “bellied porringers” in 1702.
- The WCOP records show that John Pettiver (PS7267) was making “booge porringers” in September 1681 (Welch Vol. II p155).
- There is a silver porringer in Colonial Williamsburg with a bellied bowl (Davis 1976 p199) that was made in London in 1683/4.

All this suggests bellied porringers were introduced around 1680.

P30



**Fig. 5: A porringer with a small flanged rim decorated by ropework, made by William Mabbott. Image: Pewter Society Library.**



**Fig. 6: Examples of bellied bowls. Images: P44E Hillary Bagshaw; P211 Jonathan Walters; P88, P97, P148 Pewter Society Library.**

At the other end of the date range, Hale & Sons (PS4236) and their successors (c1778–1822), Edgar Curtis & Co (PS2148, c1793–c1801), Ingram & Hunt (PS5094, c1778–1807) and Crane & Stinton (PS2071, c1807–1815) show bellied porrings were still being made in Bristol and Bewdley until c1815 or even later, though probably for the American export market only. This is rather later than Ian Robinson's suggested end date of 1760.

Bellied bowls are more difficult to make than straight-sided bowls, and it is unclear why they were introduced. We have explored three theories, but found by practical tests that none holds water. First, are they easier to use with a spoon? No, because when using 18<sup>th</sup> century spoons with their larger bowls, it is more difficult to scrape out the last dregs of porridge from a bellied bowl than a straight-sided one. Second, because a bellied side is more rigid than a straight-side one, can they be made of thinner metal and thus reduce costs? It is true that in the WCOP sizings bellied porrings weigh less, but when we checked the wall thicknesses of a few examples, bellied sides were no thinner than straight-sided ones. Finally, as most bellied bowls appear to have an everted rim, does that make them easier to stack? A simple experiment showed that is not the case. Thus bellied bowls may simply have been a question of fashion as they look more attractive than straight-sided ones.

The everted rim is, in fact, an optical illusion. On most bellied bowls, the outer surface of the rim does indeed have a visible flare, but the inner surface is roughly vertical. When we checked rims with calipers, we found the metal was thinner at the bottom of the rim than at the top. Thus the flare on the outer surface is achieved simply by turning more metal off the outside at the bottom of the rim than at the top.

With a bellied bowl, the bossed base predominates, accounting for 74% (103 out of 140). 13% (18) have a flat base and 9% (13) a flat base with foot rim. The remaining 5 have a domed base or domed base with foot rim.

### **Bowls with curved sides**

The bowls of early porrings, such as those recovered from the 16<sup>th</sup> century wreck off Punta Cana, have curved sides (Roberts 2012). The only bowl in our survey to have curved sides is the oddly constructed example P223 shown in Fig. 16 of Part 1, so for porrings of normal construction it is safe to assume that a curved side is pre-1650.

### **Ogee bowls**

We recorded just two bowls with ogee-shaped sides, P8 and P187. Both have flat bottoms and both are in the Museum of London. Neither has an identified maker,

though P8 (Fig. 7) was by a London pewterer who re-struck his touch in c1670 (PS9133), but with such a tiny sample, it is not possible to draw any conclusions.

P8



**Fig. 7: A bowl with an ogee-shaped side and an open 3-lobed ear.  
Image: Pewter Society Library.**

### **Flat bases**

We will now move on to the different bases.

Of the 68 bowls in our survey with flat bases (with or without a foot rim), just over half (35) have straight sides, and just under half (30) have bellied sides. The remaining three are on ogee-sided or curved-sided bowls.

There is little doubt the flat base was in use before 1650. Three of the recorded makers of flat bases in our survey were active before then and one, Francis Miles (PS6457), died in 1656. Equally, it was certainly still in use into the 18<sup>th</sup> century. One flat-base maker, Lawrence Child I (PS1650), did not open shop until 1695, another, Joseph Giddings of Leicester (PS3787), has an estimated start date of 1710, and three Wigan porrings with flat bases have coronet ears which, as we shall see later, are post c1710. Only one of the identified makers of flat-based porrings was active after 1730 (John Jackson I, PS5117). Four were still active in 1725, though two of those four - Lawrence Child I (PS1650) and Samuel Lawrence (PS5748) - made both flat and bossed bases and so may have changed from one to the other during their working lives. On balance, though, c1725 is the most likely end date for flat bases.

At least 22 of the flat bases have foot rims on the underside. It may be more, because if we could not inspect a porring and were relying on written descriptions or photographs, we could not determine whether there was a foot rim unless it was mentioned in accompanying text or we had a photograph of the underside. Very few of the foot rim makers have been identified, but as they include both London and Wigan examples, it does not seem to be

a regional feature. Foot rims are usually very small, but a few are larger, more of a foot than a rim, such as P165 shown in Fig. 25 of Part 1 and P202 shown in Fig. 4 above.

### **Bossed bases**

The bossed base had a rather longer lifetime than the flat base. It was certainly around well before 1650 as the 16<sup>th</sup> century Punta Cana porringer has bossed bases. In our survey, three of the bossed-base makers we recorded were active before 1650, and one had died by 1674. They are also mentioned in the WCOP 1674 sizing. It became the dominant form in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and continued to the end of English porringer making in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Of the 123 bowls with bossed bases, just 15% (19) have straight sides and all the rest have bellied sides. The bellied side, bossed base bowl is easily the most common of all the porringer bowls analysed, accounting for 52% of them.

Generally bosses are visible from both the top and the underside, but the cast decorated bosses on the unusual, small porringers P180A and B - probably wine tasters - are an exception because on the underside they are flat. P180A was illustrated in Fig. 17 of Part 1.

### **Domed bases**

Porringers where the whole base is gently domed are rare (Fig. 8). We recorded three on straight-sided bowls and five on bellied bowls. Three of the eight are by the same maker (Christopher Banckes of Bewdley, PS406, 1693-1746d), all with a geometric cross & crescent ear. Three of the others are on open 3-lobed ears and two on Old English ears, all by unidentified makers. One of those makers also made bossed bases. This limited evidence, combined with the dates for these ear types estimated below, suggests a domed base is likely to be 17<sup>th</sup> century or first quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Bowl shape and location**

We have not found any link between the bowl shape and the pewterer's location. True, we have not recorded any straight-sided bowls from Bristol even though Bristol was a major source of porringers, but that is simply because we have not identified any pre-1715 Bristol porringers.

### **Bowl shape and ear style**

Porringer bowl shapes changed over time and porringer ear designs also changed over time. There is inevitably, therefore, an indirect correlation between ear design and bowl shape. However, we have not detected any direct correlation. For example, ear designs that were in vogue during the transition from straight-sided to bellied bowls are found with both types of bowl.

P19



**Fig 8. A domed base. Image: Pewter Society Library.**

### **Decoration of porringer bodies**

The majority of porringer bodies are plain but there are a small number of exceptions. We have already mentioned the four with decorated rim flanges and the two wine tasters with cast-decorated bosses, but there are two other forms of decoration.

First, there are four bellied porringers with gadrooned bowls, P13A/B and P147A/B (Fig. 9). They are all by John Quick of London (PS7676, 1701-1722d) with geometric crescent ears. They would be difficult to keep clean, so possibly they were more for decoration than everyday use.



P13B

**Fig. 9: One of John Quick's gadrooned-bowl porringers. Image: Pewter Society Library.**

Second, there is a single example in our survey of a porringer decorated with wrigglework (Fig. 10). It has a tulip on the boss surrounded by a border. As the popularity of wrigglework coincided with the peak production of porringers, the absence of other examples may seem surprising, but that may reflect their essentially utilitarian, not decorative, nature. There is a porringer in the Museum of London with concentric circles of wrigglework in the bowl (accession no. A10371), but we did not include it in our survey because it is probably pre-1650.

P123



**Fig. 10: The only porringer in our survey with wrigglework.**

## EAR BRACKETS

The join between the ear and the bowl is a weak point. To strengthen it, pewterers commonly enlarged the surface area of the join by including some thickening or extension of the ear at the point of attachment. This is usually called the “bracket”. The bracket is an integral part of the ear, but it is convenient to consider brackets before looking at ear designs because the bracket form helps date some ear designs.

Michaelis did not study the brackets at all. Ian Robinson identified four types of bracket on English porringers, tentatively dating them as follows:

- None - pre-1625 except for a two-eared example of

1693-1723

- Wedge - c1625 - 1675
- Transitional - 1675 - 1690
- Triangular (broad V) - c1685 on.

He was also aware of linguiform brackets, but had said, wrongly, in private communication that it was only used by American makers.

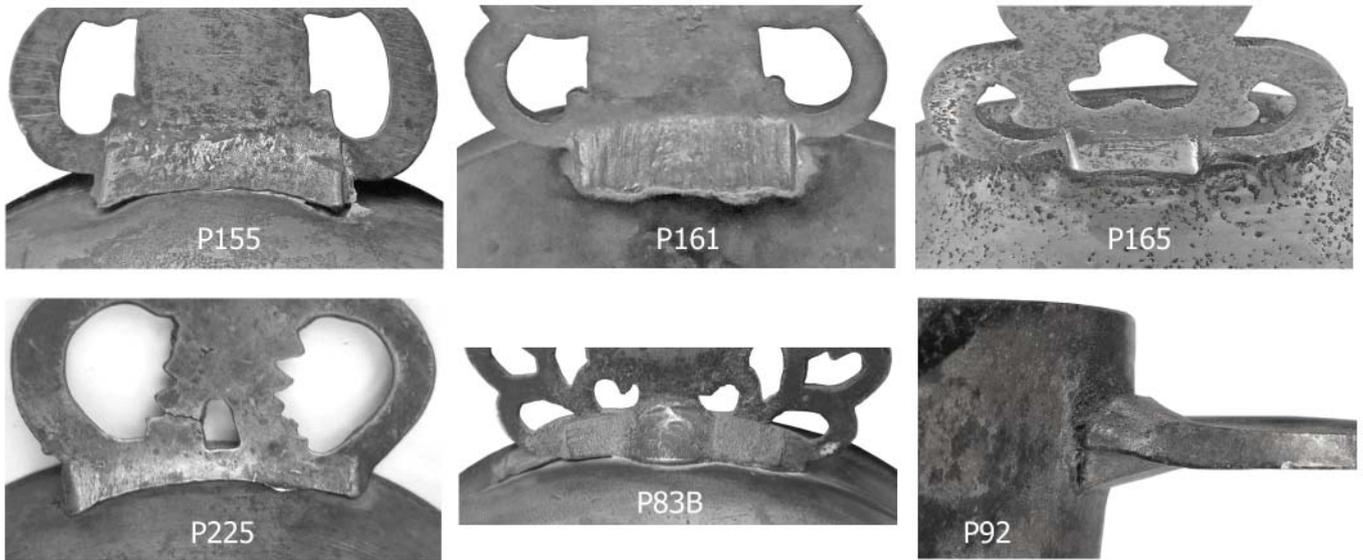
We have been able to make a more thorough study of brackets and their date ranges. We have photographs of the brackets on 99 English porringers and written descriptions of another 40, a total of 139. They exhibit much more variety than has previously been recognised, but we have kept to a fairly simple classification, along the lines proposed by Ian Robinson with some additions.

## Wedge

We have recorded 23 porringers with wedges, ie a thickening of the underside of the ear where it joins the bowl (Fig. 11). Most wedges are quite distinct, marked by a sudden upward inclination (as viewed from below) in the surface of the ear. However, some are more subtle, little more than gradual thickening of the ear. Most wedges extend for the full width of the ear at the point of attachment, but some (eg P165) are much shorter, barely extending over half the width. Two examples (P92, shown here, and P7) have a wedge on the top of the ear as well as the bottom. Two more (P83B, shown here, and P176) have a hump in the middle of the ear to further enlarge the attachment area.

9 of the 23 porringers are by London makers and 1 by a Winchester maker, but 13 are by unidentified makers. With so many unidentified makers, it would be a mistake to assume that London makers were the dominant users of wedges.

