

Ciborium 1725  
St Johns R.C.  
Church, Limerick.

Jonathan Buck

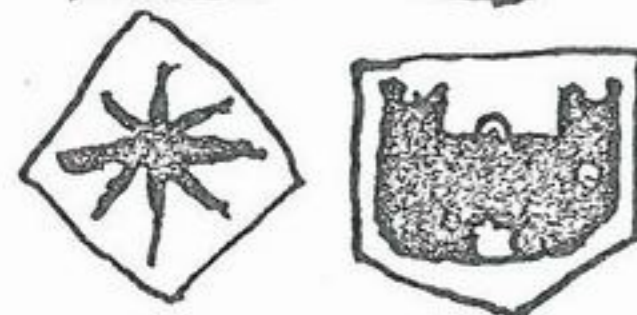


Chalice  
1685  
Ennis  
Church

Robert Smith



Paten  
Askaton  
Church



Chalice 1663  
Askaton  
Church



Flagon 1711  
St Munchin's  
Church, Limerick.

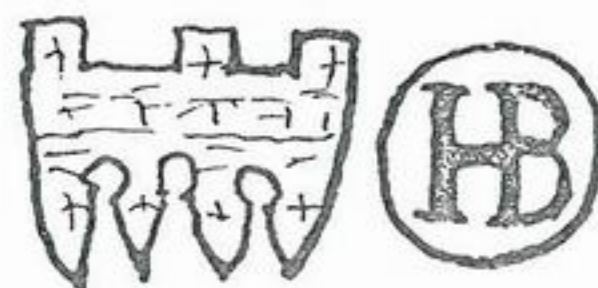


Tankard, c. 1685

National Museum of Ireland



Flagon, St. Mary's Cathedral, Limerick  
Croom Chalice, also with Castle and Star



Chalice 1698  
Dunkerrin  
Church



Knockgraffon Church  
Chalice 1712



Chalice c. 1695  
Ballintemple  
Church

2 (P) 3 times on stem



Paten inscribed "THURLES"  
now at Ballintemple Church

1 Drawings and notes made by the  
late M. S. D. Westropp, M.R.I.A.,  
former Curator of what is now the  
National Museum of Ireland.

## 2 Limerick Goldsmiths\*

It is impossible to say when the working of precious metals first took place in Limerick. Archaeological evidence that goldsmiths carried on their art about 700 B.C. is evident from finds of magnificent gold gorgets in parts of what is now County Limerick.

No assay office is known to have existed in Limerick, Dublin being the only town possessing one. This situation is fully explained in the chapter on Cork silversmiths, and the standard of Limerick-made plate, like that of Cork, probably depended on the integrity of local silversmiths.

However, because of the difficulty of transportation, large quantities of silver were made in Limerick which were never assayed nor hall-marked in Dublin.

During the eighteenth century the Dublin Goldsmiths Company records show parcels varying from 3 lb. to 20 lb. weight being sent up by Limerick silversmiths for assaying.

The first entries of provincial plate having been sent to Dublin for assay occur for Cork in 1709, and Limerick, 1711.

The earliest mark on Limerick silver is a gateway between two towers. This appears on a flagon and a paten in Limerick Cathedral, and also on a flagon from Bruhenny Church, Buttevant. They also bear the marks of a B and IB respectively, which could be the initials of some members of the Buck family. The flagon in Limerick Cathedral was given by Sir Joseph Williamson, who died in 1701.

Some of the drawings of early hall-marks made by Mr Westropp are shown in Fig. 1.

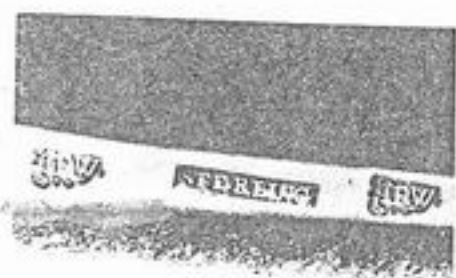
Like Cork, the Limerick silversmiths seem to have adopted the STERLING mark about 1710 or after. There is a chalice dated 1718, and the maker's initials AB in an oval shield, perhaps those of Adam Buck, but no sterling mark.

