

ART. XVI. – *The Pewterers of Penrith.*

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**T**HERE are few published records of the craft of the pewterer in the old county of Cumberland. This article is the result of some twenty years' intermittent interest in the subject and occasional research in local records during that period. The study is far from complete and leaves many questions unanswered, but is here recorded as a starting point for further research by interested parties in the future.

The history of the Worshipful Company of Pewterers in London is well documented and it is well known that major centres of pewtering existed at York, Bristol and Wigan. The craft has been under the control of the London Company which regulated the standards of craftsmanship and the alloys used from as early as 1348 and had the power of search for 'false metal' throughout the Kingdom from 1474 when their Charter of Incorporation was granted.<sup>1</sup> The records of the Company's searches show that London searchers during the period 1635 to 1647 went no further north than Derbyshire. The most northerly search of which there is any record, reached Newcastle-upon-Tyne, returning via Wigan.<sup>2</sup> No searches of Cumberland appear to have taken place and little has therefore been known or recorded of the craft in these parts. In his monumental work on British pewterers, H. H. Cotterell records, in a total of over six thousand craftsmen, apparently only two Cumbrian pewterers, "Abraham Crowley of Penrith, c. 1720-1760" and "Thomas Forde of Whitehaven" the latter known only from letters of administration of his probate at Chester in 1708.<sup>3</sup>

In this present article I intend to look at the pewterers of Penrith, a town which appears to have been the main centre of the craft in the county during the second half of the 17th and the first half of the 18th centuries.

An Exhibition of Church Pewter of the Diocese of Carlisle was held in the Fraternity of Carlisle Cathedral in 1933; this was due to the interest of a local collector of note, Mrs Scott-Nicholson, and one of the leading experts on pewter at that time, the late Howard Herschell Cotterell. Much of the pewter on display in this Exhibition was restored by Messrs. A. H. Isher of Cheltenham at the expense of these and other members of the Pewter Collectors' Society. A list of the exhibits, published at the time, included flagons from Barton, Westward and Kirkby Thore by "A.C., centre unknown".<sup>4</sup> This suggested a possible connection with Abraham Crowley and led to the present research.

Penrith is interesting as a pewtering centre for a number of reasons but particularly for the continued use over a long period of the same moulds by a number of pewterers. In London and elsewhere gun-metal moulds were often shared by groups of pewterers, because the degree of accuracy required to avoid unnecessary expenditure of time in finishing each piece cast from them, made them expensive to produce. The York Pewterers' guild for example, in 1674, required each new freeman to pay £7 10s. "towards the maintaining of the moulds".<sup>5</sup> In spite of this, moulds in general would have a fairly short life as styles changed. Although there is some overlap in styles in the development of tankards, for example, the changes in design are sufficiently marked in London and other main centres as to be used as the method of accurately dating any particular piece.

It is therefore remarkable that the use of the same mould by three pewterers in Penrith can be demonstrated over a period of about fifty-five years.

Another interesting aspect of the subject is that although, in accordance with the regulations of the London Company, these Penrith craftsmen struck their wares with their touch marks, they were not *only* pewterers, but more accurately, hammermen, a term which includes braziers, plumbers, whitesmiths, blacksmiths and the like. These latter crafts had no such regulation and I know of no example of brassware bearing the mark of any Penrith hammerman; nevertheless several known craftsmen in Penrith whose marks appear on pewter were also braziers, and since they were so described in their wills must have thought of themselves as primarily of that trade.

There was an association of smiths in Penrith in the late 16th century along with many other trade associations as is evidenced by debts mentioned in wills, to the Glovers' Stock (Funds), Shoemakers', Tailors', Tanners', Merchants', Weavers', and Smiths' Stocks, two to the latter being found in the probates of John Nelson and John Sutton.<sup>6</sup> Incidentally, there were also debts, presumably levies, for the Archer Stock, the Church Stock and the Plough Stock throwing some light on local provision for defence and the provision of shared agricultural machinery, a subject worthy of someone's further research.

As probate inventories are investigated, other pewterers described under different appellations, e.g. gentleman, yeoman, etc., may come to light. In the meantime, the biographical details of those pewterers I have recorded are set out below:

#### JOHN RUMNEY ( -1671)

The printed Registers of St. Andrew's, Penrith record his marriage, 19th Apr. 1662 – John Rumney and Eliz. Clarke, together with his children's baptisms: Mathew – 6th Apr. 1665, Isabell – 22nd Nov. 1671. It is probable, from his choice of the name Isabell for his daughter that John Rumney's parents were those whose marriage is recorded: 7th Sep. 1620 – John Rumney and Isabell Sittitre.<sup>7</sup> He died intestate, the inventory of his goods being taken on the 10th April 1671, and in which he is described as 'puterer'. Two of the appraisers were Lanclott Smithe and William Cookeson both of whom were pewterers and will be discussed later.<sup>8</sup>

Tuition of two further children, Catherine (later to marry John Grave, Pewterer) and Mary, both then under age, together with administration of the estate, was granted to his widow Elizabeth, the following day, at Penrith. His inventory shows him to have been a man of substance, his net worth after debts and funeral expenses amounting to £61 18s. 8d. It is interesting also in relation to the contents of his shop (workshop?):

Itm in the shopp ould plate brass	00-15-00
Itm 600 wgt in sadd ware (viz!) puter 5 <sup>l</sup> :5 <sup>s</sup> :y Cent	31-10-00
2 doz: and 6 pound wgt: of ould puter	01-05-00
Itm 232 pound wgt: of Hollow ware	13-00-00
Itm in Lay 4 doz: wgt: att	02-00-00
Itm mouldes working Towles & wheele	12-10-00

Sadware is the term used to describe plates, dishes, etc., which were made of a higher quality metal, usually pure tin tempered with as much copper "as of its own nature, it will take", than the lay metal used for holloware (tankards, candlesticks, etc.) which

might consist of tin and lead alloyed 'in reasonable proportions' but not generally of less than 4:1.<sup>9</sup> Rumney's stock shows him to have been a pewterer of considerable importance, amounting to some three hundred plates and dishes of different sizes and perhaps sixty to one hundred tankards or flagons or other holloware. It is remarkable therefore that no marked example of his work has so far come to light.

The presence of "ould plate brass" indicates that he may also have been a brazier. He kept two cows and four pigs, presumably for milk, butter, bacon, etc., and used his "malt in the garnal" to brew his own ale in his "mash vat".

#### LANCELOT SMITH (c. 1637-1707)

Lancelot Smith, one of the appraisers of John Rumney's inventory, is another pewterer of considerable substance who is known only from the written record, no example of his work having so far been recorded.