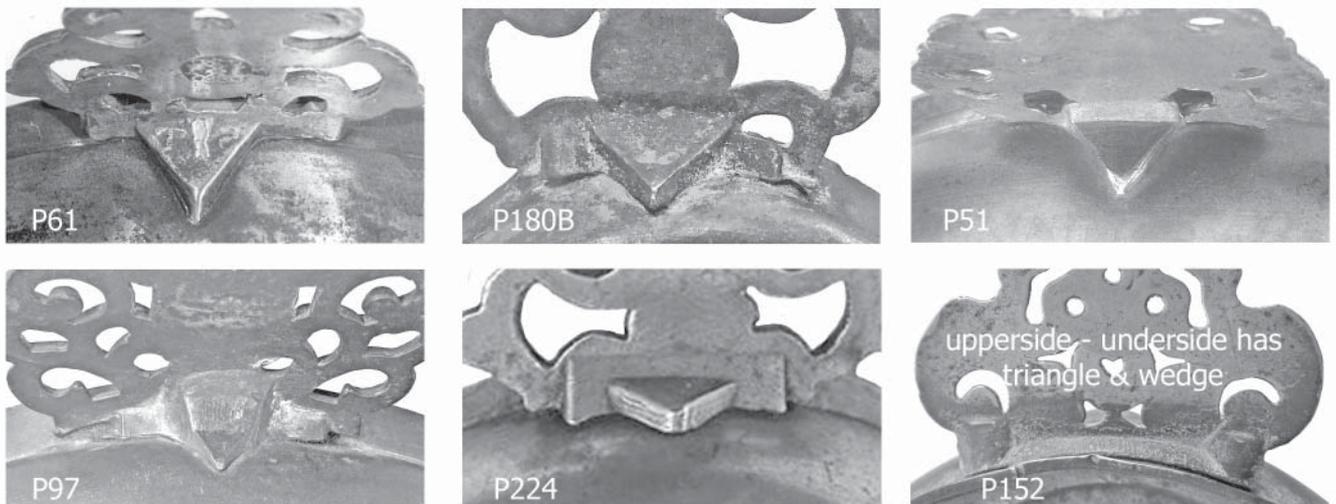
We have date ranges for eight of the pewterers who used wedges, plus start dates (but no end dates) for two more and a spot date for yet another. Five of them were active before 1650, but two only set up shop in 1675 and 1677 (and two more had only set up shop a few years previously). Five were still active in 1684, but probably only two by 1690. Three of the porringers by unidentified makers have a wedge with a bellied bowl, so that is further evidence that the wedge continued after c1680, our estimated start date for bellied bowls. However, 19 of the wedge brackets are on straight-sided bowls (and there is one oddity on an ogee bowl), so the wedge cannot have continued long into the bellied bowl era or there would be more examples with bellied bowls. This puts the likely date range for the wedge at pre-1650 to c1690. It certainly continued



**Fig.11: Some examples of wedge brackets.**



**Fig. 12: Some examples of triangular brackets. Image P211: J Walters.**



**Fig. 13: Some examples of triangle & wedge brackets. Image P51: J Bank**

after Ian Robinson's suggested end date of 1675.

## Triangle

A triangular tab under the ear was the most popular way of strengthening the ear-bowl join, and we have recorded it on 74 porringers. Triangles vary considerably (Fig. 12). Some are large and extend the full width of the ear at the point of attachment (eg P22), others are quite small and rather less than half the width (eg P115). Some are thick (P221), others are thin (P211), and in some, the triangle edges are slightly curved, not straight (P22). Three examples (including P122 illustrated here) have cast decoration on the triangle. This is a little surprising as the decoration would hardly be seen, but it also occurs on one wedge-and-triangle ear (see below). One example (P68, not shown here) has a small triangle sitting on the main triangle, another (P115) a short wiggly projection extending from the triangle under the ear and a third (P221) lateral wings on either side of the triangle.

The 21 identified makers who used triangles come from London, Bristol, Reading, Southampton, Shipston-on-Stour, Birmingham, Bewdley and Wigan, and there are a further 25 unidentified makers, so it seems likely that the bracket was used right across the country. Only 3 of the 21 makers were active before 1683: William Wood II with his exceptionally-long working life (PS10406, c1665-1726d), Jonathan Ingles (PS5067, 1670-1705d) and John Waite (PS9706, 1673-c1702). That figure had risen to 5 by 1685, 7 by 1690 and 10 by 1695, and the bracket had certainly come in before 1697, when one of the makers, Charles Wareing (PS9808), died. This suggests a start date of c1685. At the other end of the timescale, since Ingram & Hunt (PS5094) used triangle brackets and they did not start business until c1778, it certainly continued until late in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Its probable period of use, therefore, was c1685-c1790. That is consistent with the fact that, save for one exception (P202), triangular brackets are only found on bellied bowls (which are post 1680) and only 18% have a flat base (which died out by c1725).

## Triangle & wedge

We have recorded 16 porringers which have both a triangle and a wedge to strengthen the ear attachment (Fig. 13). There is considerable variation in design:

- One (P12) has cast decoration on the triangle.
- One (P61, shown here) has cast initials on the triangle, though their significance is unclear as there is a touch with different initials on the ear. Cast initials also occur on the bracket of porringer P179, shown in Fig. 14 below.
- One (P152) additionally has a wedge with humps on

the top of the ear.

- One (P51) has the wedge on top of the triangle, against the ear rather than the bowl.
- Two (P97, shown here, and P96) additionally have a wedge and tab on ear.

There are only four identified makers of triangle & wedge brackets, three from London and one from Bewdley, but with nine unidentified makers, it is not possible to draw firm conclusions on where they were used.

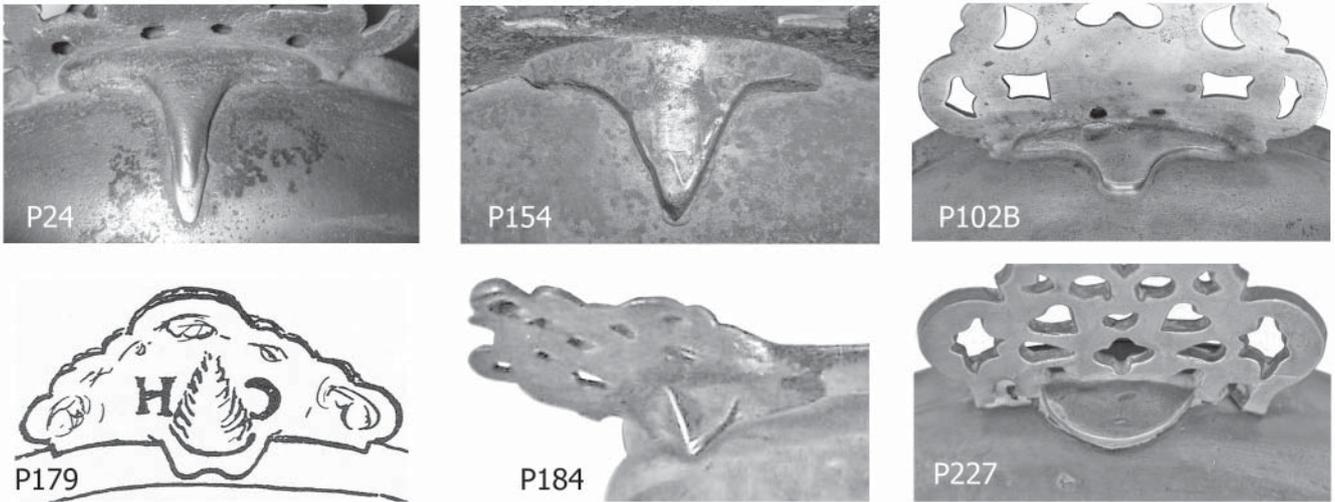
We think the triangle & wedge attachment is what Ian Robinson called "*transitional*" because he thought it was a transition between wedge brackets and triangle brackets. Two of the makers, Thomas Tidmarsh I (PS9386, 1677-1728d), and Joseph Pickard (PS7338, 1693-c1709), do indeed span the transition from wedges to triangles. However the third known London maker, John Langford I (PS5662), did not start until 1719, nearly 30 years after wedges had ceased, whilst the Bewdley makers Crane & Stinton (PS2071) have a much later date range of c1807-1815. All but one of the triangle & wedge brackets occur on bellied bowls, and that points to a post-1680 date. Half (8 out of 16) the bowls have flat bases and so were probably pre-1725, but the rest have bossed bases and so could be rather later.

The evidence therefore suggests that the triangle & wedge bracket is contemporaneous with the triangle bracket, not a transition to it, with a likely date range c1690-1815. It may have been particularly popular during the first 25 years of triangular brackets, but it continued well after that. It is essentially just a variant of the triangle, used by pewterers who felt it helped make a better attachment. Indeed, in Fig. 12 the bracket P22 used by Ash & Hutton (PS227), with its curved edges extending almost into wings, and the bracket P221 used by John Langford I (PS5662), with lateral wings, are not much different from a triangle & wedge. Melvyn Wolf (Wolf 1975 p54) coined the expression "triangular with wedge extension" for this type of bracket when found on American coronet-ear porringers, and for most triangle & wedge brackets that is a pretty accurate description.

## Other brackets

Around 10% of porringers have brackets that are not wedges, triangles or a combination of the two (Fig. 14).

The tongue-shaped or "linguiform" bracket (P102B) is more common in America, and it was American collectors who coined the term "linguiform" for it (Wolf 1975 p54). We have recorded it on two or three early geometric cartouche ears that are probably late 17<sup>th</sup> century and all five post-1778 flower ears, with nothing in between.



**Fig. 14: Top row – T-shaped and linguiform brackets. Bottom row – unclassified brackets. Images: P179 Michaelis; P184 Pewter Society Library; P227 J Walters**

On the former, it was used by John Pettiver of London (PS7267) who died in 1698. On the latter it was used by Hale & Sons (PS4236) and their successors and by Edgar Curtis & Co (PS2148).

The downwards projection on a linguiform bracket has a broad, rounded end. We have also found three T-shaped brackets (eg P24, P154) where the downwards projection tapers to a point. This is a previously unrecognised shape and all three are on geometric cartouche ears. We only have one identified maker, Henry Hammerton I of London (PS25, 1707-1741d), but as discussed below, this ear was used from c1685 to c1760.

We have also found three brackets in the form of a semi-circular tab (P227). Two are by Edmund Harvey of Wigan (PS4397, c1651-1685d), but the third is a rather

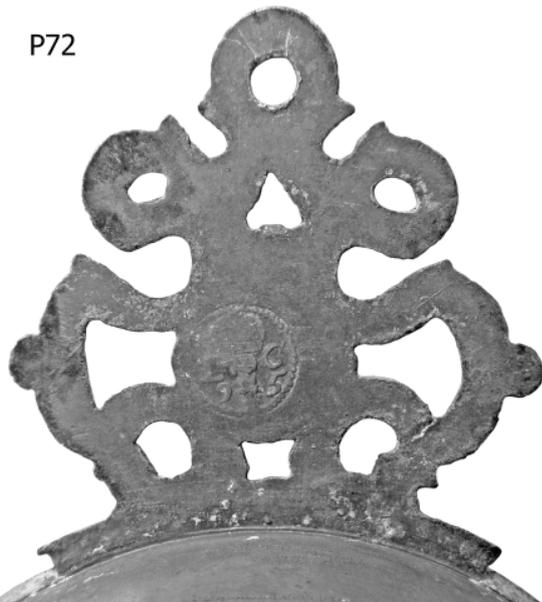
later London porringer. Finally, we have recorded one bracket of conical shape (P179) and one of pyramid shape (P184), both by unidentified makers.

**Porringers with no ear bracket**

Some Old English ears have a thin lateral extension strip against the bowl at each side of the ear instead of a bracket (Fig. 15). This is another way of increasing the attachment area, but it is only found with straight-sided bowls. It remained the standard attachment on bleeding bowls right into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but we have also found it on two ordinary porringers, one by Lawrence Child I (PS1650) and one unmarked.

