

ANTIQUITY OF SPOONS

THEY ARE LINEAL DESCENDANTS OF ANCIENT SHELL SCOOPS.

Metal Spoons Were in Use in Biblical Days—Anointing Spoons Are as Old as the Time When Prophet Nathan Anointed King Solomon.

A French scholar says: "Spoons are old. I do not claim that they are as old as the world, but they are certainly as old as soup." After which it is easy to believe that for the last five or six centuries no self-respecting family, of however humble station, but could boast at least one spoon to its name, whether of silver, pewter or even wood.

That spoons are the direct lineal descendants of the shell and horn scoops with which our ancestors were wont to convey fluid food to their mouths would seem a safe assumption. Many examples of these ancient spoons are seen in museums and also of the spoon of wood, which was the next step toward the spoon of today. It is from the wooden spoon that the word is derived, as the old English word "spoon" meant a small piece of wood.

That metal spoons were used in biblical days is certain, for in Exodus the Lord tells Moses to make spoons of gold for use in the tabernacle, and today there are to be seen in the British Museum spoons which certainly were used in the early days of Christianity, besides others found in the ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum.

Anointing spoons are as old as the time when Nathan, the prophet, anointed Solomon as the ruler of Israel, and they have been used to anoint kings from that time to the present day. The spoon with which England's rulers are anointed by the archbishop of Canterbury is at least 600 years old and has been used for the purpose of anointing the kings of England ever since it was remade for the coronation ceremonies of Charles II.

Another spoon of great antiquity is the "Pudsey spoon" given by Henry VI. to his friend and protector, Sir Ralph Pudsey, in 1445, at the time when he was concealed in Sir Ralph's house after the battle of Hexham. This spoon has the pear-shaped bowl of the usual form of all ancient spoons previous to the restoration. The handle is octagonal and at the end is flattened out to form a seal, on which is carved the king's badge, a single rose. Inside the bowl, near the shaft, is the hall mark of the thirteenth century sterling silver, a leopard's head, and on the back of the bowl is the mark of the maker, a heart in outline.

This spoon is the most ancient known piece of silver in existence that bears the indisputable authentic hall mark of the English "Goldsmiths' company."

All the earliest spoons have pear-shaped bowls. It was not until the latter part of the seventeenth century that they began to elongate toward the egg-shaped spoon of the present time. Up to the seventeenth century all spoons were large and closely resembled the modern soup spoon, the bowl being very deep.

The handles of the early specimens were straight and rather heavy, but about the time mentioned their shape was entirely changed. The stem and handle became flat and broad and at the extremity were divided into points, or scallops, and slightly turned up.

When this great change first began teaspoons were made as small as the after-dinner coffee spoon of modern times, but as the art of making them advanced they became larger and larger until they attained the size they are now.

Again, at the beginning of the eighteenth century the handles showed a still further change in that where the sides were straight they had curves and the shaft itself became slightly undulated. At this same time were also seen some innovations in the shape of spoons for specific purposes, one being a spoon having a perforated bowl, with a straight stem, which was presumably intended to clean the spout of a teapot, while the bowl was for the removal of floating tea leaves from the cup.

This was undoubtedly the forerunner of the tea strainer. Another spoon was the sauff spoon, and besides this the narrow spoon made its appearance. This first narrow spoon was a crude affair indeed, but it was not very long before it reached the form in which it is seen even nowadays—that is, with the two ends of different sizes, one for the large bones and the other for the very small ones.

Probably none of the old spoons equals in interest the apostle spoons, which came into fashion in the sixteenth century. It was an English custom at that time for sponsors to give these spoons to the children for whom they made themselves responsible as baptismal gifts. A wealthy godparent gave a complete set of thirteen, but a poor one generally contented himself with but one, that having on it the figure of the child's patron saint, to make up for the lack of the others. The complete set had a Master spoon and twelve others, the Master spoon having a figure of Christ on the handle holding in one hand the sphere and cross, while the other is raised in blessing. Each of the twelve apostles is distinguished by some emblem. St. Paul has a sword, St. Andrew a cross, St. Peter, of course, a key, St. Jude a club, St. John a cup (the cup of sorrow), and so on.

Whole sets of these spoons are exceedingly rare. It is said that but two complete sets are in existence at present, and there is a third set of eleven. This is of great value, having an un-

doubted date of 1519, while the two others are 1566 or 1767 in one case and 1620 in the other.

This last set is especially unique in that every spoon in it was made in the same year and by the same maker. The oldest hall marked apostle spoon that is known is dated 1468, that date being determined by the hall mark on the bowl, a shield, with a crowned star in the center.

The value of these old sets of apostle spoons will be understood when some of the prices paid for them are known. One set sold in 1903 for \$24,500, while another, of less ancient date, brought \$5,300. A single apostle spoon, bearing on its handle a figure of St. Nicholas and on the stem the inscription, "St. Nicholas, pray for us," sold in London some years ago for the unheard-of sum of \$8,450, the most exaggerated price ever paid for a single spoon so far as can be ascertained.

