

Pyrography



I bought this 12.75 inch diameter plate on the internet thinking that it might be an unusual finish and not burnt on, but it has been burnt on. The fern pattern on the reverse side declares the piece to be Mauchline Ware. The colouring of the roses and the shading of the leaves must have required a very complex mechanical process, as the piece does not give the feel of being hand made or made from a complicated design. If it was produced in bulk, does anyone know of similar examples or have any idea of the history of this piece or of other examples of pyrography? It



does have a resemblance to Ian McFeeter's favourite piece – a snuff box shown Journal No. 53.

The piece below is 12 inches long and serves no useful function as far as my imagination goes! Did the Druids carry something like it, using it as a sickle for the mistletoe, - but I'm not sure if they have any mistletoe in Maine. The transfer of the Sea Wall, Bald Head Cliff appears in the Maine list in Trachtenberg and Keith's book.

Kenneth Macleod



Inverness views on Mauchline Ware

As a former pupil of Inverness Royal Academy I am interested in views of Inverness and the surrounding area on Mauchline Ware. I have photographs on various pieces of MW of Inverness from Ness Walk, Inverness from Bank, Inverness from Castle, The Font Inverness Cathedral, Inverness Castle and Bridge and Castle Leod Strathpeffer (no family connection!). I also have transfers of

Inverness from Tomnahurich, High Street, Inverness and Loch Ness from Fort Augustus.

I see from the list in Trachtenberg and Keith that I still lack three other transfer views. If any club member is willing to part with any or can give me information of other views I would be most grateful to hear from them.

Kenneth Macleod

Made in Switzerland

I recently acquired a napkin ring, 4cm deep and 5cm diameter, with a transfer view of 'Marine Parade, Brighton', with an additional inscription 'Made in Switzerland'. I am not an authority on wood, but that used in the ring if not sycamore is something similar, certainly not the pine used in German items. The engraving of the transfer is slightly coarser than in the Mauchline Ware, but not so bad that one would doubt its origins if there were no inscription. The only other reference to Made in Switzerland that I know is in Journal No.4, 1987.

John Marks

Editor's note. Journal No.19, April 1992, mentions a Swiss mountain scene (Vue du Rigi Kulm) on a scent bottle holder and Trachtenberg & Keith list Souvenir du Rigi Kulm and Vals Source Intermit. These are taken to be Mauchline Ware pieces exported to Switzerland.



Patricia Ault

We are sorry to report that Patricia died on 27 February, aged 86 years. She was a longstanding member, regularly attending our Conventions, thus becoming known to many members. Patricia was also a dealer, exhibiting at the Conventions and at Fairs. She will be greatly missed from our gatherings.

Letters to the Editor - *Battle of the Diamond*

From Dan Turner

In my report on the first Club meeting in the US (Journal, August 2004), I mentioned the Battle of the Diamond 1695, shown on a banner on the side of a snuffbox and asked for help in interpreting its significance. The box also commemorates the Battle of the Boyne and campaigns at Enniskillen, Aughrim, Limerick and Derry. The King's Own Scottish Borderers fought campaigns in Ireland and on the Continent, including a major battle at Namur (south east of Brussels) on 27 July 1695. Could this be the Battle of the Diamond? It would seem reasonable to guess that the snuffbox was made to order for a member of Regiment.

From Peter Cavan

In answer to Dan Turner's enquiry and Islay Donaldson's letter in the last Journal: the Battle of the Diamond was fought at the Diamond cross-roads near the village of Loughgall, about 4 miles from the City of Armagh on 21 September 1795. It was one of a series of skirmishes in a feud between the Roman Catholic Defenders and the Protestant Orange Boys which raged between 1790 and 1800. William Prince of Orange, William III of England, was the inspiration for the founding of the Orange Society, Order as it now is, and the centenary of the Battle of the Boyne, fought on 1st July 1690, saw the emergence of Orange memorabilia.

The illustration on the snuffbox is a typical idealised image of King William crossing the River Boyne, and is still to be seen today on Orange Order banners and painted on gable-walls in loyalist areas of Northern Ireland. It would seem that the date on the box is a typographical error - 1695 rather than 1795, or a deliberate attempt to make it appear older than it is. The box probably dates to 1895 or thereabouts.



From Dan Turner

I have to disagree with Peter Cavan. These costly pen and ink snuff boxes were made during the period of 1780 to 1830. There is no indication that they were still being produced as late as 1890. The most costly and limited production items, many of which were personal orders, were the tea caddies and painted and pen and ink snuff boxes. No one could have ordered this expensive item and then accepted it with the wrong date. It would have been a simple matter to correct the date to 1795, if that was the original intent.

From Peter Cavan

The Battle of the Diamond, 1795, is firmly placed in the mythology of the Orange Order. To this day, Enniskillen, Aughrim, Derry and the Boyne are to be seen on Orange Order banners carried in processions each 12 July and refer to the campaign battles between the followers of William III and James II in 1688-90.

I do not think that the KOSB, or the Battle of Namur, have much to do with the decoration of the snuff box, as all the references appear to have an Irish connection. The equestrian figure in the costume of a Roman general (*Ed: on the underside of the box*) could well represent a statue to William III which

was erected in Dublin early in the 1700s (since removed following damage) and was the object of veneration on the anniversary of King William's birthday.

Given Dan Turner's date range for the production of the box as between 1780 and 1830, there is a strong possibility that it was made around the time of the centenary of the Battle of the Boyne, when there was an upsurge of Orange and Williamite sentiment.

From William and Ruth Hodges

We have read the correspondence and conclude.

The Battle of the Diamond refers to the skirmish in 1795 which led to the founding of the Orange Society/Order.

Though the KOSB were fighting in Ireland and at the Battle of Namur in 1695, the box has an exclusively Orange feel about it and must refer to events in Ireland. We think the date 1695 is a mistake and, as the box was probably not a commission, but aimed at the large number of Orange sympathisers, this would not matter too much.

Snuff boxes with wooden hinges were only made in the east of Scotland before 1800 and we think this box comes from an Ayrshire maker, where support for the Orange cause would have been great (not so much in the Laurencekirk area in eastern Scotland). We do not think it was an anniversary piece - 1790 or 1795 is too early, 1890 or 1895 is too late for this sort of pen and ink work, so we (tentatively) would date it to circa 1825-1840.

We saw Dan Turner's box in New York and can say that the pen and ink work on it is first-class, a very fine snuff box, just the thing for a loyal Orangeman to possess, reminding him of the events which led to the birth of the Orange Order...but we may be wrong!