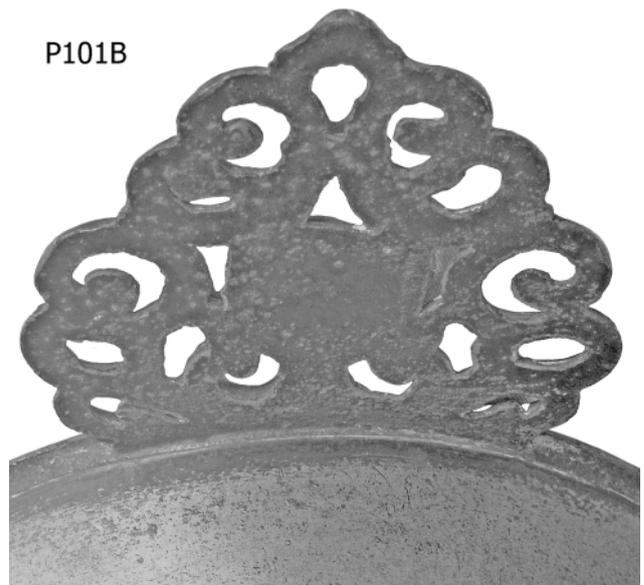
We have also recorded five ears with neither a bracket nor a lateral extension. The five are an unmarked open

P72



**Fig. 15: Old English ear with lateral extensions.**

P101B



**Fig. 16: Ear attachment with no bracket or lateral extension.**

3-lobed ear, two peacock's tail ears by Samuel Lawrence (PS5748, Fig. 16), an unmarked peacock's tail ear and an unclassified ear by Benjamin Cooper I (PS1923). Lawrence and Cooper have a date range of 1680-1729, but with such a small sample we cannot be sure ear attachments like this were confined to this date range. Indeed, many pre-1650 porringer have no brackets.

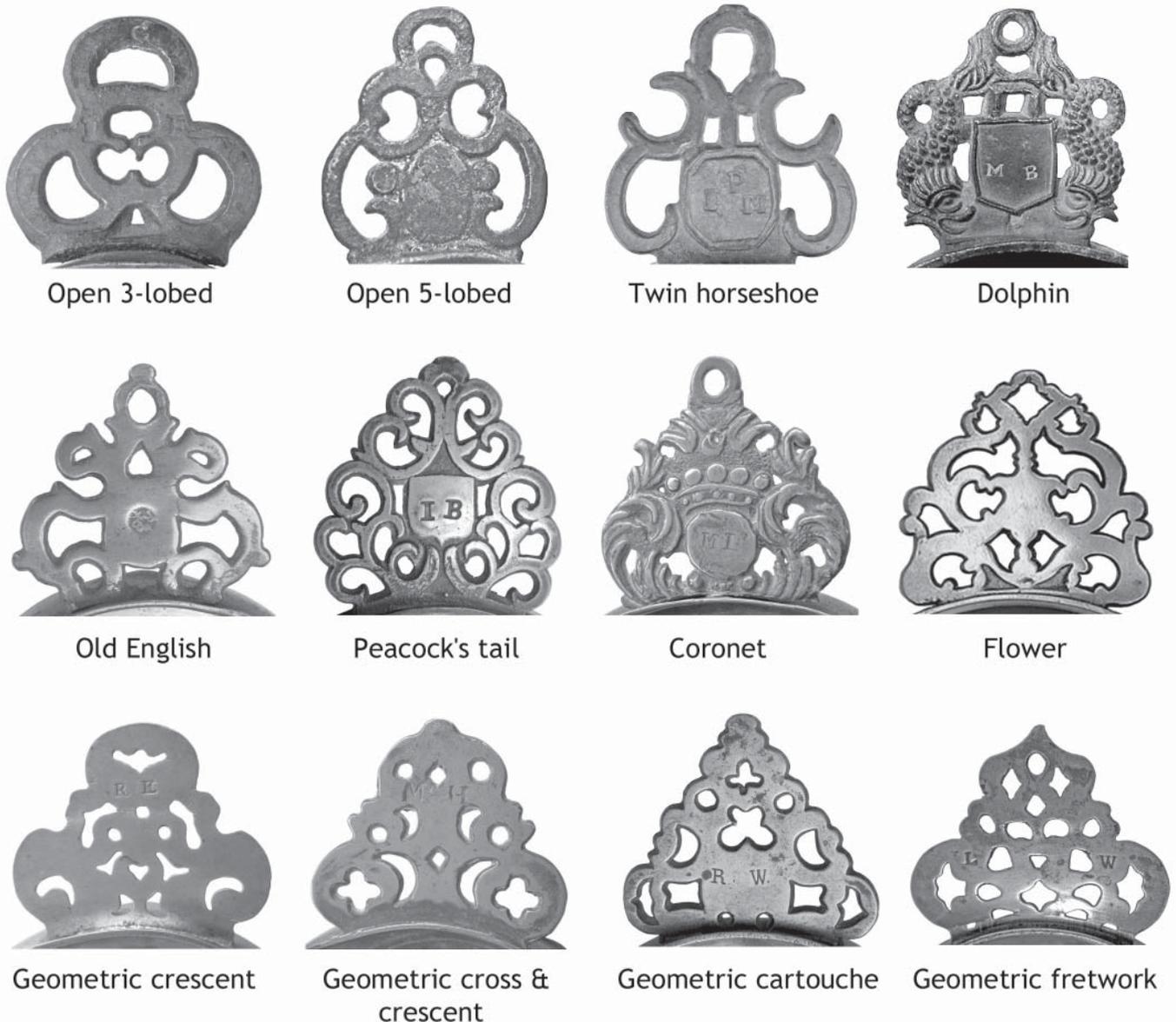
## PORRINGER EARS

### Classification of ear styles

At the October 2014 meeting, members had no disagreement about the correct Michaelis ear classification in 84% of cases, which shows that most of the time his classifica-

tion is clear and fairly easy to apply. The 16% that caused problems were all "Old English" or "open 3-lobed" ears. With both these types, Michaelis created different categories for ears that were only slightly different, and members had difficulty deciding between those categories. They found too many ears that had features of more than one category and did not precisely fit any of them. Members therefore agreed that breaking down these two styles into finer subdivisions was not sensible.

Although it was not reflected in the porringers brought to the meeting, we have found in addition that the Michaelis classification does not cope well with the rare one-offs that do not resemble any of the common styles. There is usually only a single example and they were probably only made by one pewterer. Michaelis's approach was to give



**Fig. 17: The agreed terminology for the main types of ear. Top – P92, P145, P161, P34; middle – P54, P97, P127, P90; bottom – P10, P20, P102B, P158. Images: P34 Pewter Society Library; P90 Wayne Hilt; P145 David W Hall.**

each a new number, but that quickly gets out of control and is not helpful. We propose simply to describe them as “unclassified”.

The third problem with the Michaelis ear classification is that because it is number-based, it is not memorable. As a result, many of the styles have now acquired descriptive terms which people use in preference to the Michaelis numbers. Members agreed that descriptions are better than numbers, but we need some new terms to cover all the main styles. At the Spring 2015 meeting members approved terms for all but two ear types. Those two proved particularly difficult to encapsulate in a couple of words, but after further discussion acceptable terms were devised (geometric cartouche and geometric fretwork). The agreed terms are shown in Fig.17.

Most of the terms are fairly descriptive. “Old English” is not, but it is so well established that it would be unhelpful to change it. “Flower” is not an obvious term either, but it is well established in America and has a historical basis. “Peacock’s tail” (unhelpfully called “very pretty” by Peal) has also been used to describe the thumbpiece often found on ale jugs (eg Sotheby’s London 9 July 1970 lot 91), but we do not think there is a risk of confusion. Most geometric ears, on the other hand, do fall into four fairly distinct groups, so we have distinguished them by terms that highlight their most distinctive characteristic.

We will now look at each ear type in turn, in approximate chronological order.

### Open 3-lobed ear

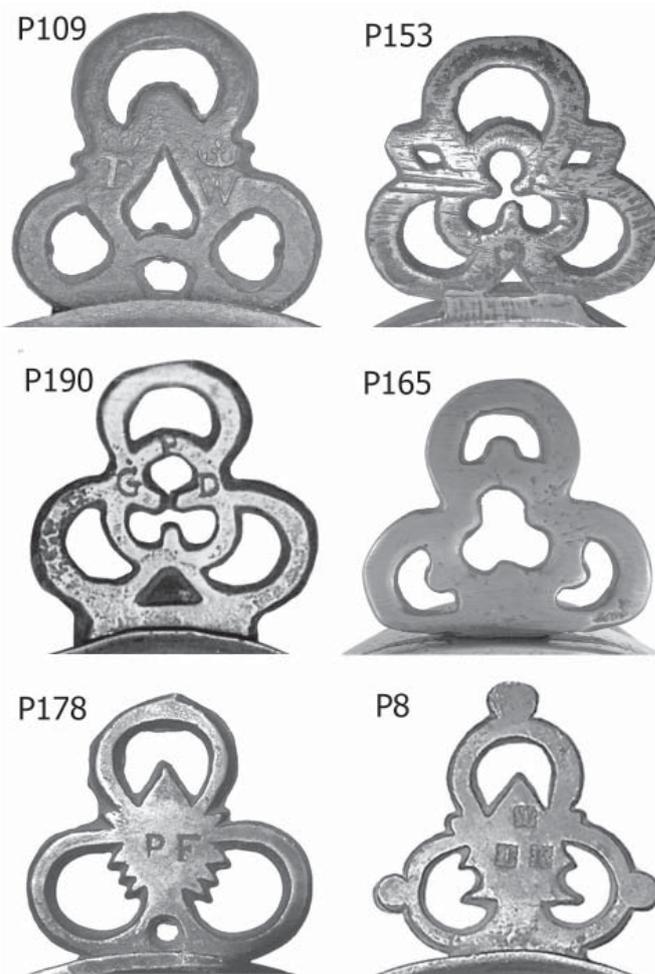
This category exhibits a wider range of variations than any other (Fig. 18). Michaelis recorded five versions of this ear which he numbered 5, 7, 11, 12 and 27. We have found examples approximating to all these save 27 (and Michaelis fails to say where he found that one), but we have also found other significantly-different variations. As no two ears have exactly the same design, there is a danger of creating a plethora of categories each represented by just a single example. The agreement of members that this type should not be subdivided avoids this problem.

Only one of the 13 examples in our survey is by an identified maker, William Mabbott of London (PS6088, 1644–1680d). One other has an unidentified touch that was re-struck on the London Touchplate in c1670. So, there is evidence they were made in London, but we have no idea where else they were made. The ear has been recorded on bowls with a very wide range of diameters, from 87 to 153mm.

Previous publications have often dated these ears to the 16<sup>th</sup> century or the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> (eg Hornsby et al

1989 p58 or Christies London 1<sup>st</sup> May 2007 lots 15, 16). Whilst our survey was not looking for porringers pre-1650, our 13 examples provide no evidence to support such early dating. On the contrary, the two examples mentioned in the previous paragraph point to the third quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, another example has a bellied bowl which, from the evidence discussed above, did not appear until c1680. However (and save for one oddity with an ogee bowl), all the other examples have straight-sided bowls, which had gone out of fashion by 1715, so the ear style was probably declining by the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Taken as a whole, the evidence suggests an end date of c1700. Where known, the bracket under the ear is always a wedge (save for one with no bracket) and, as discussed above, that is also reasonably consistent with an end date of c1700.

Whilst there is no evidence that any of the examples in our survey is pre-1650, there is a silver porringer with this ear made in London in 1635 (Clayton 1985 p39 and Hughes 1990 p34). This pushes the start date for this ear back into



**Fig. 18: Some examples of open 3-lobed ears. Images P8, P178, P190: Pewter Society Library.**

the second quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

One word of warning. Porringers with these ears were later made in America, and there are also a significant number of late 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century American reproductions with these ears.

### Open 5-lobed ear

This is a fairly rare ear type (Fig. 19). Michaelis split it into two categories, but there are other variations he did not record. As with open 3-lobed ears, no two are quite the same and there is nothing to gain by trying to subdivide this group.