The full marks on Limerick silver during most of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century were the word STERLING and the maker's mark, the latter often stamped twice.

Mr Westropp, writing in the *North Munster Antiquarian Journal* for 1939, states:

A curious variety of maker's mark employed in Limerick towards the end

\* The information in this short section on Limerick silver is taken mostly from various articles written by the late Dudley Westropp, M.R.I.A.



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Courtesy Weir &amp; Sons (Antiques) Ltd



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of the eighteenth century is that of using a punch exactly corresponding to the outline of the Harp Crowned punch used in Dublin. However, in this punch, initials of the maker are substituted for the figure Harp, the Crown alone remains above the initials. Presumably this mark seems to have been instituted to make it appear like the Dublin Harp and the Crown Punch. The mark has been found in connection with the maker's initials P.W. (Patrick Walsh), I.S. (probably John Strit or Stritch) and G.H. (George Halloran).

All three marks are produced here (Figs. 2-4). The PW is from a pair of feather-edge spoons, the GH from a bright-cut dessert spoon and the IS is from a sugar bowl.

Also shown is a sauce boat with a plain wavy fluted body. The rim is punched with vertical lines, and it has three hoof feet with shell knuckles, a triple scroll handle, and is 7 in. in length overall. It is by John Strit (sometimes written Street or Stritch), having the IS in a Harp Crowned outline punch (Fig. 5).

George Halloran, who died in 1804, also used a script GH without the lion rampant, and his mark is shown here, taken from a dessert spoon c. 1770 (Fig. 6).

Another interesting mark of certain Limerick silversmiths in the middle of the eighteenth century was that of a lion rampant between the maker's initials.



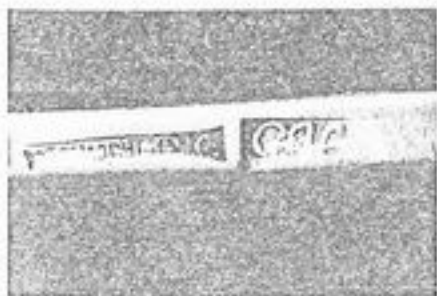
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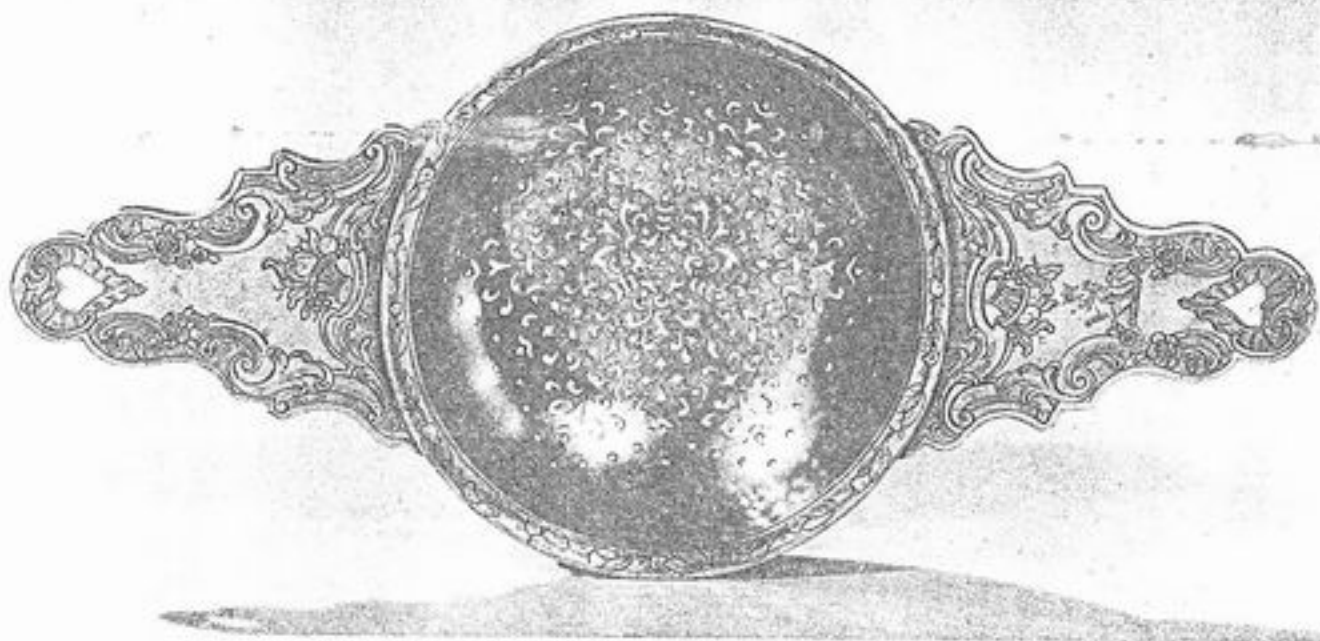
Joseph Jones enjoyed a long spell as a silversmith from 1731 to 1774 and was both Sheriff and Mayor of Limerick. He appears to have used only one type of punch—that of a lion rampant with a capital I on either side. He used this mark with the word *STERLING*.