The most modern apostle spoon of which there is any record bears the date 1903. It is believed that about that period the custom of giving spoons as presents at baptism began to wane. Other spoons of interest, though not of such great antiquity, are the little "caddy spoons," which made their appearance when tea drinking became fashionable more than 200 years ago. All of these spoons have very short stems and handles, with bowls of some fanciful design, some perforated, but the majority shell shaped and flat.

A few were made like miniature scoops, with handles of ebony, and some others were perfect imitations of leaves, the handle being formed by the leaf stem curling around into a ring.

The hall mark on a spoon has varied in position with almost every century since the first was made, and as this is one of the important things in determining the date of a spoon, together with the position of the maker's mark, it is necessary to know what year each change was made in.

CUTTING GLASS.

Ways by Which It May Be Done Without Using a Diamond.

It often occurs that glass tubes of various dimensions have to be cut where a diamond is not at hand, as in shops and power plants where oil and water gauge tubes must be neatly fitted. The usual method adopted, says the National Glass Budget, is to file a small groove around the tube and separate the glass with a sharp rap at the place weakened by the file. The result is not always satisfactory, because the ends often break unevenly owing to the difficulty of making a straight groove with the file. Better results are obtained when only a small incision is made with a file, just enough to cut through the enamel of the tubes on one side and not all around. While the tube is still warm from the friction of the file the tube is then taken between the thumbs and forefingers, the thumbs opposite the file incision and the forefingers around the tubing, close to, but not covering, the incision. Pressure of the thumbs invariably causes the tube to break in as straight and clean a line as though cut with a diamond.

Another method is to use a fine saw blade, which should be kept fed with white emery, carborundum or pulverized silica sand of hard grit, moistened with camellia oil, turpentine or water. A straight, steady and even stroke should be made, and when the work is carefully done against a gauge the cut will be as true as though it had been ground.

Window glass, especially single strength, can be accurately split either in straight or curved lines by first making an incision through the enamel of the glass and then holding a hot iron close to the incision till a fracture is started. The fracture will follow the hot iron with remarkable fidelity. The iron should be preferably round and somewhat blunt and with a bulky head, like an ordinary fire poker, so as to retain its heat well for long cuts, especially for thick sheets, to keep the fracture going when once started, even if two heated irons have to be used.

Monarchs and Coins.

The great Napoleon was not great at the whist table, and a characteristic story is told of him at St. Helena. At a private party of what he took out four napoleons to use as markers, and one of the young ladies took up one of the cards and asked him what it was. The polite hero snatched it rather roughly from her and, pointing to the impression, exclaimed, "C'est moi!"

The annoyance caused by this incident ruffled him so much that he made a mistake. The party begged him to try again, and he did so with the same result. His countenance then displayed the rages of convulsive fury, and his anger was not appeased until the house had been searched for old cards, which could be more easily dealt. Meantime the unhappy Count Las Cases, his only attendant, was ordered to sit down at a square table to play the cards alone until they should run smoothly.

Louis Philippe showed equal regard for the coin that bore his name. He dropped a louis on the carpet while playing whist and arrested the progress of the game to look for it, whereupon a foreign ambassador who was one of the party set fire to a billet of 1,000 francs to give light to the king under the table.

Wealth of Words.

"He talks very interestingly," said one girl.

"Yes," replied the other, "but in all the stories I ever read the man who used lovely language was always poor and struggling. It doesn't seem a good sign to me."—Washington Star.

An Angel Once.

"Does it create a furor in your family when you go home late?" asked B Jones of his friend De Smith.

"No; it creates a furor," was the suggestive answer.—Chicago Record-Herald.

Always Increases the Strength.

A reasonable amount of food thoroughly digested and properly assimilated will always increase the strength. If your stomach is a "little off" Kodol Dyspepsia Cure will digest what you eat and enable the digestive organs to assimilate and transform all foods into tissue-building blood. Kodol relieves Sour Stomach, Belching, Heart-Burn and all forms of Indigestion. Palatable and strengthening. Sold by G. E. Williams.

St. Placere.

There is a pretty bit of history in the name of that vehicle, the sacre. St. Placere was an Irishman of noble birth, who went over to France in the seventh century and lived as a hermit in a forest near Meaux. His popularity became very great in the France of later centuries. When Sauvage started public hackney coaches in Paris in 1640 he found the most convenient center for them to be an inn in the Rue St. Martin, named Hotel St. Placere and adorned with an image of the saint; hence "sacre."

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Now, Then.

"Do you mean to say this child fell from the third story and landed on her feet?"

"Yes," replied the policeman. "I was an eyewitness."

"That settles it!" replied the neighbor. "I always said her mother was a cat."—Detroit Free Press.

His Mission.

Old Mortality was freshening up the illegible inscriptions on the ancient tombstones.

"I merely wish to show," he explained to the curious bystanders, "that there is nothing essentially new in modern fiction."—Chicago Tribune.

Soothing and Comforting.

The soothing and comforting effects of DeWitt's Witch Hazel Salve, when applied to Piles, sores, cuts, boils, etc., relieves pain almost instantly. This Salve draws out the inflammation, reduces swelling and acts as a rubefacient, thus circulating the blood through the diseased parts, permitting or aiding Nature to permanently remove the trouble entirely. Sold by G. E. Williams.

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