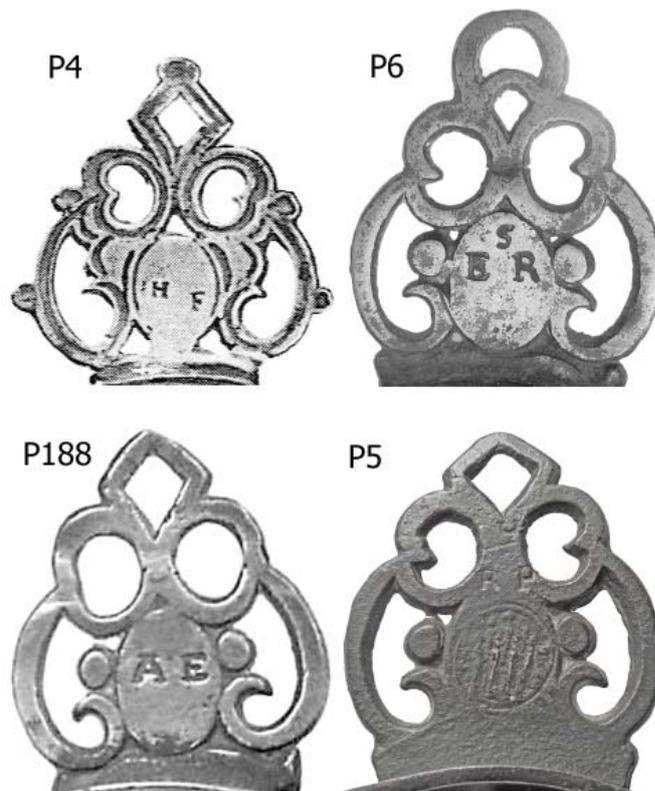
Two of the seven examples are by known London makers, but the remaining five have unidentified makers. The two identified makers have dates of 1642–c1674 and 1632–1656d. One example has a bellied bowl (post c1680) but all the rest have straight-sided bowls, pointing to much the same end date as for the open 3-lobed ear. The most likely date range, therefore, is c1645 to c1700. One has a wedge bracket, which is consistent with this date range. We do not know what brackets are on the others.

### Twin horseshoe ear

This ear has only been recorded on four porringers. One ear is incomplete. The other three are all very similar, but they have been compared carefully and are not identical. Two of the complete ears are illustrated in Fig. 4 of Part 1, and the third is in Fig. 17 above.

Three of the porringers are by London makers: Edward Newbolt (PS6747) or his widow Ellen (PS11560), Joseph Higdon (PS4638) and 'CS' (PS9133) who re-struck his touch in c1670 and is probably Charles Sweeting I (PS9079). The fourth is by the Winchester-based parents of Edward Newbolt - Nicholas Newbolt I (PS6763) or his widow Alice (PS6762). (The latter porringer is the only one Michaelis was aware of, and he wrongly identified the mark.) It is, of course, possible that both the Newbolt porringers were made in the same place and exchanged between the London and Winchester businesses. They do not have identical ears, but they are on different size bowls.

The ear certainly continue after 1677 because that is when Joseph Higdon set up shop, and three of the makers remained active to c1685. However, the ear has only been recorded on straight-sided bowls (ceased c1715) with wedge brackets, (ceased c1690). The start date is less clear, because whilst two of the makers only set up shop in 1668 and 1677, Edward Newbolt started c1637 and Charles Sweeting in 1633. As the ear is rare, it is unlikely it was made over a prolonged period, so a date range of c1665 to c1690 seems reasonable.

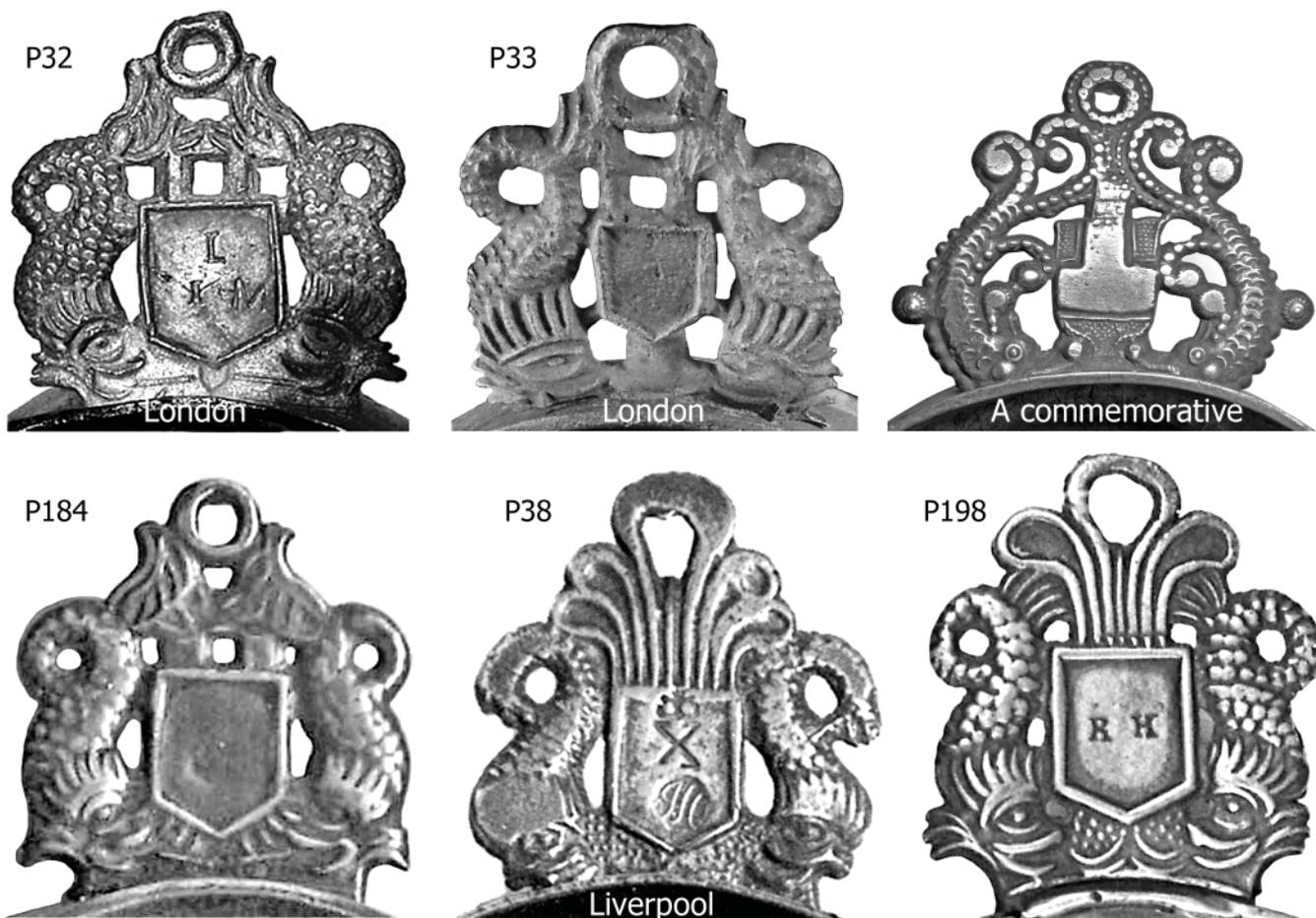


**Fig. 19: Some examples of open 5-lobed ears. Images: P4 Phillips; P5, P188 Pewter Society Library.**

### Dolphin ear

The dolphin ear is also common on commemorative porringers, so for the purposes of this assessment we have combined 13 single-eared examples from the present survey with the 14 dolphin-eared commemorative porringers in Hayward & Moulson 2013. Twelve of the 27 examples have an identified maker and 11 of those 12 are London. The twelfth is by John Houghton of Liverpool (PS4842), a brazier who was active c1727–1743d but whose widow continued the business for many years afterwards. It may be a predominantly-London design although with 15 unidentified examples we cannot be sure. Dolphin ears are also found on American porringers, though only two ear moulds are known (Pass 2016).

The underlying theme of all the ears is the same, but there are marked differences between the commemoratives and non-commemoratives and between London and provincial designs (Fig. 20). With one exception, the commemoratives have a T-shaped central block and two scrolls at each dolphin's tail, whereas the non-commemoratives have a central shield and just one loop at the tails. Further, the Liverpool-made ear (P38) has sprays at the top that are quite different from the London ears. There is a second example with these sprays (P198) by an unidentified maker.



**Fig. 20: Some examples of dolphin ears on single-eared porringers with, top right, a typical example from a commemorative porringer. Images: P32 Jan Gadd; P33, P38, P184 Pewter Society Library; P198 Museums Sheffield.**

From the working dates of the ten identified pewterers who used this ear either on single-eared porringers or twin-eared commemoratives, we can say with certainty that it was in use before 1678 when Timothy Blackwell (PS735) died and was still in use after 1726 when Henry Smith (PS8640) set up shop. However, only two of the ten were active in 1674 and only three in 1700, whereas six were active between 1706 and 1721, so it seems unlikely the ear was introduced any earlier than c1670. Four of the ten were still active in 1744 but only two by 1750, so c1750 seems a likely end date. Ian Robinson had proposed a date range of 1650–1690, but his end date is certainly too early, whilst his start date seems rather optimistic.

Nine of the 27 examples have a straight-sided bowl and 18 have a bellied bowl, and that ratio fits in well with our suggested date range of c1670 to c1750. Six have flat bases and 21 bossed bases, which also fits in well, although to be fair the commemoratives may be distorting the figures as inevitably all of them are bossed. We have details of the brackets for only seven examples and they show considerable variety. Four have wedges, two have triangles and the last has an odd conical bracket.

### Old English ear

The term “Old English ear” was coined by two Americans, Percy Raymond and Joseph France (Raymond, September 1959 p20). They chose it because of the prevalence of this ear in the UK. The term was certainly not common currency in the UK in 1956 as Michaelis did not use it in his article for the *Antique Collector* that year (Michaelis 1956). However, Sotheby’s in London were using it by 1965 (Sutherland-Graeme sale catalogue 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1965). The term is now well established, but the ear is not confined to England. It was popular with American makers, there is an example excavated in Deventer with an unidentified Dutch mark (Boijmans pp152-3 and Dubbe 2009 p386) and it occurs on German porringers too (Michaelis 1956 p197).

This is the most common ear on surviving English porringers, accounting for 27% of the porringers in our survey. It must have been made in huge quantities because it is more common than geometric and coronet ears which, being later, will have had a higher survival rate. Four examples of this ear were illustrated in Fig. 3 of Part 1 and



**Fig. 21: Some more examples of Old English ears. Image P211: Jonathan Walters.**

another six are illustrated here (Fig. 21). All these ears have exactly the same design features, and yet they all differ in the way the design is executed. It is, perhaps, the most striking illustration of the point made in Part 1, that pewterers preferred to copy established styles rather than create their own.

Less than a third (19) of the 59 examples in our survey have an identified place of manufacture, even if we include the two initialled marks whose provenance is probable but not certain. 51% (30) have unidentified initialled marks and 17% (10) are unmarked. The identified makers come from London, Wigan, Bristol, Birmingham, King's Lynn, Leicester, Reading, Shipston on Stour and Southampton. London does not feature particularly strongly, with just six porringers from six makers, and even adding in the commemorative porringers only increases the number of London makers to seven. It seems that this ear was widely made and not a speciality of any specific area.

If we include Samuel Lawrence (PS5748), who used the ear on commemorative porringers but not ordinary porringers (Hayward & Moulson 2013), there are 15 identified makers who used the Old English ear. The ear was certainly in use before 1685 when one of the known makers, Edmund Harvey (PS4397), died, and it was certainly still in use in 1734 when another known maker, Ann Cart-

er (PS90), started business. Between 1670 and 1733 there were never fewer than five active simultaneously, peaking at ten between 1695 and 1697. Before 1665 only one was active. Likewise there was only one after 1754 and only two after 1741. So, the identified makers point to a probable date range of c1670 to c1740. For 8 of the unidentified pewterers we have estimated dates from other wares and they are consistent with this.

Identified makers, though, are not the only dating evidence. We also have bowl and bracket styles. The Old English ear has been recorded on

- 15 straight-sided bowls and 43 bellied bowls
- 23 flat based and 33 bossed based bowls (plus two domed bases).

This suggests it spanned the transition from straight to bellied bowls, with a preponderance in the latter, and also spanned the decline of the flat-bottomed bowl in favour of the bossed base. The date range suggested above is fully consistent with this. However, it has been recorded with 33 triangle or triangle & wedge brackets but only one wedge bracket. As discussed above, the wedge bracket did not die out until 1690, so if Old English ears started as early as 1670 one would expect to find a higher proportion with wedges. Perhaps, therefore, a start date of c1680 is more realistic.



**Fig. 22: Cast decoration on Old English ears. Image P71: Pewter Society Library.**

The suggested date range does not cover bleeding bowls, which went on using the Old English ear until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Allen & Hanbury's catalogue of 1905 p845 and Down Bros catalogue of c1929 p1614 both illustrate pewter bleeding bowls with what looks like Old English ears, though the drawings are not very clear.