He was the son of Lancelot Smith, Churchwarden of St. Andrew's, Penrith in 1638, who died in 1644 and Frances, his wife, who died in 1662. His baptism is recorded in St. Andrew's Registers: 8th Jun. 1637 – Lancelote s. of Lancelote Smith and his marriage: 28th Aug. 1662 – Lancelot Smith and Ann Jefferson. His children's baptisms are recorded: Frances – 1st Oct. 1663, Lancillot – 12th Nov. 1668, Anne – 2nd Jun. 1676 (buried 22nd Jan. 1679), George – 3rd May 1678 (buried 16th Dec. 1678), Mary – 7th May 1685. Lancelot Smith was churchwarden of St. Andrew's in 1674 and died in 1707. His burial is recorded: 10th Oct. 1707 – Lancelot Smith, a Pewterer by Trade.<sup>10</sup> His will, dated four days previously, describes him as "Yeoman" and "aged and Infirm of Body"; he leaves bequests of £200 each to his two grand-daughters and £100 each to his two grandsons, the remainder to his widow.<sup>11</sup>

An indication of the extent of his business is given by the fact that he was able to supply Lady Anne Clifford in 1668 with a large quantity of domestic pewter partly for her own use and partly intended as a gift for her steward Mr Gilmore. In her account book there appears the following entry:

Disbursements for 6 Jun 1668

Payed the 6th day to Lanclott Smith for severall sorts of Pewther dishes, chamber potts, fflaggons plaites salts & other things for my owne house Use Seaven pounds – Sixteene shillings & six pence as will appear in perticulers by the Booke. 7-16-6

Payed then to him which I intend to give to Mr Gilmoore viz: pewther dishes, salts, Candestickes, porrengers Chamber potts One flagon, Tankard & hand bason as will appear in perticulers by the Book Three Pounds Eighteen shillinges. 3.18.0<sup>12</sup>

If we relate these amounts to the sums mentioned some three years later in John Rumney's inventory, above, we can see that Lady Anne Clifford's purchases would amount in total to about two hundred pounds weight and the fact that, in view of her connections, she chose to patronise a local pewterer says much for his reputation at the time.

#### JOHN GRAVE ( -1717)

John Grave's baptism is not recorded at St. Andrews and it is possible that he came to Penrith as an apprentice. Although there seems to have been little travel across the Pennines, to York for instance, for the purpose of apprenticeship, there is evidence that

youths from Cumberland were apprenticed at places as far away as Bristol on the western route, and the reverse may also have happened. In those days it was not uncommon for an apprentice subsequently to marry his master's daughter and although I have found no evidence to suggest it, it is possible that John Grave was apprenticed to John Rumney; in any event he married his daughter. The event is recorded in the St. Andrew's marriage Register: 5th Oct. 1676 – John Grave and Catherine Rumney. They had several children whose baptisms are recorded as follows: Mary – 28 Nov. 1677, Lancelot – 18 Sept. 1679, John – 16 Mar. 1681/2, Susan – 30 Jan. 1683/4, Catherine – 18 Mar. 1685/6, Sarah – 29 Mar. 1688, Thomas – 28 Aug. 1690 and Dorothy – 20 Jun. 1692.

John Grave was churchwarden of St. Andrew's in 1697. He died in 1717.<sup>13</sup> His will, dated 23rd Mar. 1714, describes him as pewterer of Penrith and was proved in Oct. 1717. By it, his sons Lancelot and John and his daughter Mary having been "already provided for" each received five shillings. Susan and Sarah are not mentioned and presumably pre-deceased him. His remaining property was to be divided equally between Thomas, Katherine and Dorothy, the daughters to have "the best of the linen". The three were each to receive a third of the proceeds of the sale of his house and premises unless "the said Thomas have a mind to live in the said house and premisses and enjoy the same being Convenient for his Trade" in which case he was to pay his two sisters £25 each for their shares. It is clear therefore that son Thomas was also in the trade of pewterer or some allied trade. John Graves' probate inventory is notable in showing no tools or stock-in-trade; it appears therefore that he had already retired from the craft and had handed on his tools, presumably to his son, Thomas.<sup>14</sup>

#### THOMAS GRAVE (c. 1690-1763)

Thomas Grave's baptism was recorded at St. Andrew's, Penrith on 28 Aug. 1690. His marriage to Hannah Betham I have been unable to trace but the marriage bond is present among the bonds for Jun. 1716:<sup>15</sup>

Thomas Grave, Penrith, Yeoman bound to marry Hanah Betham, Penrith, Spr.  
Bondsman – John Linskill, Emontbridge, yeo

Their children's baptisms are recorded at St. Andrew's, Penrith: Hannah – 26 Sep. 1717, John – 5 Feb. 1718, Thomas – 7 Apr. 1720, Matthew – 22 Feb. 1721, Lancelot – 25 Jun. 1730. He was Churchwarden at St. Andrew's in 1727 and his burial is recorded there, 2 Jun. 1763 – Mr Thomas Grave.<sup>16</sup>

The only example of his work that I have been able to find is an alms dish at Lanercost Priory, which was first recorded by Massé as by 'Thomas Grame, at Lanercourt, Carlisle'.<sup>17</sup> In the 1933 Exhibition it was listed as by Thomas Grove and the mark recorded by Cotterell, (no. 1953) as Thomas Grame.<sup>18</sup> My inspection of the dish showed the mark, struck twice clearly, as that of Thomas Grave and the mark has now been corrected by Peal.<sup>19</sup>

#### THE COOKSON FAMILY

There were several members of the Cookson family of Penrith involved in the metal-working trades. The history of the family has been recorded by W. Percy Hedley and C. Roy Hudleston, tracing their origins in Kendal and describing their many varied

business activities in Penrith and Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and their genealogy, in great detail.<sup>20</sup>

The fact that at least one of the many William Cooksons was a pewterer with his own touchmark, has however, so far been overlooked.

The first member of the family recorded was William Cookson of Highgate, Kendal, who was buried in 1594. His son William Cookson II also of Highgate, Kendal, and his wife Janet moved to Penrith before 1597, where their deaths were recorded in St. Andrew's Registers: 26 Jul. 1597 – Janet, wyffe of William Cookson, buried 27 Feb. 1599/1600 – Willm Cookeson, tincler, buried<sup>21</sup>

The name tinkler or tinker, today suggests a low-grade worker, often itinerant, in brass and other metals requiring the use of tin-based solders. This was clearly not the case in the late 16th century. From his will, there is no doubt that William Cookson was resident in Penrith, in "the house that I have by Whiet rent of Mr Willm Hutton", and was a man of considerable property. His inventory shows that he was involved in a wide range of metal-working activities, and includes:

Item for beating Mettell	xxxvjs
Item for plaitt	xxvs
Item in brase	xvjs
Item seamed pannes	xjs8d
Item rased pannes	xjs
Item old iron	xvjs
Item brase & puder	viijs
Item 9 dosen & five pound semed waire	iiij li xvs
Item 2 dosen 8 pound banded semed pannes	l4s
Item 2 banded pannes	vs
Item 2 dosen 4 pound new brase pottes	iiij li vjs 8d

Obviously he worked in both brass and pewter and perhaps as a blacksmith; he probably also decorated his wares –

Item 25 stampe & ponss (punches)	ijs
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and supplied ironmongery,

Item 14 pound round nailes	viiij d
Item 5 grose pines 2 dosen buttons & Ringes	ijs

In addition, he may have served as the local armourer at a time when most probate inventories include a steel cap and weapons, presumably for defence against the incursion of border reivers:

Item 3 daggers, 3 skulles (steel caps)	iijs
Item 4 swordes, 2 daggers, a byll	vs
Item a dag, a byll, a pair of skailes & trifelles	xij d

From the context it is not clear whether

Item puder 94 pound	xlvijs
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is part of the contents of his workshop or of his living quarters but that he dealt in pewter is clear –

It 56 pounds flanders Waire

lvjs<sup>22</sup>

It is possible that "flanders Waire" refers to the brass or latten chargers which were imported from Flanders in the 16th century and which survive in considerable numbers today, but an entry in the inventory of Robert Bartram who died in Penrith in 1577 would suggest that it may well have been pewter:

Item two flanders puder pottes

ijs<sup>23</sup>

The fact that little Flanders pewter (or English for that matter) has survived from this period in England may be readily accounted for by the universal practice of re-casting old pewter to make new.

There were at least four metalworkers in Penrith by the name of William Cookson who were each described in their wills as brazier; these were – William Cookson III, bap. 1599, bur. 1666, son of John Cookson and nephew of William Cookson II; William Cookson IV – son of William Cookson III, bur. 1712; William Cookson V – son of William Cookson IV, bur. 1744; and William Cookson – son of Henry Cookson and nephew of William Cookson IV, bur. 1706/7. As they were all described in their wills as brazier, they must all have thought of themselves primarily as such; at least one of the latter three was also a pewterer, working during the closing years of the 17th century, as is evidenced by the existence of a number of pieces of pewter church plate in the Penrith locality bearing his touchmark. There is no clear evidence which of these three was the pewterer; the work is very accomplished, of London standard, both sophisticated in design and well executed, lacking the rather homespun quality evident in the designs of the later Penrith work.

William Cookson IV was a man of considerable substance. From his will it appears that his son, William Cookson V, had already received his settlement, in 1691, probably on completion of his apprenticeship, as his brothers did.<sup>24</sup> By his death, in 1744, William Cookson V had become something of an industrialist, owning part shares in "Iron Foundries at Newcastle-upon-Tyne" (making cast-iron pots and other utensils), a "water-mill at Clifton Fields" and a "Colliery at Clifton".<sup>25</sup> Incidentally, the long tradition of craftsmanship in metal was carried on by his son Isaac Cookson, who in 1720 was apprenticed to Francis Batty, goldsmith in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and who became one of that city's leading gold and silversmiths. It is worth noting that on his son's apprenticeship William Cookson V was described as gentleman, an appellation not lightly used in those days.<sup>26</sup> It seems likely that the William Cookson pewterer's mark was that of William IV or V, but William Cookson, the nephew of the former cannot be excluded. In the diocesan Gazette, September 1933, various church plate is attributed to "William Cookson, Wigan, 1690"; although the dating is correct no such maker is recorded at Wigan.<sup>27</sup>

William Cookson's mark is recorded by Peal as of Kendal, circa 1651 with the note that "the mark appears much later than his date" which in fact, it is.<sup>28</sup> That the pewterer using this mark was working in Penrith about 1690 will be seen later when we consider the work and the use of moulds.

William Cookson IV and his wife Alice were denounced as nonconformists in 1669. By 1673 he was "back in the fold" and churchwarden of St. Andrew's, denounced and excommunicated again in 1682, absolved in January 1682/3, and churchwarden again in 1684.<sup>29</sup>

His periods of conformity seem to have resulted in some business for him as can be seen from St. Andrew's Churchwardens' Accounts:

1666 – William Cookson for Iron	00-18-03
1675 – Paid William Cookson for Exchange of the Handbell	00-04-00
1687 – To Wm Cookson for a Tunn of New Leads	09-15-00
and – Received for the old Lead which was sold to Wm. Cookson	05-07-00

From this it can be seen that William Cookson IV was not only a brazier, but a worker in iron, and a plumber, replacing roof leads. He may have learnt this trade from his mother's family as the Lickbarrows were substantial plumbers in Kendal. His bell, however, was not destined to last long as a later entry shows:

1681 – "Paid to a Wiggon man for a hand Bell	00-15-6 <sup>30</sup>
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In the Lowther Household and Estate Accounts there appears:

29 Jan 1686/7 – Will. Cookson's bill for Straw & a Candlestisk ( <i>sic</i> )	01-09-00 <sup>31</sup>
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#### EDWARD CALVERT

Edward Calvert is a hitherto unrecorded Penrith pewterer; no example of his work has so far been traced. He is known only from his will, dated 1 Nov. 1695 and proved 17 March 1695/6, in which he is described as Pewterer, of Penrith.<sup>32</sup> His wife was Mary (née Webster), and they had one son, John, who died in infancy. The relevant entries in the St. Andrew's Registers are: Baptism – 19 Aug. 1695, John, son of Edward Calvert and Mary h.w. (born 3rd); Burial – 25 Jan. 1696, John Calvert, an infant. Edward Calvert himself was buried on 25 Nov. 1695 and his widow remarried in 1701.<sup>33</sup>

#### ABRAHAM CROWLEY (CRAWLEY) (c. 1698-1760)

Abraham Crowley is perhaps the best known and probably, to judge from the quantity of his work which has survived, one of the most prolific in output. In his will, in 1760, he is referred to as Brazier; in the bond as Pewterer and in a lease of property to his children, also in 1760, as "Plummer".<sup>34</sup> It is clear therefore that like many of his predecessors, Crowley was a general hammerman and prepared to turn his hand to whichever aspect of metalwork was required.

His origins are somewhat obscure. His baptism and that of his brother Jacob are not recorded at St. Andrew's, Penrith. At this time the Register entries for Crowleys (and Crawleys – his name is often spelt with an 'a') are all for Quakers and it is significant that several other metalworkers at this time were either Quakers or non-conformist, some of whom were later reconciled to the Church. The page of the Register recording Quaker births commences in 1698 and it is probable that Abraham, and certain that Jacob were born prior to this (the latter in 1694). It seems very likely that Abraham's and Jacob's parents were John and Mary Crowley. Their other issue are recorded as follows: John – 1 Sep. 1700, Mary – 10 Dec. 1701, Thomas – 17 Feb. 1703. Thomas's burial is recorded: 24 Jan. 1724 – Thomas Crowley, batchelor.<sup>35</sup> Also, in the Churchwar-

dens' Accounts, St. Andrew's is the following entry, establishing that John Crawley was a man of little wealth:

1711 – Gave Jn<sup>o</sup> Crawley in his sickness 1s. 6d.