Two pieces of his are illustrated here. One is a beautiful lemon or orange strainer with flat chased handles, measuring 11 in. across the handles, and weighing 5 oz. 17 dwt., *c.* 1760 (Fig. 7). The other illustration (Fig. 8) is a pair of sauce boats with human mask feet, weighing 24 oz.

Samuel Johns, who was made a freeman of the City of Limerick on 10 September 1756, used a similar mark with a lion rampant between a script S. and J. His mark on a spoon is shown in Fig. 9.

Collins Brehon also used this mark of the lion rampant with the paw of the lion crossing into the C. on the left. Collins Brehon was a freeman in 1747 and died in 1768. His mark, taken from the base of a salver on loan to the National Museum of Wales from the Jackson Trustees, is shown in Fig. 10.


Also illustrated is a beautiful set of hand-engraved hunting buttons with the maker's mark IB on either side of a lion rampant (Fig. 11). The




GOLD

buttons are alleged to have come from a Limerick family. The mark could be that of Jonathan Buck, who was a freeman in 1731, and died in 1762, or that of Jonas Bull, who was made a freeman on 1 October 1750.

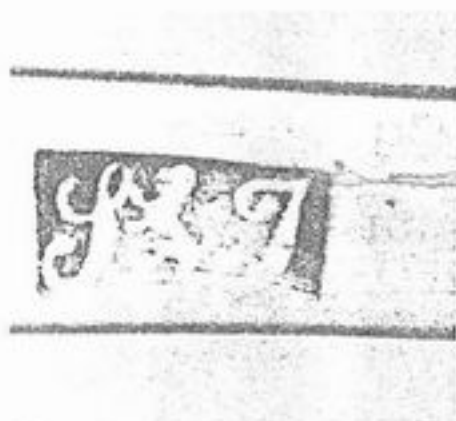
'The Two Blue Posts' was the shop sign of Collins Brehon 'opposite the Exchange'. In the *Munster Journal* of 30 September 1765 his advertisement says:



SILVER

He makes all kinds of repeating watches and mends them in the best and safest manner . . . said Brehon has a large assortment of touched plate, Butterboats, large and small ditto, large and small cups, Varieties of touched Shoe and Knee Buckles, and a large assortment of Jewellery work from the Maker in Dublin, such as paste and stone, shoe and knee buckles, Garnet Hoops, Gold set locket, Rings of different kinds, Pebble rings set round with garnets, Watches, &c he will engage; also plain and chased Coffee pots, and plate-handled knives and forks, with Cases, with several other articles too tedious to mention. N.B. He will give the highest price for old Gold and Silver and for Silver and Gold lace.