Four of the ears have cast decoration on their upper surface (Fig. 22). One (P217) is on a bleeding bowl and has a pattern of grooves, forming a shell-like decoration in the centre. An identical bleeding bowl is illustrated in Peal 1971 p125. The other three (P71 and P180A/B) are all on miniature porringers or wine tasters and are covered in raised dots. The identical ears on P180A and B, from the WCOP collection and the Victoria & Albert Museum respectively, also have the cast initials "CR" with half a star above. As the Old English ear did not appear until c1680 and triangle and wedge brackets under these ears did not appear until c1690, the CR cannot refer to Charles Rex and must presumably be the maker. The complete wine taster P180A is illustrated in Fig. 17 of Part 1.

### Peacock's tail ear

These attractive ears are all very similar in design, but apart from a matching pair by the same maker, no two ears come from the same mould (Fig. 23). P115 by "IF" (PS18453) and P96 by "TL" (PS6077) are the closest pair when viewed from the front and are on the same size bowl, but the backs of their ears differ.

Only three of the 19 examples have an identified maker, and two of those are a matching pair by the same pewterer. 14 have unidentified initialled marks, one has an illegible mark and one is unmarked. With such a high proportion of unidentified makers, it is not possible to work out how widely they were made, but the two identified makers are London, and two of the unidentified makers are believed from other evidence to be North of England. This ear was

also popular with American makers.

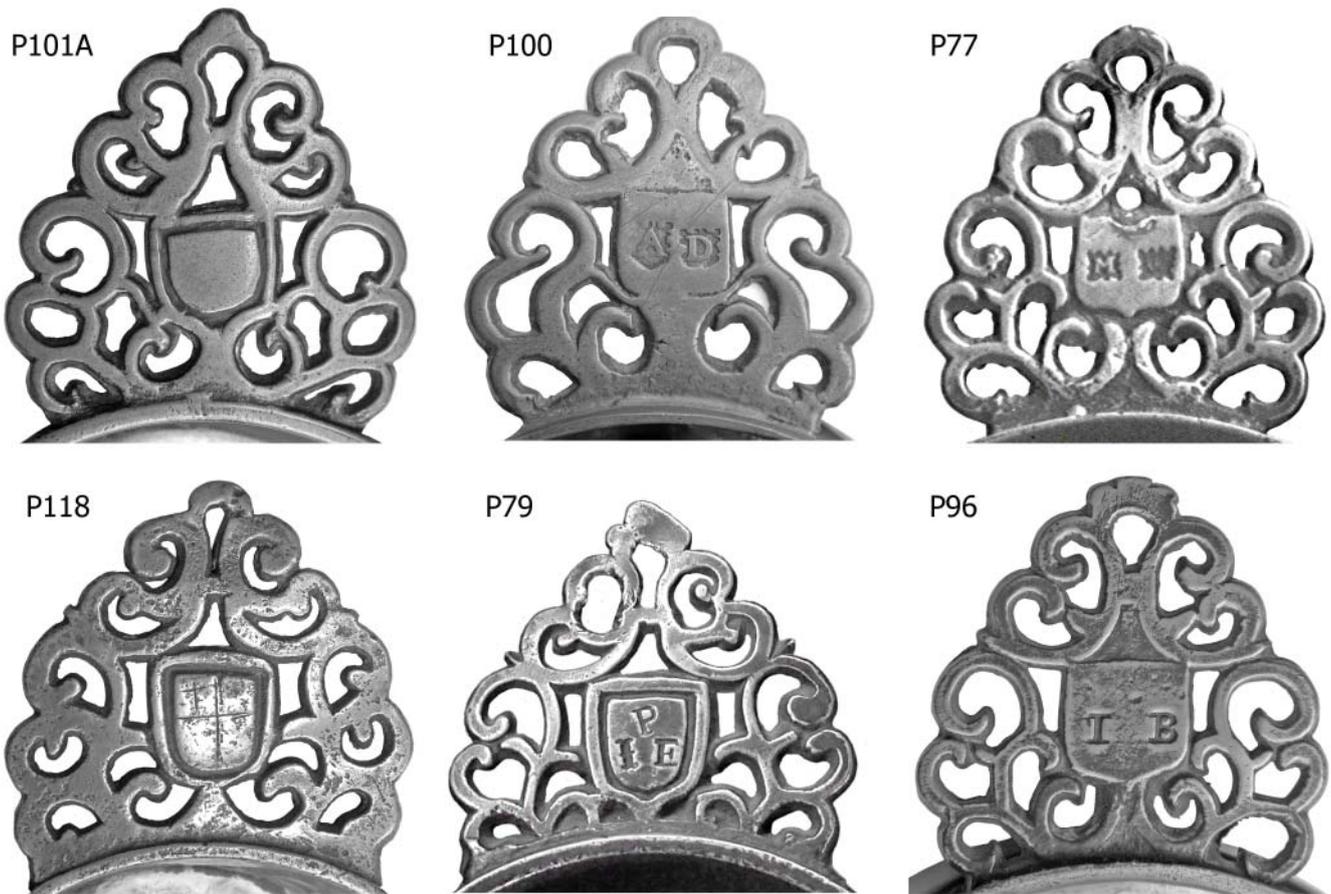
The two identified London makers were both active c1690 to c1725, and three of the unidentified makers have been dated to the period 1685 to 1715 on the basis of other wares. Nine examples have a bellied bowl and five have a straight-sided bowl, which suggests this ear spans the introduction of bellied bowls. However, none of them have a bossed base, which suggests the ear did not continue very far in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Taken together, this evidence points to a probably date range of c1685 to c1720. This is broadly consistent with Ian Robinson's suggested range of 1690–1715.

We have details of the brackets on 12 of the porringers, and they are a very odd mix of types. Across porringer ears of all types, triangle & wedge brackets are outnumbered 5 to 1 by straightforward triangles, but on the peacock's tail ears there are more triangle & wedges (5) than triangles (3). Also, three have no brackets, a feature that, ignoring bleeding bowls, is only recorded on three other porringers. The 12<sup>th</sup> example has a wedge bracket. This atypical distribution is difficult to explain.

### Geometric crescent ear

This is the first of the four main types of geometric ear (Fig. 24). Ian Robinson had proposed that geometric ears taken as a group had an end date of 1730. This ear type and the following three show that to be quite wrong. Indeed, the next type, geometric cross & crescent, went on to about 1815.

The geometric crescent ear appears to be a London design, as 12 of the 15 examples have an identified maker and they are all London. Two have unidentified initialled marks and one is unmarked. Between them, the 12 with an identified maker were by seven different pewterers. The ear was certainly in use before 1722 when one of the makers, John Quick (PS7676), died and was still in use in



**Fig. 23: Some examples of peacock's tail ears. Image P77: Pewter Society Library.**



**Fig. 24: Some examples of geometric crescent ears.**

1734 when another maker, James Tidmarsh II (PS9383), opened shop. None of the seven known makers was active before 1693 or after 1765, but during the whole of the period 1701 to 1757 there were always at least three active. It therefore seems reasonable to assume a date range of c1700 to c1755. All examples have a bellied bowl, which is consistent with this date range. Further, the brackets on the 10 examples for which we have the information are all triangles or triangles with a wedge, and that too is consistent with this date range.

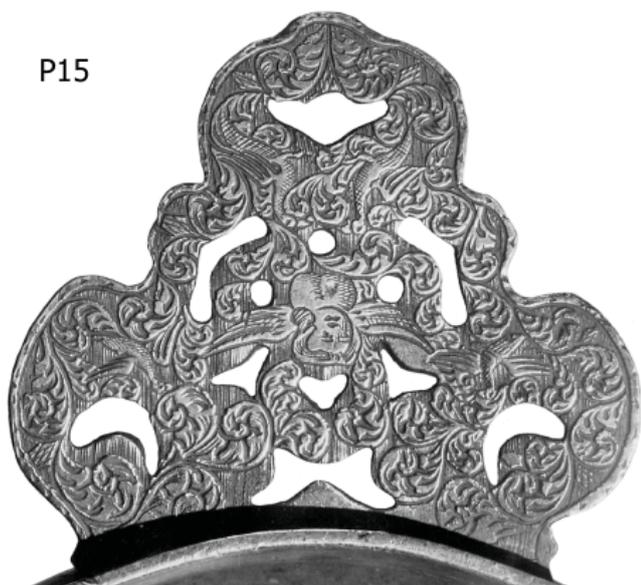
This ear and the geometric fretwork ear share one unusual

feature. Apertures in ears always have chamfered edges. This may in part have been for appearance but it was probably mainly to make it easier to remove the two halves of the mould from the ear after casting. The chamfers are normally on the upper surface. However, on every geometric crescent and geometric fretwork ear the chamfers are on the underside, despite the fact that these ears were used by several different pewterers who each had a different mould. Michaelis 1949 Part IV suggested this was so a better surface would show when the porringer was hanging up bowl to wall, but if that was the case, why is this feature

not found on any other ear type? A more likely explanation is that it happened because pewterers were so fond of copying other pewterer's designs. If the mould makers for the pewterers who first invented these designs happened to put the chamfers on the underside, one can then imagine subsequent pewterers instructing their mould makers to "make me a mould for something like this" and all the subsequent moulds would have chamfers on the underside too.

No fewer than 7 of the 15 porrings with this ear have additional ornamentation, which is an exceptionally high proportion. It is the ear that was used by John Quick on his four ornate porrings with gadrooned bowls (Fig. 9 above). Further, James Tidmarsh II (PS9383) used this ear style on an ornate porring with two ears, but in this instance it was the ears themselves that were elaborately decorated (Fig. 25). Finally, as discussed earlier decorated brackets are unusual, but two of the 15 porrings in this group have them (P12, P106).

P15



**Fig. 25: One of the two elaborately decorated ears on a porring by James Tidmarsh II. Image: Pewter Society Library.**

### Geometric cross & crescent ear

This is the commonest of the geometric ears (Fig. 26), and it shows slightly more variation in its design than the geometric crescent ear. Indeed, Ash & Hutton of Bristol (PS227) had two different cross & crescent ears for the same size bowl (P18, not illustrated here, and P22). 16 of the 20 examples have an identified maker, or at least an identified provenance, and they show that this ear was used in London, Bristol, Bewdley and Wigan. We have not spotted any design features that are distinctive of a specific region.

We have identified nine makers of these porrings, and they spread over a surprisingly long time span. The ear was certainly in use before 1728 as that is when one of the makers, Thomas Tidmarsh I (PS9386), died, but at the other end of the spectrum, another maker Crane & Stinton (PS2071) did not start business until 1807. Between 1693 and 1758 there were always at least four of the identified makers active, and between 1707 and 1746 at least five, but before 1687 and after 1760 the number drops to two. Moreover, there are no identified makers between 1768 and 1807. The evidence therefore suggests that the ear was in general use from c1690 to c1760, but that Bewdley continued using it to c1815, when Crane & Stinton ceased. All the porrings of this type have a bellied bowl, and the 12 brackets for which we have details are all triangles or triangles plus wedges, and both these features are consistent with the suggested date range.