His son might well be the beneficiary of a parish apprenticeship:

1713 – Pd with Crawly son an Apprentice to  
W. Clayton 2:10:0<sup>36</sup>

This Crawley's son, apprenticed to W. Clayton who was a whitesmith, could only have been Abraham; Thomas would only be ten years of age and Jacob, born 1694, was a currier by trade. A whitesmith was a worker with tin, making tinned-iron wares (called in Scotland a white-iron-smith), a trade closely allied to pewtering.

That Jacob Crawley and Abraham were brothers is established by a reference by Abraham's son Hugh to "my uncle Jacob Crawley" in an entry in the Court Leet Book of the Duke of Portland's Honor of Penrith dated 6th Sept. 1759.<sup>37</sup>

Further evidence pointing to the Quakers John and Mary Crawley being the parents of Abraham and Jacob (as well as of John, Mary and Thomas) is hinted at in an entry in the Quaker Minutes of the Stricklandgate Meeting, Penrith, where among many entries referring to John Crawley, Jn<sup>o</sup> Crawley, John Crowley, etc., is only one for a John Crowland, suggesting he is the same man:

2nd Nov. 1699 John Crowland "reporteth to this meeting that he wanteth an Apprentice to ye Currier traide"<sup>38</sup>

If this is John Crowley it would also be likely for his eldest son Jacob to follow him into the currier trade; Jacob was indeed a currier, as can be seen by his burial entry in the St. Andrew's register: 20 Jan. 1775 – Jacob Crawley, widower & currier aged 81.<sup>39</sup> The transposition of Crowland for Crowley is not hard to reconcile; in the same minutes we have John Abbot referred to as John Abbey and Thomas Abbot as Thomas Abat. Even in more recent times, in Chancellor Ferguson's 'Old Church Plate in the Diocese of Carlisle' the mark of the Dufton paten, which is clearly CROWLEY, is recorded as CROWLING.<sup>40</sup>

It seems a reasonable supposition therefore that Abraham and Jacob were the sons of John and Mary Crowley and that Abraham was born circa 1695 to 1698.

From the (printed) St. Andrew's Registers we find that Abraham Crawley married twice with three children of the first marriage and five of the second. The relevant entries are:

Marriage (1):

26 Dec. 1732 – Abraham Crawley & Susan Simpson

Baptisms: 28 Mar. 1734 – Hugh s. of Abraham Crawley

27 Jan. 1735 – John s. of Abraham Crawley

4 Nov. 1737 – Mary d. of Abraham Crawley

The choice of these two latter names would seem to confirm Abraham Crawley's parentage as they might then be named after his brother and sister, or his parents.

Burials:

3 Dec. 1737 – Susan wife of Abraham Crawley

7 Dec. 1737 – John son of Abram Crawley



25 Jan. 1737/8 – Mary d. of Abraham Crawley

1 Oct. 1759 – Hugh Crawley, Batchelor

Marriage (2):

31 Oct, 1738 – Abraham Crawley & Dorothy Harrison (of) Penrith.

Dorothy was the daughter of William Harrison, smith of Eamont Bridge.

Baptisms:

19 Jul. 1739 – William, s. of Abraham Crawley

6 Jan. 1740 – Dorothy, d. of Abraham Crawley

9 Jan. 1742 – Mary, d. of Abraham Crawley

22 Apr. 1744 – Abraham, s. of Abraham Crowley

29 Oct. 1746 – Isabella, d. of Abraham Crawley

Burial:

7 Mar. 1755 – Dorothy, wife of Abraham Crawley<sup>41</sup>

A considerable quantity of pewter by Abraham Crawley both secular and in churches, still exists in the Penrith area.

Crawley was the maker of a flagon at St. Michael's Church, Barton which was extant in 1966, but subsequently stolen and never recovered. In the terrier of 1749 there is mention of

“one pewter flagon”

“one paten”

In 1882 “the flagon remains 9” high bearing makers initial N.C. within two concentric circles”.<sup>42</sup> (The author inspected the flagon in 1965; the initials were in fact A.C. with mullet above and similar below). In the Churchwardens' Accounts of St. Michael's Barton, under disbursements we find:

1728 – A Homily book & Flaggon	0:10:00
1748 – A Patton Bought for the Church	0: 2: 3
1752 – Abraham Craulei for 16 stone & 11 lbs of lead at 2s 4d a stone	01:19:02

There is also an entry in 1729 for a “Book of Homales” at 7s. 6d. from which it would seem that the pewter flagon, presumably Crawley's, would cost about 2s. 6d., in 1728.<sup>43</sup>

The Churchwardens' Accounts for St. Andrew's, Penrith, show that in 1743, Abraham Crowley was one of four Churchwardens, along with William Porthouse, of the famous local clockmaking family. Other entries include

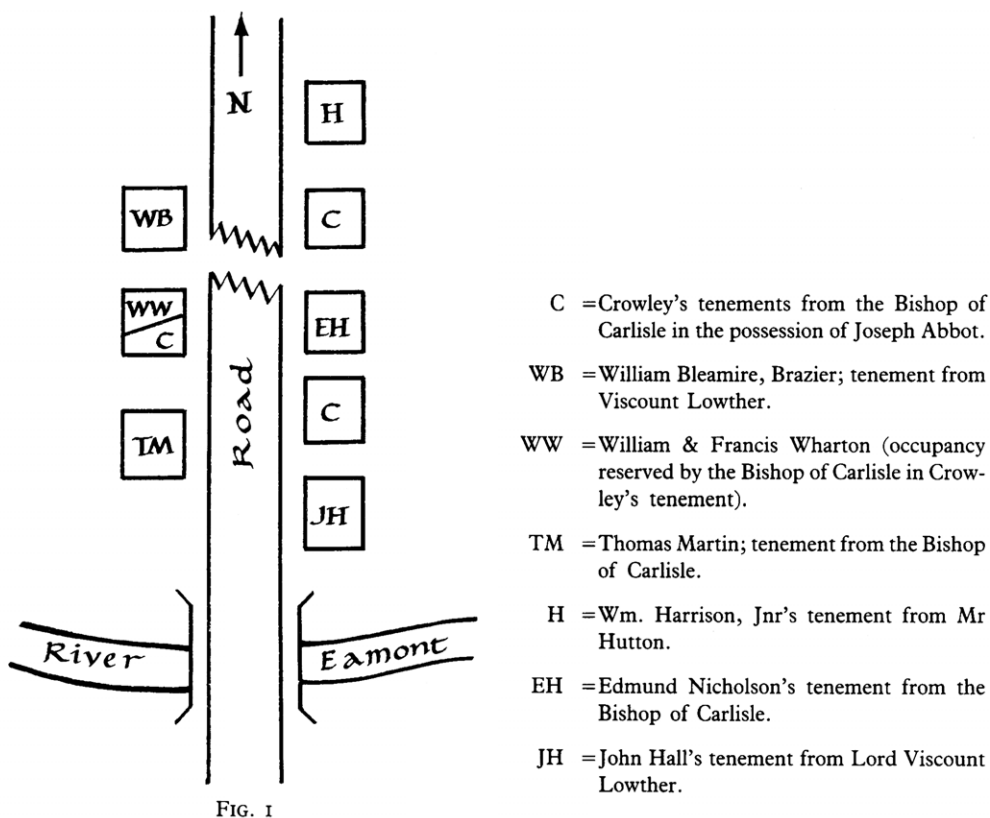
1748 – To cash p <sup>d</sup> Abram Crawley for mend <sup>s</sup> a Flaggon	6d
1758 – Paid Ab <sup>m</sup> Crowley as per Bill Rec <sup>d</sup>	0.15.0

