

A Limerick Silver Tankard

By J. N. A. WALLACE.

In former Journals of this Society I have written several papers on old Limerick Silver, these papers referring entirely to silver articles for ecclesiastical use, such as chalices, patens and flagons.

Quite recently I was privileged to examine a very fine piece of domestic silver, namely, a Tankard which is worthy of being put in record.

The Tankard is in a very good state of preservation and weighs 28.3 ozs. On the side of the body, close to the handle and also on the lid are struck the following three marks—an eight pointed star, the makers initials, R.S., and a castle gateway. The same three marks I have noticed on the Ennis Church Chalice which is dated 1685. This gives the approximate date to the Tankard. The maker was a Rober Smith, who was a working goldsmith in Limerick between the years 1674 and 1687. This Tankard is the earliest piece of Limerick domestic silver which has so far come to light. Engraved on the front of the Tankard are a "coat of arms" and "crest." The "coat" reads:—"On a fess between three martlets as many bezants; impaling, a chevron ermine between three dolphins embowed."

Representing the Bailey family and a marriage into the Blennerhassets. The crest over the "coat" is that of the Bailey's, viz., a griffin sejant.

The Baileys were a Kerry family living near Tralee, and the Blennerhassets lived, and were well-known for years in the heart of Co. Limerick.

In our Journal for 1947, I described a collection of some 94 silver buttons of various sizes. All these belonged to the Blennerhasset family and their connections, the Fosberys.

Opposite : Limerick Tankard and, on Reverse, Clare Gold Find.

CLARE GOLD FIND.

Gold Gorget or collar (front) found with other objects in a hoard at Gorteenreagh, Feakle, Co. Clare. Date: Late Bronze Age, after 1000 B.C.

Two gorget terminal discs.

Two double-conical, hollow, gold ornaments: possibly used as hair-ornaments.

2 gold wire strips, used for tying terminal discs to gorget.

2 pieces of back of terminal disc.

1 piece of hair-ornament (?).

1 gold fibula or dress-fastener.

2 bent gold bracelets.

Photographs, which are not in proportion, and description kindly supplied by the Keeper of Irish Antiquities, National Museum.