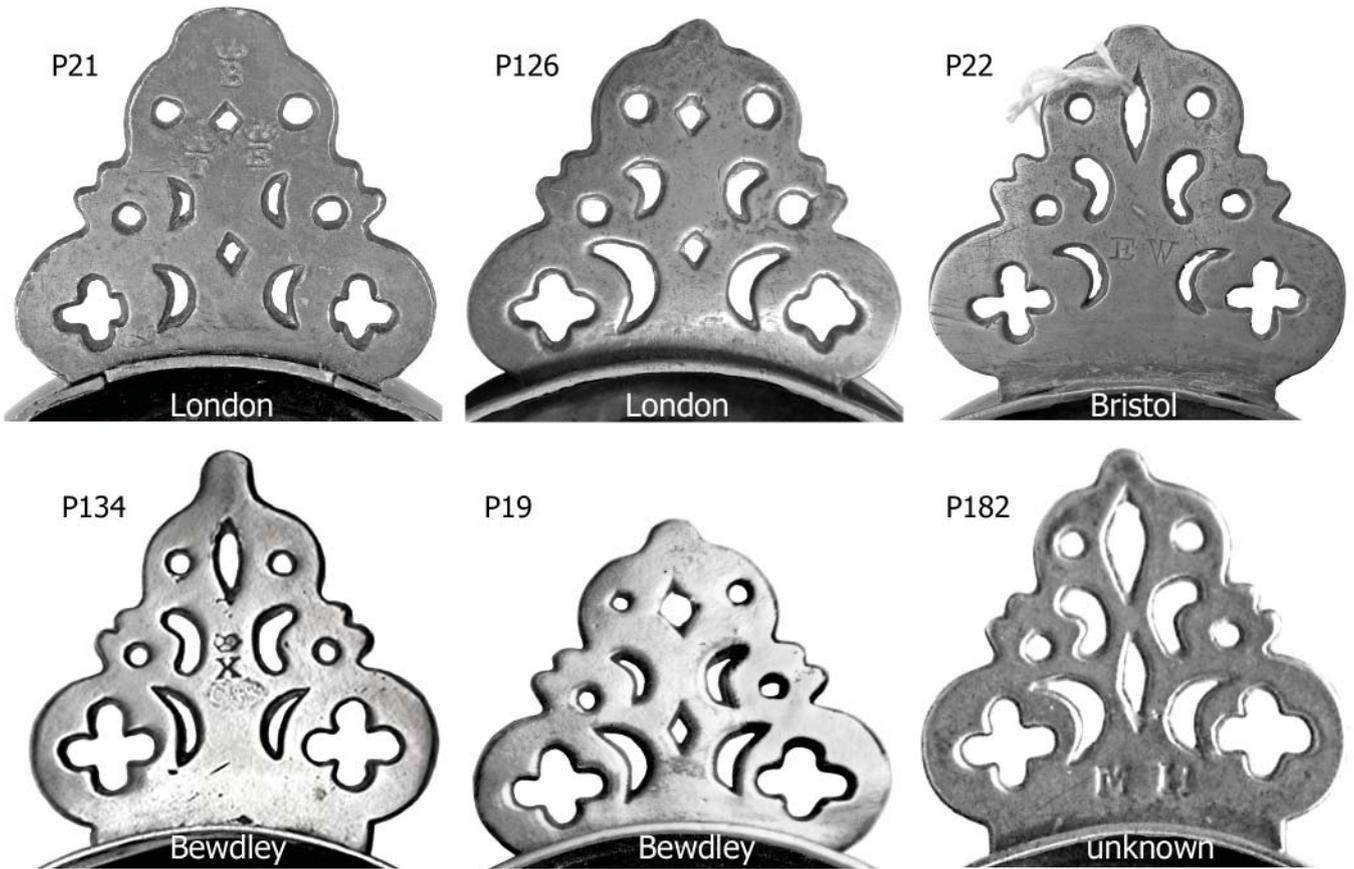
Michaelis 1949 Part IV says these ears sometimes have the chamfers underneath, like the geometric crescent and fretwork ears, but that is not the case with any of the examples we have found.

### Geometric cartouche ear

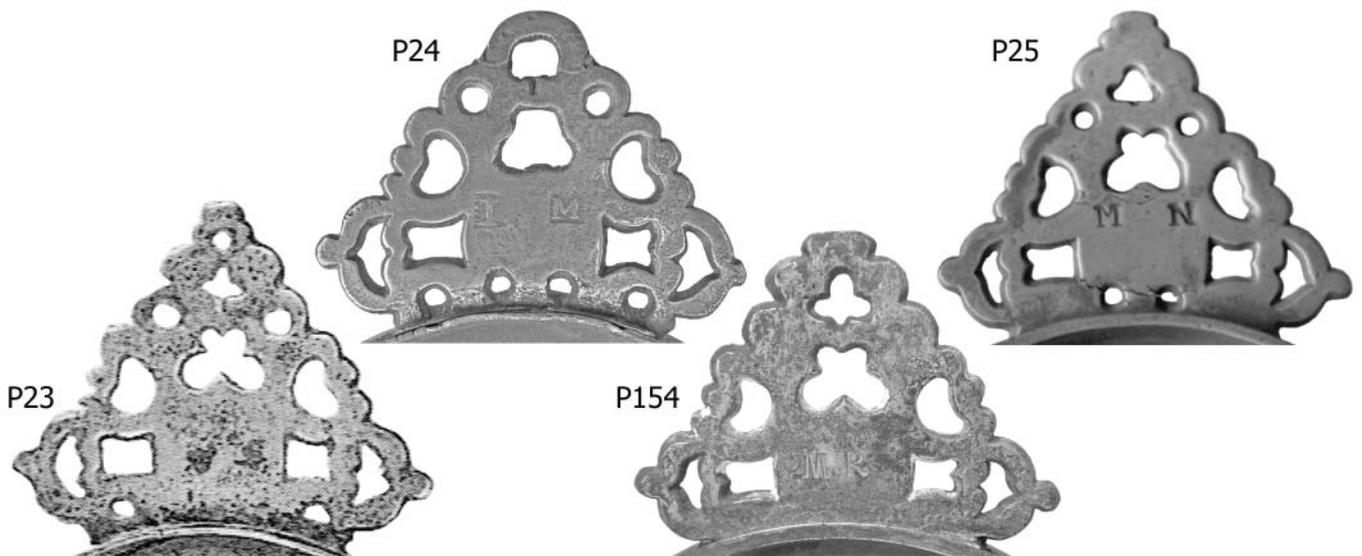
The geometric cartouche ear (Fig. 27) is less common than the crescent and cross & crescent. It probably originated as a London design because five of the nine examples have an identified maker and four of the five are London (although the attribution of the "IP" hallmarks on two of them to John Pettiver, PS7267, is not 100% certain). The fifth is by a Bristol maker. Three others have unidentified initialled marks and one is unmarked. The ear was also used by some American makers.

There are two London-made silver porrings with this ear which both date to the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. One is in the Victoria & Albert Museum (accession no. M.183-1913, image online) made in 1698/9 and the other in Colonial Williamsburg (Davis 1976 p199) made in 1683/4. If the attribution of the "IP" hallmarks to John Pettiver is correct, in pewter the ear must have been in use before his death in 1698. Even without relying on John Pettiver, the unidentified pewterer "LS" (PS9173) who made porring P75 also made Old English ear porrings, gadrooned capstan salts and flat-lid tankards, so that too points to the same period. Thus the ear could well have appeared on pewter porrings by c1685.

London pewterers Lawrence Child I (PS1650, 1695-1725d) and Henry Hammerton I (PS4299, 1707-1741d) also used this ear, but so did the Bristol pewterers Ash & Hutton (PS227, 1741-1768), so it certainly continued into the 1740s, if not into the 1760s. With such a long period of use (c1685 to c1760), it is surprising that the ear



**Fig. 26: Some examples of geometric cross & crescent ears.**  
**Images: P134 Wayne Hilt; P19, P182 Pewter Society Library.**



**Fig. 27: Some examples of geometric cartouche ears.**  
**Images: P23 Phillips; P25 Pewter Society Library.**

is relatively rare.

All the porringers have a bellied bowl, which is consistent with this date range, but they do have another curious feature. We have details of the brackets for six of the nine examples, and all are either T-shaped or linguiform. The first is a shape that we have not recorded with any other ear, whilst the second is a shape we have otherwise only recorded with the very-late flower ear. Why pewterers did not use the far more common triangular bracket with this ear, or conversely, why they did not use the T-shaped and linguiform brackets with other ears, is a mystery.

Finally, porringer P25 in Fig. 27 calls for some additional comment. Michaelis 1949 Pt I depicted the ear that was then on this porringer as a variant of the Old English ear which he numbered “21b”. What he depicted looks like the top half of an Old English ear on the bottom half of a geometric cartouche ear (Fig. 28), and that is exactly what it was. He later discovered (Michaelis notes) that the top of the ear had broken off and someone had fashioned a new top half modelled on an Old English ear! This came to light when he compared the porringer with an identical undamaged example by the same maker that was owned by Cyril Minchin. Michaelis then cut off the wrong top half and modelled a new top half from Minchin’s porringer, so the ear on P25 now has its third top half. There are several photographs of this porringer in the Pewter Society Library, but some have the second top half and some the third. Because of this confusion, we inadvertently entered this porringer three times in Table 1 of Part 1, as P25, P141 and P199. It would have been better to rely on the unrepaired Minchin example, but we do not know where it is.

### Geometric fretwork ear

The geometric fretwork ear (Fig. 29) is marginally less common than the cartouche ear, but it seems to be an exclusively-London design. Four of the eight examples have an identified maker and they are all London, and the

P25



**Fig. 28: Not a genuine ear! A marriage of Old English and geometric cartouche ears. Image: Pewter Society Library.**

ear has also been recorded on a commemorative porringer by London maker Samuel Lawrence, PS5748 (Hayward & Moulson 2013). Like the geometric crescent ear, all the geometric fretwork ears have the chamfers on the underside.

Dating is difficult because there is not much evidence to go on. There are very few known makers and we are unaware of any silver examples which might help. Including Samuel Lawrence, the four identified makers have date ranges 1687-1729, 1695-1725, 1701-1735 and 1719-1758. During the period 1695 to 1735, therefore, there were always at least two active simultaneously, and that is probably the best estimate we can make of the date range for this ear. All the bowls are bellied, and five of the six brackets for which we have details are triangular, and that is consistent with the suggested date range. The sixth bracket is an unusual curved tab.



**Fig. 29: Some examples of geometric fretwork ears. Image P227: J Walters**

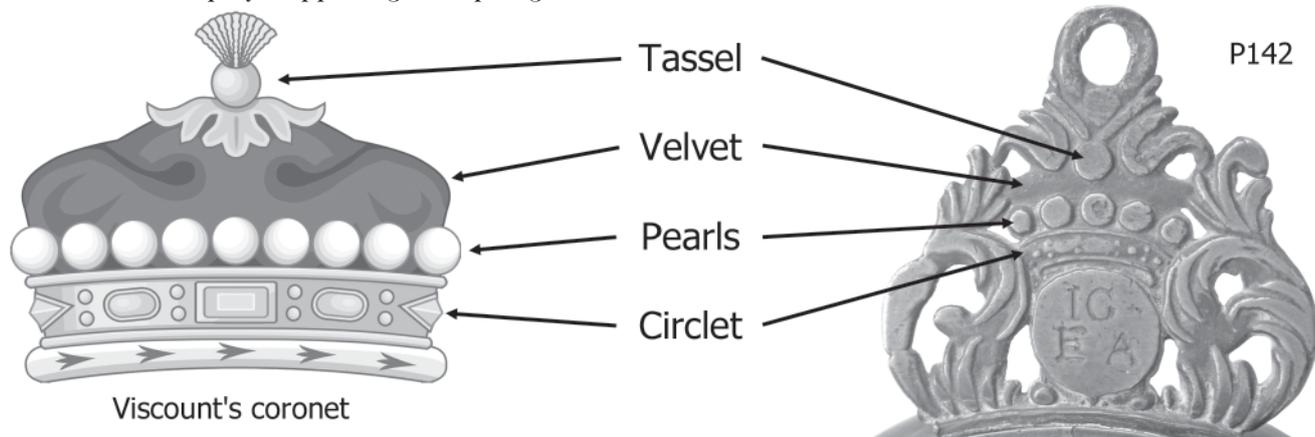
## Coronet ear

Ian Robinson published a study of English coronet ears 18 years ago (Robinson 1998), but we now have the advantage of a larger sample. We have confirmed most of his conclusions, but not quite all.

The coronet ear is a representation of a viscount's coronet (Fig. 30). This consists of a circlet with a ring of closely-set pearls mounted above it, surrounding a crimson-velvet cap surmounted by a tassel. Nowadays a viscount's coronet has sixteen pearls, of which only nine are visible from the front, but prior to an order of the Earl Marshall in 1761 the number was not rigid and coronets were often depicted with fewer pearls (Robson 1830, entries for "coronet"). That is probably why some coronet ears show five pearls (equivalent to a ring of eight) and some six. On real coronets the circlet below the pearls is not bejewelled but it is normally chased and embossed to simulate jewels. This decoration often takes the form of "colons" alternating with rectangular or oval patches, and this is replicated on some coronet ears. The stippled area above the pearls on a coronet ear represents the velvet cap and the boss above represents the tassel. There should be a band of ermine below the circlet, but coronet ears do not attempt to show this. Quite why pewterers chose to use a coronet for porringer ears (and specifically a viscount's coronet rather than that of, say, a duke, marquess, earl or baron) is a mystery. Indeed, why choose a coronet rather than the royal crown?