The flagon mended by Crawley in 1748 was probably that purchased in 1712 from Robert Nicholson, of London.<sup>44</sup>

Abraham Crawley died in 1760 possessed of several properties which were to be sold under his will to provide for his younger children. From his son Hugh, who pre-deceased him by a matter of months, Crowley inherited two dwelling houses in Nether End in the Honor of Penrith, copyhold from the Duke of Portland at a rent of three shillings per annum. Hugh had himself inherited them from his grandmother, Frances Simpson, also in 1759.<sup>45</sup>

Crawley also owned “A messuage and tenement at Emonbridge” which had come to

him along with a "large Personall Estate" as part of the marriage portion of his second wife Dorothy, daughter of William Harrison, smith, of Eamont Bridge. This property was in three separate parts and from the defining clauses of a lease from Abraham to his three younger children dated 14th Aug. 1760 their relative positions can be established as in the schematic plan below (Fig. 1).<sup>46</sup>



Property H can be identified today as that which has a door lintel carved  $W_{1734}^{HL}$  (Plate 6(a)). The William Harrison, Jnr., of 1760 was the son of William Harrison, smith, who married Lucy Nicholson on 29 Nov. 1720 at St. Andrew's; he died in 1734.

The property WW/C is that which has a double commemorative lintel and plaque (Plate 6(b)); the upper one reads R. & E. Wharton 1781 (incorrectly picked out as R. & L. Wharton, 1781). This commemorates the occupancy of Richard Wharton, clogger, and Elizabeth his wife (née Hayes) who were married at St. Andrew's on 23rd Apr. 1774. Richard was the son of William and Frances Wharton, also a clogger, who occupied the property in 1760. The earlier inscription commemorates Nathan and Elizabeth Gowling whose child was baptised at St. Andrews in 1718. The date should read MDCCXVIII and has been somewhat futuristically picked out as 2718. Property TM was the first house in Cumberland, from the south.<sup>47</sup>

Abraham Crowley was an inventive pewterer, adapting moulds to his current needs, and his work is therefore of a very individual nature at a time when styles in general were fairly standard. He died between August and November 1760 and was survived by his brother Jacob, his eldest son William, and his three younger children, Abraham, Isabella and Dorothy.

His burial is not recorded at St. Andrew's because of the absence, in Virginia, of the curate, the Reverend Joseph Tickell, who was in charge of the registers.<sup>48</sup>

### The Pewter

The corpus of ecclesiastical and secular pewter under discussion here is remarkable in illustrating the use of the same moulds by different craftsmen over a considerable period. One late 17th century handle mould was used by three pewterers, another by two of the three, and one thumbpiece mould by the same three craftsmen.

Handles of a design I shall call type A are found on a pair of flagons (formerly three) at Crosby Ravensworth, by William Cookson (Plate 1(a)). The handle dates from this period, the 1690s, suiting the late Stuart design of the flagon admirably. An identical flagon, presumably also by William Cookson, is at Patterdale, St. Patrick's (Plate 1(b)). This flagon is illustrated and described, erroneously, as of the "early 17th Century" by J. F. Curwen in an article in these Transactions. He records that the flagon was in the possession for many years of one John Walton, waller, joiner, toothpuller, tinsmith and tinker "who prided himself on being the dirtiest man in Patterdale, so much so that he left instructions in his will for his body to be buried in the same state".<sup>49</sup> After his death the flagon was auctioned and returned to the church.

Inspection shows the touchmark to have been deliberately hammered out of the base and the formerly flat lid given a rather unevenly hammered slight dome, presumably by the said John Walton during its sojourn with him.

Flagons with handles from this mould with the touch of Abraham Crowley are found at Barton (later stolen), Castle Sowerby, Kirkland (3), Temple Sowerby and Westward Churches (Plates 2(a), 2(b), 2(c), 2(d) and 1(c)). Each of these flagon bodies differs in design from its fellows and each has a double-domed lid except that of Barton which had a most unusual treble-domed lid with a baluster-shaped finial, the only such lid and one which as we have seen may possibly be dateable to 1728.

The three identical flagons at Kirkland are worthy of note. Pairs of flagons are relatively common but three is highly unusual. Ferguson discussed a possible reason for the need for three flagons. St. Lawrence, Kirkland, also served Blencarn and Skirwith and each township accounted separately for its communion wine, etc., in the Churchwardens' Accounts.<sup>50</sup> In addition, in the eighteenth century it was not unusual to hold communion services at intervals of six months, a year or even longer and with a large area of the fells towards Alston to draw on, as well as the three townships, there may well have been several hundred communicants on occasions.

Incidentally the Kirkland flagons are now suffering badly from 'tin-pest' because of the cold winter conditions in which they have existed for two centuries, and since 1882 two of the lids have gone missing. The problem of conservation of communion plate of pewter, which cannot exist in a stable form at below 13°C, in churches, which by their

nature are often unheated for several days at a time, through the coldest winters, is one which needs the consideration of the Church in general.

The third maker to use the A type handle, used as his touchmark IG, with pellet above and below (mark viii). His flagon (Plate 1(d)), formerly in the author's collection, has an early form of high double-domed lid and a body very akin to York types of the late 17th century. It may therefore be dated to about 1700, between the productions of William Cookson and Abraham Crowley, both known to be of Penrith. It follows therefore that IG is also of Penrith and the date fits precisely with biographical dates of John Grave; there is no other recorded pewterer with these initials in Penrith.



