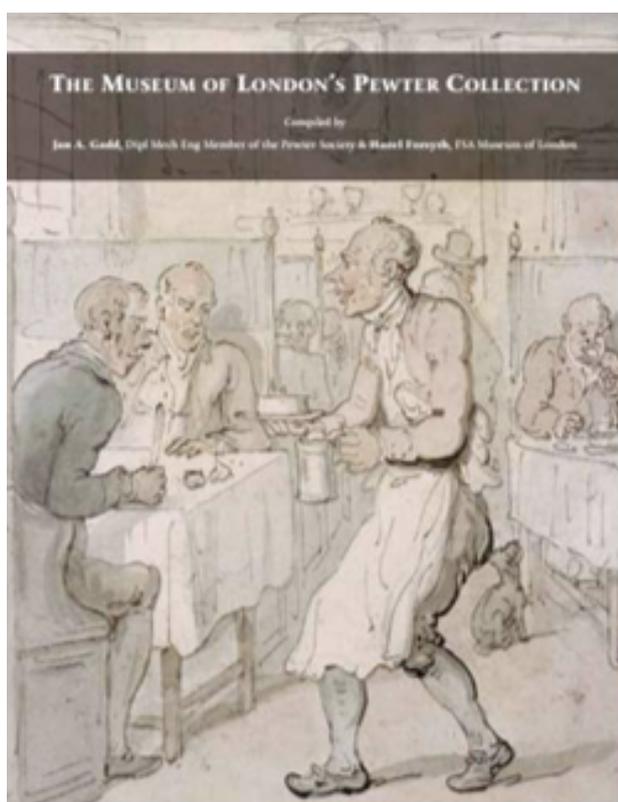


The catalogue of The Museum of London's pewter collection



“It is with great pleasure and delight that I am able to announce the publication of the catalogue of The Museum of London's pewter collection”. It was in this manner that Jamie Ferguson, President of the Pewter Society, announced the forthcoming publication of this catalogue.

Covering 237 pages, the catalogue both illustrates and describes all of the near 400 items currently on display at the museum - as well as those held in reserve (excluding the vast collection of spoons!). Many members of the Pewter Society have had the opportunity to handle a number of these pieces during recent summer meetings.

The catalogue is available through the Pewter Society at the price of £20, plus p&p. For more information, please contact the Secretary, Robert Lindsay, at ril48@hotmail.com.

The Museum of London's pewter collection is extensive and, of course, many of the items in the Museum's collection are not on display.

Alan Williams

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The Introduction to the Catalogue, set out below, has been supplied by the joint author of the catalogue, Hazel Forsyth, who is the Senior Curator of Medieval and Post-Medieval Collections at the Museum of London,. She emphasised that the Catalogue does **NOT** include any spoons (it was felt that the Museum had too many and that the book was large enough as it was!)

The Pewter Society was founded in 1918 and its objectives are, inter alia, to encourage research into the history, manufacture and social context of pewter, and to disseminate information through publications and other appropriate activities; hence their participation in this project.

*This Catalogue is not the first piece of cooperation between the Museum of London and the Pewter Society. In 1983 the Society published, in collaboration with the Museum, *Pewter – A Handbook of Tudor and Stuart Pieces*, and in 1989 the Society played a part in the staging of, and the preparation of a catalogue for, the temporary exhibition entitled ‘Pewter, a Celebration of the Craft’.*

The Museum’s pewter collection has long been thought of considerable importance, not just because it was comprehensive or it contained many superb pieces but also because so many of the items had age and provenance. As can be seen from this Catalogue, many pieces have been found, essentially by members of the public, in London, either recovered from the ground or water courses; a considerable part of the rest have been donated by their (London) owners.

This gives the collection an integrity for comparative and research purposes that other collections do not always have. The collection contains many early pieces dating from the late medieval and early modern periods, far more than most other museum or private collections. Some were made in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and in certain cases perhaps even earlier. Whereas the history of pewtering in London from the midseventeenth century has been extensively written up, much less is known about the pre-1660 period and in particular the period before 1551 when the earliest surviving Court Book of the Worshipful Company of Pewterers commences.

Dating such early pewter items can be notoriously difficult unless they were recovered from a dated archaeological context which unfortunately is not the case for items described in this catalogue.

The research that underlies the Catalogue began in 2004. Following a request to the Society, a four-man team—Jan Gadd, David Hall, John Richardson and Malcolm Toothill—visited the Museum in February 2004. They spent two days in the Museum store photographing and recording some 213 pieces. At the time this was understood to be the extent of the material with which cataloguing help was needed, except for some thirty pieces that were on display.

Jan Gadd and David Hall returned a few months later to record and photograph the 30 displayed items. However, a series of follow-up visits over the next few years produced further groups of items, and by the end of their last joint visit in April 2008, the total had reached almost 400 items. Jan Gadd, who had taken all the photographs, then compiled the catalogue, working primarily with Hazel Forsyth as joint author and with input from other members of the Pewter Society.

There was then a hiatus of several years as Jan Gadd became seriously ill; he died in July 2015. However, with the assistance of his son, Ian, and the financial support of his estate, the publication process was resumed. A further team from the Pewter Society, headed by Jamie Ferguson, completed the work of collating and correcting.

Views expressed in the body of the Catalogue are those of the authors.

Museum of London: <https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/museum-london>

The Pewter Society: <http://www.pewtersociety.org>

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