This is the second most common ear, and it exhibits noticeable variations in design (Fig. 31). Differences are most easily seen in:

- the number of pearls in the coronet and their variation in size
- the contents of the band below the pearls
- the number of sprays supporting the top ring



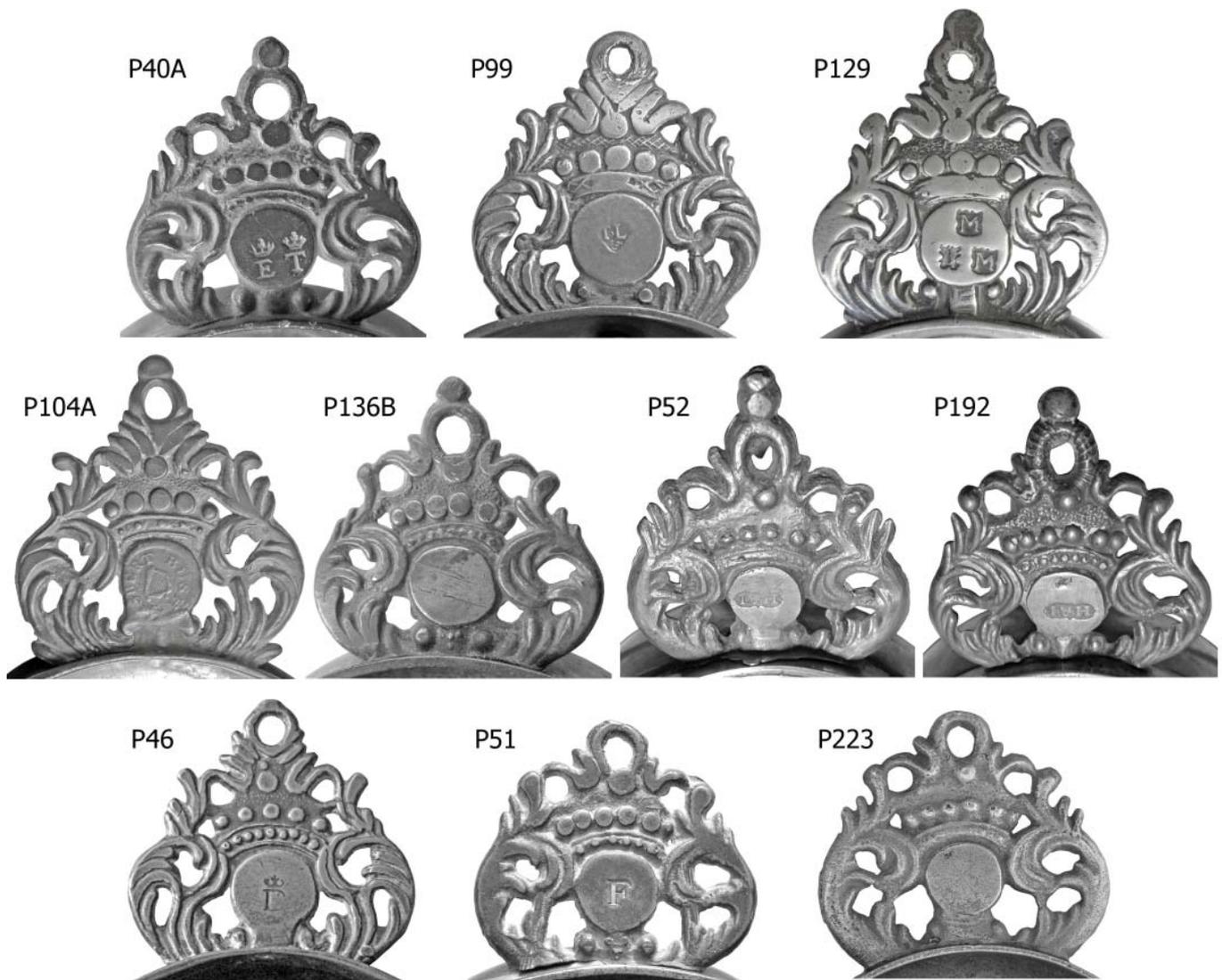
**Fig. 30: Comparison between a viscount's coronet and a coronet ear. Drawing of coronet: Sodacan, Wikimedia Commons.**

- the shape of the shield
- what is in the area below the shield
- whether the background (which is not subject to wear) is plain, lightly stippled, heavily stippled or hatched.

We have not discerned any clear link between particular design features and location. Indeed, porringers P104A and P136B in Fig. 31 differ in four of the above six features and yet they are by the same maker, Robert Bush I (PS1229). The same is true of porringers P52 and P192 by Ingram & Hunt (PS5094), P192 also being distinguished by unusual banding around the top perforation.

The large number of English-made coronet ears found in America suggests English pewterers were mainly making them for the American market, but the ear was also very popular with American makers. It was being made in New York before 1754, whilst Boston pewterers were still making it in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. A number of members have bought unmarked coronet ear porringers in the United Kingdom assuming they were English, only later to discover they were American, so take care! Indeed, we have had to delete two of the coronet ear porringers included in Table 1 in Part 1 because we now realise they are American, not English. There are helpful, well-illustrated studies of American coronet ear porringers in Wolf 1975 and Blaney 1983, and it is worth checking any unmarked examples against the illustrations in these studies. Note that American collectors wrongly describe the ear as a "crown". Crowns are reserved for the monarch and heir apparent, and if the ear really were a crown its continued popularity after independence would make little sense.

A fair number of American coronet ears have a keyhole-shaped shield. Ian Robinson's assertion that this is never found on English examples is not entirely correct as P46 (and the similar P140, not illustrated here) have one, al-



**Fig. 31: Some examples of coronet ears. Images: P46 Chris Stuart; P52, P192 Boston Museum of Fine Arts.**

though admittedly the downward extension is not as large as on most American examples. P52 also appears to have one, although this may be because the distinction between the shield and the area below was lost when the pewterer was finishing the surface of the shield by scraping. Much the same is true of P223, although here the distinction has not been completely lost. However, Ian Robinson was correct in saying that you do not find hemispherical struts extending from the shield at 4 o'clock and 8 o'clock nor splines on the back of the ear on English examples, whereas some American examples do have these features.

Curiously, pewterers made little attempt to make their ears symmetrical, and you are more likely to find significant differences between the left and right sides than with any other ear. You are also more likely to find flashing partly or wholly blocking some apertures than with any other ear. It is almost as if pewterers were taking less care with these porringers, perhaps because they were intended for

export. Indeed, Robert Bush was happy to finish the top surface of his ears simply by running a flat file over it. This may have been an easy way of getting rid of casting imperfections, but it blurred the pattern of the ear. This is demonstrated in Fig. 32, particularly at the top and bottom right of the ears and to the upper left of the shield.

As no London makers have been recorded, the coronet ear seems to be wholly provincial. It is strongly associated with Bristol, as six Bristol makers account for half of the 33 recorded examples, many of them with multiple examples of the same or different sizes. However, there are also three Wigan makers, plus individual makers from Bewdley, Blandford Forum and Liskeard, as well as some unidentified makers and unmarked examples.

Between 1742 and 1761 four of the six Bristol coronet-ear makers were active simultaneously, and this may have been the heyday of the coronet ear. This certainly was not the



**Fig. 32: Two Robert Bush ears from the same mould, one of which has been filed so heavily that the pattern is much less sharp. Image P44E: Hillary Bagshaw**

end of the ear, though, as another Bristol maker, Burgum & Catcott (PS1182), did not even start their business until 1765, whilst Bewdley makers Ingram & Hunt (PS5094) did not start until c1778. Two makers - Robert Bush I (PS1229) and Ingram & Hunt - were active until 1800 and 1807 respectively, but we do not know how long they continued making this ear. There was clearly demand for locally-made ones in America into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but because, so far as we know, no other Bristol pewterers active in the 1780 to 1800 period made them, demand for coronet-eared porringers exported from England must have reduced. Accordingly, an end date of c1790 is probably realistic.

As for the start date, only one of the six Bristol makers was active before 1735, and that is Richard Going I and II (PS3940, PS32) whose exceptionally long joint working life does not help pin down dates. The Blandford Forum and Liskeard makers were both active from c1714, but they went on to c1748 and c1761 respectively and so we cannot be sure they were making coronet ears before the Bristol makers. The picture in Wigan, though, is different. For the three confirmed Wigan makers we only have estimated dates, but these are c1700-c1730, c1690-c1700

and c1710, significantly earlier than the Bristol dates. Moreover, the Wigan porringers with coronet ears have a flat base whereas none of the others do (ignoring the odd blood porringer P223), and flat bases had died out by c1725. That suggests the coronet ear may have originated in Wigan, not Bristol. Accordingly, we suggest a start date of c1710 in Wigan but c1740 in Bristol. The brackets on the 22 examples for which we have information are all triangular, and (again ignoring P223) the bowls are all bellied, and those features are consistent with this date range.

### Flower ear

The flower ear (Fig. 33) is primarily an American design. The term seems to have been used by the pewterers themselves as the 1793 inventory of the Rhode Island pewterer David Melville refers to moulds for “*plain and flowered*” porringers (Raymond 1959 p1). American collectors define the term “flower ear” quite strictly, requiring six (or, rarely, five) pairs of apertures to the left and right. All five English examples fit the American definition. No two match, but then only two (by different makers) are on the same size bowl.

In England, this ear is a Bristol speciality. Four of the five recorded examples were made in Bristol, and the fifth is by an unidentified maker. The flower ear probably originated in Rhode Island in c1770, and it is likely that the Bristol examples were only being made for export. The identified makers were active from 1778 to c1822, right at the end of English porringer manufacture, so whilst the evidence is limited, a probable date range of 1780 to 1815 seems realistic. As one would expect for that period, they always have a bellied bowl and bossed base. As mentioned earlier, all have a linguiform bracket.

The Hale & Sons marks on P86 and P135 in Fig. 33 are clearly from a punch specially made for these flower ears. This may be some indication of the size of the expected American market that it was felt worth investing in a spe-

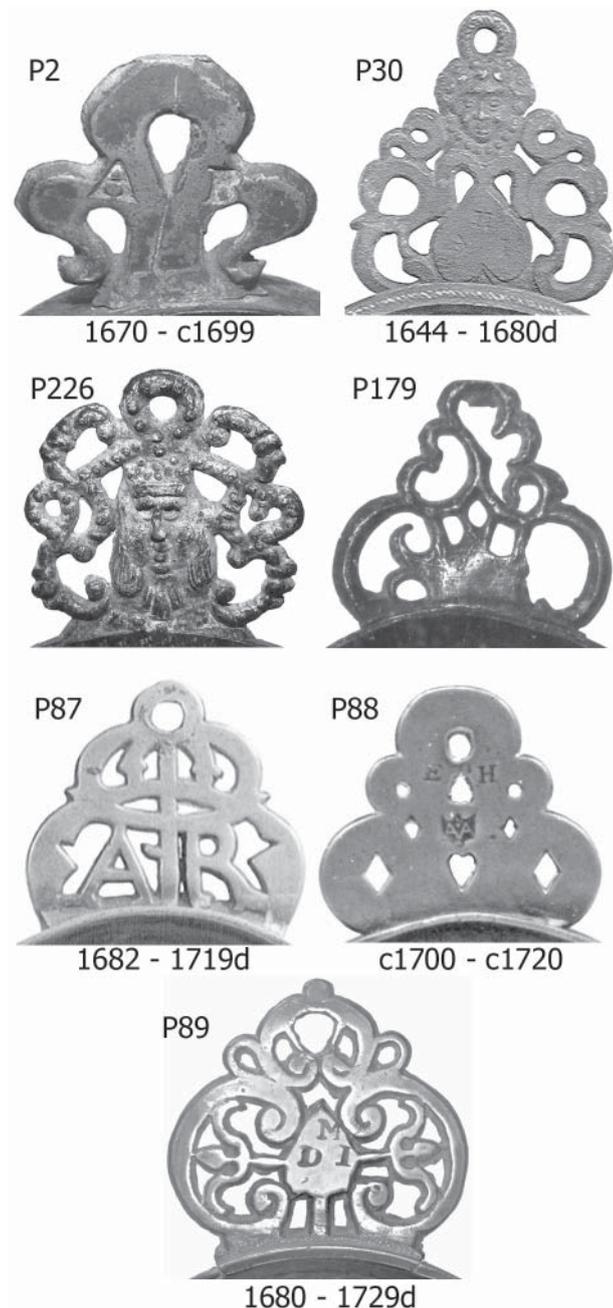


**Fig. 33: Some examples of flower ears. Images: Wayne Hilt.**

cial punch. Edgar Curtis & Co, by contrast, just used an existing pot mark punch on P133 which resulted in a mark which didn't fit very well on their flower ear.