(i)



(ii)



(iii)



(iv)



(v)



(vi)



(vii)



(ix)



(viii)



(xi)



(x)

FIG. 2. - Marks.

This raises an interesting question. There are three baluster measures, used as communion flagons at Kirklington, Scaleby and Walton (Plates 4(a), (b), (c)). Each has a slender baluster body, similar but not identical, a flat lid and a 'hammerhead' thumbpiece. That at Walton has 'wriggled' work bands, the others incised turned lines, and all three date from the last quarter of the 17th century. Those of Kirklington and Walton each have stamped ownership initials F.H. suggesting a common origin. The touchmarks, struck on the lids of all three are identical and are as on the flagon previously discussed; I.G., pellet above and below in a crude shield (not a diamond as recorded by Ferguson),<sup>51</sup> (as mark viii). In the 1933 Exhibition the Walton flagon was described as by James Green of Wigan. Cotterell records such a maker (mark no. 1981), in 1655.<sup>52</sup> Shelley, on the other hand, although mentioning this flagon as an example of the work of James Green of Wigan, does not list such a maker in his "complete list" of Wigan

Pewterers.<sup>53</sup> Recent discussions by members of the Pewter Society regarding slender baluster measures of similar body-shape, some with 'spray' thumbpieces, have tentatively suggested a Wigan origin for the type.<sup>54</sup> This may well be so; there is a fair amount of Wigan pewter in the area, and it may well be that John Grave used a Wigan specimen as his prototype. That these particular flagons were made by Grave is, I think, much more likely. The Walton alms-dish incidentally (Plate 4(d)) is also of Penrith manufacture, by William Cookson.

It is of course possible that Cookson, Grave and Crowley all bought their handles of type A from a Wigan pewterer but most unlikely as their use of this handle covers over half a century. Cookson's flagons at Crosby Ravensworth must date from circa 1695 and Crowley's three flagons at Kirkland do not appear on the 1749 terrier but are listed in an inventory in the Churchwardens' Accounts for 1753, probably as Ferguson surmises, on the occasion of their purchase.<sup>55</sup> The possibility of their manufacture other than locally at Penrith is made even less likely by the use of the same thumbpiece mould (type 5) by Cookson, in the case of the Crosby Ravensworth flagons (Plate 1(a)); John Grave on that formerly in my own collection (Plate 1(d)) and Crowley on that at Westward (Plate 1(c)), which confirms a Penrith manufacture for these pieces.

John Grave also made a tankard (Plate 3(c)) with a plain body of similar character to his flagon previously discussed, which is in a private collection in the Penrith locality, and which bears his touch, struck inside the base (mark viii). The handle of this tankard which I shall call type B, and the thumbpiece (type 4) both of which suit the style and proportions of the tankard, circa 1700, are both found on a slightly later and somewhat ungainly tankard by Abraham Crowley in a local farmhouse (Plate 3(d)). An identical tankard to this latter example, by the same maker, now in the Hockin collection, was formerly in the private collection of centenarian antique dealer Miss A. Rickerby, of Carlisle, and sold at her sale a few years ago. Abraham Crowley's 'broken' handles are also interesting. The idea of the broken handle was, I imagine, to spread the leverage, caused by the weight of the contents, away from the lower handle joint, where damage often occurs. Most examples are of a fairly sophisticated double-S design. Crowley has used a composite of part of the handle used on his 'double-domed' drum tankard (Plate 5(a)) which I shall call type C, and part of handle type A to create the Kirkby Thore flagon 'broken' handle (Plate 3(a)). The Dufton flagon handle (Plate 3(b)) is a composite of two parts of the handle used on his pleasing tulip-shaped tankard (Plate 5(b)) which I will call type D. Each of these two flagons has also the thumbpiece of the type found on the tankard whose handle-mould it shares.

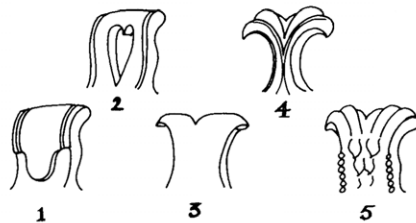


FIG. 3. - Thumbpiece types.

Abraham Crowley's inventiveness is demonstrated also by the use of a spool salt and a plain-rimmed plate to create the Dufton footed paten (Plate 5(c)); a similar but not

identical spool salt bearing mark ii, then in the Peal Collection, is illustrated in an article in *Apollon*, May 1947 (Figure II, centre). A most unusual pair of chalices whose feet and ogee-shaped lower bowls are all cast from his double-domed tankard lid-mould are at Gretna Old Kirk (Plate 5(d)). A similar chalice, apparently unmarked, is at Wreay, St. Mary's, and may be of Crowley's making.

The flagons at Dufton and Castle Sowerby have spouts which by their similarity may be original; that of Westward has had a spout which was no doubt removed at the time of its restoration in 1933.

Finally, it is worth noting the number of Crowley's marks (seven found so far) which is unusual and the use of a rebus (CROW-LIS) for his touch (mark vi). The seal on the lease document previously referred to, dated 1760 is also of a bird holding a plant (Plate 6(c)), but this I suspect is merely coincidence as the bird looks distinctly like the dove of peace with its olive branch and his will, of the same year, is sealed with a neo-classical head. The use of six annulets, once in mark i, and twice in mark vi, may, it has been suggested by B. C. Jones, Esq., be connected with the six annulets of the arms of the Lowther family, who were possibly among his patrons, as they had been in the case of William Cookson.

### Acknowledgements

My thanks are due to all those Rectors, Vicars and Churchwardens past and present, who kindly allowed me to inspect and photograph their Church plate for this article, to the various private owners, and to Messrs. Bruce Jones, Jeremy Godwin and David Bowcock of the Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle, who have patiently produced countless records for me over many years. Photographs of flagons from St. Michael's Barton from a photograph in the possession of Eric Davidson, Thackergate, Penrith, published in a Church guide and of Abraham Crowley's seal and signature by Tassell Studio Centre, Carlisle. The remaining photographs and the illustrations are my own.

### Notes and References

- <sup>1</sup> John Hatcher and T. C. Barker, *A History of British Pewter* (Longman, London, 1974), 145 *et seq.*
- <sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, 178.
- <sup>3</sup> H. H. Cotterell, *Old Pewter, Its Makers and Marks* (Batsford, London, 1929).
- <sup>4</sup> D. F. Campbell, *Exhibition of Church Pewter of the Carlisle Diocese held in the Fraternity 1933* (Carlisle Diocesan Gazette, September, 1933).
- <sup>5</sup> J. H. & T. C. B., *op. cit.*, 249.
- <sup>6</sup> Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle, P1583 John Nelson and P1588 John Sutton.
- <sup>7</sup> F. Haswell, *The Registers of St. Andrew's, Penrith, Vols. I to IV.*
- <sup>8</sup> C.R.O. Carlisle, P1671 John Rumney.
- <sup>9</sup> J.H. & T.C.B., *op. cit.*, 164.
- <sup>10</sup> Haswell, *op. cit.*
- <sup>11</sup> C.R.O. Carlisle, P1707 Lancelot Smith.
- <sup>12</sup> C.R.O. Carlisle, Lady Anne Clifford's Account Book 1665-8, Microfilm J.A.C. 227.
- <sup>13</sup> Haswell, *op. cit.*
- <sup>14</sup> C.R.O. Carlisle, P1717 John Grave.
- <sup>15</sup> C.R.O. Carlisle, Calendar of Marriage Licence Bonds, vol. 1.
- <sup>16</sup> Haswell, *op. cit.*
- <sup>17</sup> H. L. J. Massé - *Pewter Plate* (Geo Bell, London, 1904), 247.

- <sup>18</sup> H. H. Cotterell – *op. cit.*
- <sup>19</sup> C. A. Peal, *More Pewter Marks* (The Pewter Society, 1976).
- <sup>20</sup> The early origins of the Cookson family and their later connections in Penrith and Newcastle-upon-Tyne are fully discussed by W. Percy Hedley, M.A., F.S.A. and C. Roy Hudleston, M.A., F.S.A., in *Cookson of Penrith, Cumberland and Newcastle upon Tyne*, (privately printed, 1968).
- <sup>21</sup> Haswell, *op. cit.*
- <sup>22</sup> C.R.O. Carlisle, P1600 Will and inventory of William Cookson, tinker.
- <sup>23</sup> C.R.O. Carlisle, P1577 Inventory of Robert Bartram.
- <sup>24</sup> C.R.O. Carlisle, P1712 Will of William Cookson, brazier.
- <sup>25</sup> C.R.O. Carlisle, P1745 Will of William Cookson, brazier.
- <sup>26</sup> W. Percy Hedley & C. Roy Hudleston, *op. cit.*, 15.
- <sup>27</sup> D. F. Campbell, *op. cit.*; R. A. Shelley, *The Pewterers of Wigan and Liverpool*, (1946).
- <sup>28</sup> C. A. Peal, *op. cit.*, 16.
- <sup>29</sup> W. Percy Hedley and C. Roy Hudleston, *op. cit.*, 11.
- <sup>30</sup> C.R.O. Carlisle, PR/110/1/75.
- <sup>31</sup> C.R.O. Carlisle, D/Lons/L3/19.
- <sup>32</sup> C.R.O. Carlisle, P1695 Will of Edward Calvert.
- <sup>33</sup> Haswell, *op. cit.*
- <sup>34</sup> C.R.O. Carlisle, P1760 Will and bond of Abraham Crowley; D/Lons/L/Clifton/1/11.
- <sup>35</sup> Haswell, *op. cit.*
- <sup>36</sup> C.R.O. Carlisle, PR/110/1/75.
- <sup>37</sup> C.R.O. Carlisle, D/MBS.
- <sup>38</sup> C.R.O. Kendal, Minutes of Great Strickland monthly meeting, 2nd 8mo., 1699, W/DFCF2/1.
- <sup>39</sup> Haswell, *op. cit.*
- <sup>40</sup> R. S. Ferguson, *Old Church Plate in the Diocese of Carlisle*, CWAAS, 1882.
- <sup>41</sup> Haswell, *op. cit.*
- <sup>42</sup> R. S. Ferguson, *op. cit.*
- <sup>43</sup> C.R.O. Kendal, WPR93W1.
- <sup>44</sup> C.R.O. Carlisle, PR/110/1/75.
- <sup>45</sup> C.R.O. Carlisle, D/MBS4/46, Honor of Penrith Court Book 1753-1764, fol. 126.
- <sup>46</sup> C.R.O. Carlisle, D/Lons/L/Clifton/1/11.
- <sup>47</sup> Haswell, *op. cit.*
- <sup>48</sup> G. Watson, *St. Andrew's Penrith Registers – A popular arrangement*, (1893).
- <sup>49</sup> CW2, xvi, 221f. Curwen quotes Rev. W. P. Morris, *Records of Patterdale*, 99.
- <sup>50</sup> R. S. Ferguson, *op. cit.*, 228.
- <sup>51</sup> R. S. Ferguson, *op. cit.*, 44.
- <sup>52</sup> H. H. Cotterell, *op. cit.*, 218.
- <sup>53</sup> R. A. Shelley, *op. cit.*
- <sup>54</sup> J. A. Douglas, *North of England measures*, Journal of the Pewter Society, Autumn 1979 (and postscript in later issue).
- <sup>55</sup> R. S. Ferguson, *op. cit.*, 228.

TABLE I. – Flagons

Maker	Location	Overall height cm.	Handle type	Thumb piece	Lid	Mark	
William Cookson	St. Lawrence, Crosby Ravensworth	23.5	A	5	Flat, serrated front	(x)	(Pair – formerly 3)
William Cookson	St. Patrick, Patterdale	24.7	A	5	Flat, serrated front, later slightly domed	None (removed)	
John Grave	Formerly author's collection, present whereabouts unknown	24.7	A	5	Double dome	(viii)	
Abraham Crowley	St. Michael, Barton	—	A	3	Treble dome with finial	(i)	
Abraham Crowley	St. Kentigern, Castle Sowerby	28.7	A	1	Double dome	(i)	(spout)
Abraham Crowley	St. Cuthbert, Dufton	29.2	Composite 2×D	2	Double dome	(ii)	(spout)
Abraham Crowley	St. Michael, Kirkby Thore	27.3	Composite C & A	1	Double dome	(i)	
Abraham Crowley	St. Lawrence, Kirkland	27.8	A	3	Double dome	(i)	(Set of three)
Abraham Crowley	St. James, Temple Sowerby	25.5	A	1	Double dome	(i)	
Abraham Crowley	St. Hilda, Westward	24.8	A	5	Double dome	(i)	(spout removed)



TABLE II. – Measures as Communion Flagons

Maker	Location	Overall height cm.	Handle	Thumbpiece	Lid	Mark
John Grave	St. Mary, Walton	19·5	Simple solid straps of usual form	Hammerhead	flat	(viii)
John Grave	All Saints, Scaley	16·3	Simple solid straps of usual form	Hammerhead	flat	(viii)
John Grave	St. Cuthbert, Kirklington	16·7	Simple solid straps of usual form	Hammerhead	flat	(viii)