### Unclassified ears

We have found eight ears that do not fit any of the above categories. Seven of them are illustrated in Fig. 34 with the date ranges of their makers, where known. The eighth, P218, is very similar to P30. Note that we cannot be certain P179 and P226 belong to our post-1650 period as we have no dating evidence for them.



**Fig. 34: The unclassified ears. Images: P2, P226 Jan Gadd; P30, P87-89, P179 Pewter Society Library.**

These ears have little in common with the styles discussed already. True, P88 could be described as a geometric, but it is quite different to the four more-common geometric styles. Six of these ears were known to Michaelis and he allocated each of them a type number, but the other two were not known to him. As stated earlier, we see little advantage in inventing classes for styles of which only one or two examples exist, which is why we have labelled them all “unclassified”.

Four of the eight are by London makers and four by unidentified makers. One might have expected idiosyncratic styles to come from remote provincial towns, but these figures show London makers were just as willing to come up with their own designs. Known makers' dates do not go beyond 1729, so perhaps the inclination to produce “own designs” faded once the home market for porringers started to decline. Also, three of the ears (P2, P179 and P226) are on miniature porringers, so perhaps there was more inclination to create different ear styles for miniatures.

### One or two ears?

Earlier English porringers often had two ears, but during the post-1650 period covered by the present study nearly all ordinary English porringers only had a single ear. The main exception was commemorative porringers (Hayward & Moulson 2013) which were presumably designed to be primarily decorative rather than purely functional.

Randle Holme's comment (Holme 1688) that whilst some porringers had two ears, most only had one confirms that a single ear had become the norm by 1688. In our survey, only three porringers had two ears. One is P15 in the WCOP collection from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but the detailed engraving on the ears suggest that, like commemorative porringers it was primarily a decorative piece. The other two are P225 and the rather odd deep-bowled example P165 (Fig. 25 in Part 1). Both have open 3-lobed ears, so they are certainly pre-1700 and may slightly predate our period altogether.

### POSITION OF MARKS

The final feature to consider is where pewterers marked their porringers. Pewterer's touches are found under the bowl, in the bowl, on the back of the ear and on the front of the ear. Hallmarks are sometimes found in the bowl. We have recorded the mark position on 164 porringers (166 marks as two have both marks and hallmarks).

43% (15 out of 35) of touches under the bowl are on porringers with early ear styles that had died out by 1690 (open 3-lobed, open 5-lobed and twin horseshoe). Two porringers with touches under the bowl have coronet ears

(one by a maker who did not start until 1714), but the other 33 all have ear styles that were in use before 1700. This suggests marking under the bowl died out during the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps by c1725. No Bristol porringer has been recorded with the touch under the bowl, but that is probably because most Bristol porringers are post 1725. Otherwise a touch in this position does not seem to be characteristic of any particular region or regions.

Touces in the bowl occur with a wide range of post-1680 ears styles but not with any of the earlier styles. Moreover, all but two of the porringers have bellied bowls (ie post 1680), which suggests the practice of putting a touch in the bowl only became common after 1680. The earliest firm date for a touch in the bowl is on a Port Royal porringer of 1692. Touches in this position are geographically wide-spread.

Touces on the back of the ear have been recorded with all geometric ear styles plus Old English, peacock's tail and coronet ears. They have not been recorded on any of the earlier ear styles or on the later flower ear. This points to a probable date range of c1680 to c1800. Touches on the back of the ear do not seem to be characteristic of any particular region or regions.

Touces on the front of the ear occur on a wide range of porringers and do not seem to be confined to any particular date range. Whilst the London Punta Cana porringers have a touch on the front of the ear, no post-1650 London porringer has been recorded with a touch in this position. Accordingly, any unidentified touch on the front of an ear is probably provincial.

Two of the eight porringers with hallmarks in the bowl were by unidentified makers, but the other six were all from London. However, one of the unidentified ones has a flower ear which (in England) was only made in Bristol 1780–1815, so one cannot safely deduce that the presence of hallmarks implies a London maker. The other seven porringers all have geometric cartouche or fretwork ears and bellied bowls, suggesting a potential date range for this feature of c1690 to c1815.

Surprisingly, seven makers were not consistent about where they placed their marks:

- Samuel Lawrence, London (PS5748): under the bowl on peacock's tail ears but on the back of a geometric cross & crescent ear
- John Pettiver, London (PS7267): touch on the back of an Old English ear, but hallmarks in the bowl for geometric cartouche ears
- Lawrence Child I (PS1650) and John Langford I (PS5662), London: touches always on the back of the

ear, but on geometric fretwork bowls each additionally put his hallmarks in the bowl

- Richard Going I or II, Bristol (PS3940, PS32): on the back of coronet and Old English ears, but in the bowl for a geometric cross & crescent ear
- Robert Bush I, Bristol (PS1229): on the front of seven coronet ears, but on the back of two others.
- Christopher Banckes, Bewdley (PS406): in the bowl of one geometric cross & crescent ear but on the back of the ear of another.

## CONCLUSION

By bringing together such a large sample of porringers, this study has managed to throw far more light on the manufacture, use and features of post-1650 English porringers than has been possible previously. It has also provided dating guidelines that are more extensive and should be more robust than previous attempts and, with the help of members, created a better terminology for describing porringers.

In the course of this study we have accumulated over 600 photographs of porringers and parts of porringers. Some are scans from the Pewter Society Library or publications, but most - around 80% - are previously-unpublished photographs taken for this study. They have been deposited electronically with the Pewter Society Library so they are available to future researchers.

## Acknowledgements

This study would not have been possible without the help and enthusiastic support we have received from so many members. There are too many to name, but it includes those who brought their porringers along to the October 2014 meeting or supplied details and photographs of their porringers separately, and those who helped us at that meeting and the two subsequent ones to develop better terminology. It has been a true corporate effort and demonstrates what the Society can achieve by pooling its information.

In addition we are grateful to Hilary Bagshaw and Trish Hayward for their hard work in photographing all the porringers at the October 2014 meeting, to David Houlston of Bonhams for giving us ready access to all Ian Robinson's porringers, and Angus Patterson of the V&A and Helen McConnell Simpson of Blaise Castle House Museum, Bristol for giving us access to their porringers and allowing us to photograph them. Courtney Harris of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Massachusetts was helpful in providing photographs of the ears of their two porringers

(both the gift of Mrs Winthrop Sargent). Albert Bartram helped us work out how bellied bowls were made, and Trish Hayward researched the references to porringers in early cookery books and some other sources.

All unattributed photographs were taken by the authors or Trish Hayward.

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*For the main list of references, see Part 1.*

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## SUMMARY OF MAIN FEATURES

### Porringer bowls

Side of bowl	Date range	No.	%	
Straight, without flange	pre-1650 - 1715	54	27%	29%
Straight, with flange		4	2%	
Bellied	1680 - 1815	138		69%
Curved	pre-1650	1		2%
Ogee	late C17?	2		
Base of bowl				
Flat, without foot rim	pre-1650 - 1725	46	23%	34%
Flat, with foot rim		22	11%	
Bossed	pre-1650 - 1815	123		62%
Domed, without foot rim	pre-1725	7		4%
Domed, with foot rim		1		

### Brackets under ear

Category	Date range	Provenance	No.	%
Wedge	? - 1690	London & elsewhere	23	17%
Triangle	1685 - 1790	country wide	74	53%
Triangle & wedge	1690 - 1815	London & elsewhere	16	11%
Linguiform	1685 - 1710 1780 - 1815	London; geo. cartouche ears only Bristol; flower ears only	8	6%
T-shaped		London; geo. cartouche ears only	3	2%
Unclassified			5	4%
No bracket	? - 1930	London & bleeding bowls	10	7%

### Porringer ears

Category	Date range	Provenance	No.	%
Open 3-lobed	1635 - 1700	London - and elsewhere?	13	6%
Open 5-lobed	1645 - 1700	London - and elsewhere?	7	3%
Twin horseshoe	1665 - 1690	London, Winchester	4	2%
Dolphin	1670 - 1750	London (mainly)	13	6%
Old English	1680 - 1740	widespread	59	28%
Peacock's tail	1685 - 1720	uncertain	19	9%
<i>Geometrics (all)</i>			52	24%
. crescent	1700 - 1755	London	15	7%
. cross & crescent	1690 - 1815	widespread	20	9%
. cartouche	1685 - 1760	London, Bristol	9	4%
. fretwork	1695 - 1735	London	8	4%
Coronet	1710 - 1790	Provincial, esp. Bristol from 1740	33	15%
Flower	1780 - 1815	Bristol	5	2%
Unclassified			8	4%

## Position of marks

Position	Date range	Provenance	No.	%
Under bowl	1650 - 1725	widespread except Bristol	35	21%
In bowl	1680 - 1800	widespread	26	16%
Back of ear	1680 - 1800	widespread	64	38%
Front of ear	1650 - 1815	widespread except London	33	20%
Hms in bowl	1690 - 1800	London, Bristol	8	5%

## ANNEX

Additions, deletions and corrections to the list of porringers in Table 1 of Part 1.

No.	Ear	Comments
P14	Geometric cres.	Ear chamfers are on the back
P25	Geometric cart.	The upper half of the ear is a replacement, but Minchin had an identical, unrepaired example [Michaelis notes in Pewter Society Library]
P31	Dolphin	Source: Michaelis 1950 p121
P52	Coronet	Boston Museum of Fine Arts' accession number is 16.351
P75	Geometric cart.	The bracket is probably linguiform, not T-shaped
P91	'Unclassified'	Ear is peacock, not unclassified, and mark is on front of ear
P101A/B	Peacock's tail	Thickened rims, but no true rim flange
P102A/B	Geometric cart.	The brackets are linguiform, not T-shaped
P112, P121	Coronet	Deleted - these unmarked porringers are now known to be American.
P141	Unclassified	Deleted - the ear is an incorrect repair and the corrected porringer is listed as P25
P156	Coronet	Deleted - the same porringer as P127
P180	Old English	Re-number P180A. Cast-decorated boss of a rose and cast-decorated ear with initials CR. Maker PS15888. In Sources, 'Pt III' should read 'Pt IV'.
P180B	Old English	An addition. A second example of porringer P180A. Straight-sided bowl with cast-decorated boss of a rose but flat underside; cast-decorated ear with initials CR; triangle & wedge bracket. V&A 1379-1904. Maker PS15888.
P185	missing	Recent research has shown the maker is PS5117, John Jackson I, 1677-1731d.
P189/P226	Unclassified	The Museum of London porringer A2544 should be P226, not P189.
P192	Coronet	Boston Museum of Fine Arts' accession number is 16.352
P199	Unclassified	Deleted - this photograph is P25 when it had its incorrect repair
P221	Geometric C&C	Bracket is a triangle with wings
P222A/B	Geometric fret.	Maker is PS18919 (unidentified), not Robert Iles who is no longer a known porringer maker. Ear brackets are triangles, and the ear is soldered, not cast, on.
P223	Coronet	Bowl side is curved, not straight.
P225	Open 3-lobed	An addition. Unmarked. Two ears. Straight-sided bowl, bossed base, wedge bracket. Diameter 100mm, capacity 186ml, weight 174g. Werowinski collection.
P227	Geometric fret.	An addition. Unmarked. Bellied bowl, bossed base, curved-tab bracket, ear chamfers on back. Diameter 137mm. Walters collection.
P228	Old English	An addition. By PS90, Ann Carter, Southampton, 1734-1754d, touch M288 on back of ear, bellied bowl, bossed base, triangle bracket. Diameter 107mm, capacity 310ml, weight 168g. Bonhams Feb 2016 lot 228.