TABLE III. – Tankards

Maker	Location	Overall height cm.	Handle	Thumb piece	Lid	Type	Mark
John Grave	Private collection	14·3	B	4	Double dome	Plain drum	(viii)
Abraham Crowley	Hockin collection	16	B	4	Double dome	Drum with fillet	(i)
Abraham Crowley	Private collection	16	B	4	Double dome	Drum with fillet	(i)
Abraham Crowley	Private collection	16	C	1	Double dome	Drum with fillet	(i)
Abraham Crowley	Private collection	16	D	2	Double dome	Tulip with fillet	(i)
Abraham Crowley	Private collection	16	D	2	Double dome	Tulip with fillet	(ii)

TABLE IV. – Dishes and plates

Maker	Location	Diameter cm.	Edge type	Type	Mark
Abraham Crowley	St. Mary, Beaumont	21·5	Single-moulded	Plate (paten)	(vii)
Abraham Crowley	St. Cuthbert, Dufton	23·6 (8·5 high)	Plain-rimmed	Footed paten	(iv)
Abraham Crowley	Heelis collection	23	Single-moulded	Plate	(iii), (v) & (vi)
Abraham Crowley	Private collection	42	Single-moulded	Charger	(iii), (v) & (vi) × 2
Abraham Crowley	Ex author's collection	38	Single-moulded	Charger	(iii), (v) & (vi) × 2
Thomas Grave	St. Mary Magdalen, Lanercost	34·3	Primitive triple- reeded	Shallow bowl (alms dish)	(ix) × 2
William Cookson	St. Mary, Walton	22·1	Triple-reeeded	Large plate (paten or alms dish)	(x) × 2 & (xi)

TABLE V. – Chalice

Maker	Location	Mark
Abraham Crowley	Old Church, Gretna	(ii)

PLATE I.



(a) William Cookson, Crosby Ravensworth  
(one of pair)



(b) William Cookson?, Patterdale



(c) Abraham Crawley, Westward



(d) John Grave, Private Collection

## PLATE 2.



(a) Abraham Crawley, Barton



(b) Abraham Crawley, Castle Sowerby

(c) Abraham Crawley, Kirkland  
(one of three)

(d) Abraham Crawley, Temple Sowerby

PLATE 3.



(a) Abraham Crawley, Kirkby Thore



(b) Abraham Crawley, Dufton



(c) John Grave, Private Collection



(d) Abraham Crawley, Private Collection

## PLATE 4



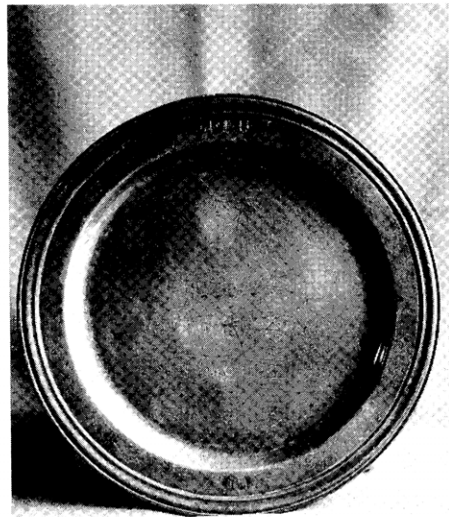
(a) John Grave, Kirklington



(b) John Grave, Scaleby



(c) John Grave, Walton



(d) William Cookson, Walton

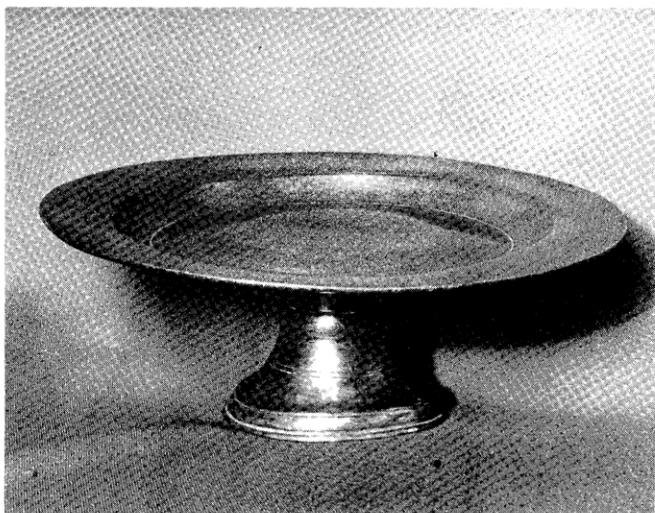
PLATE 5



(a) Abraham Crawley, Private Collection



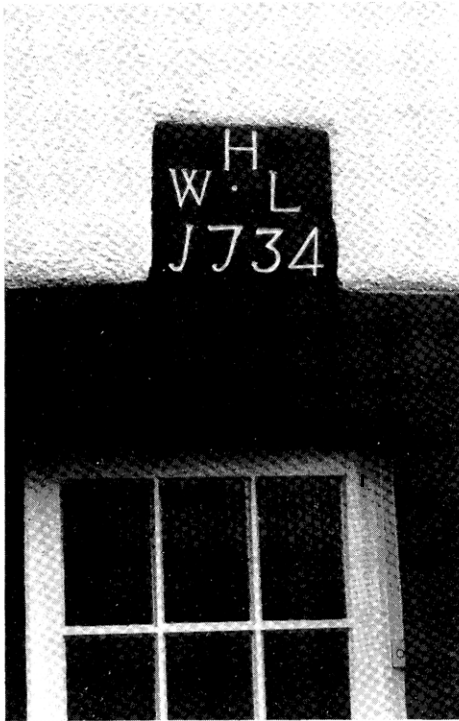
(b) Abraham Crawley, Private Collection



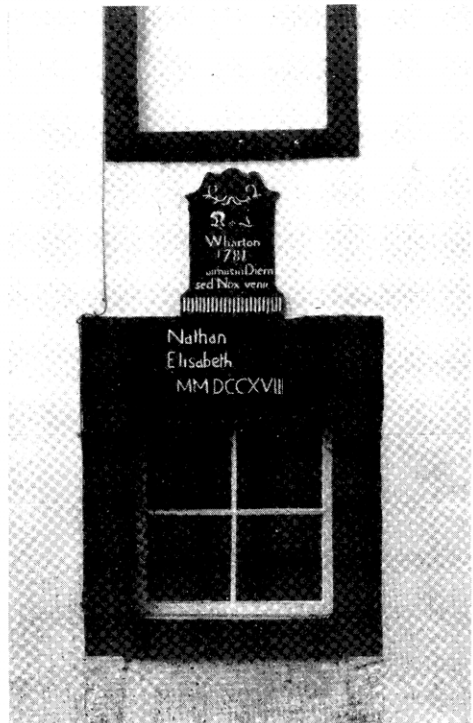
(c) Abraham Crawley, Dufton



(d) Abraham Crawley, Gretna Old Church  
(one of pair)



(a) Lintel, Eamont Bridge



(b) Lintel, Eamont Bridge



(c) Abraham Crawley, seal and signature, 1760