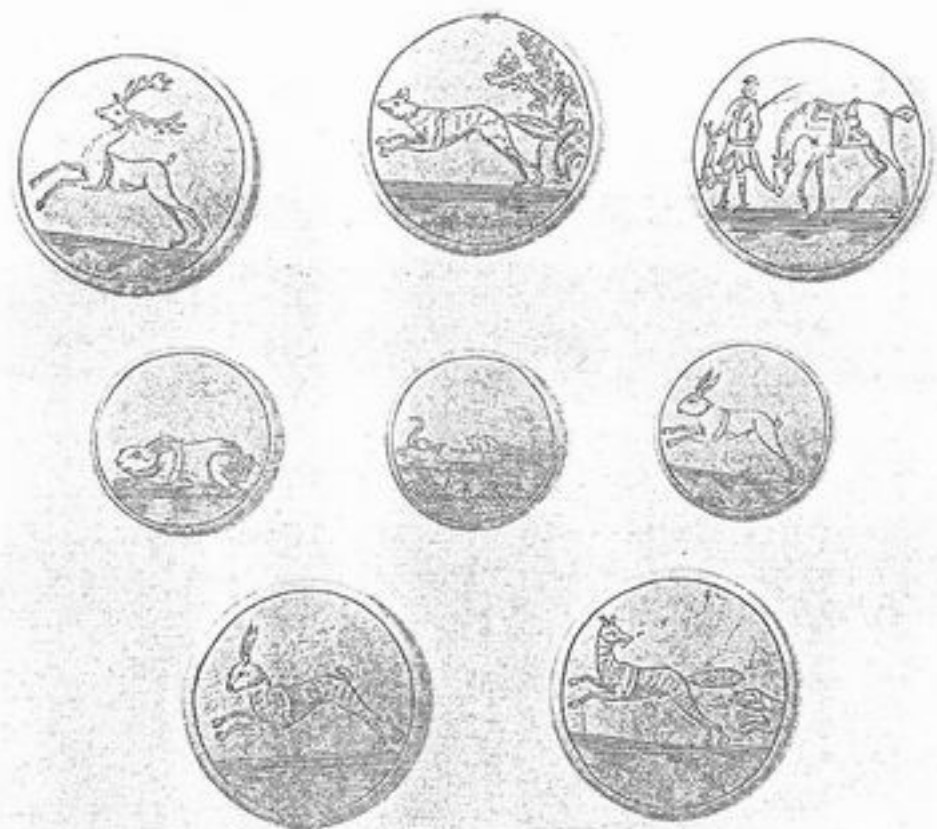
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Courtesy of Jackson Trustees. On loan to National  
Museum of Wales



11



Courtesy Hyman Danker Antiques



The tapered handle spoon was one of the most popular Irish styles. From about 1730 to 1780 this with pointed ends was beloved by Irish and Scottish makers. It was less typical of English silver, and was much in vogue in both Cork and Limerick.

The spoon by Maurice Fitzgerald (Fig. 12) has typical Limerick decoration with a motif of fleur-de-lys or of Prince of Wales plumes. Dr Robert Wyse Jackson, the retired Bishop of Limerick, suggested that the emblem had a connection with Limerick's ruling family of Pery. This design was used about the turn of the nineteenth century, about the time of the Act of Union.

In a letter the Bishop also stated: 'Until lately tea spoons of this kind were to be seen here and there in Limerick. Tradition has it that each child going to the Convent Schools was equipped with one. If this be so, the practice must have ceased with the Famine, for I have seen none of any later period.'

The Pery family donated several pieces of church plate to the diocese of Limerick. A flagon from St John's Church bears the inscription: 'The gift of Edmund Sexton Pery, Esq. to the Church of St John's Limerick, 1750.' The donor was speaker of the Irish House of Commons, and in 1785 was created Viscount Pery.

There is also a chalice from St George's Church with the inscription: 'ANN DOM 1788. The Gift of the Right Honble. Ld. Visct. Pery to St George's Church, Newtownperry, Limerick.'

A large flagon bears the arms of William Cecil Pery, later Baron Glentworth, and Bishop of the diocese from 1784 to 1794.

An entry from the Minute Book of the Dublin Goldsmiths Company reads: 'William Ward informed the Assay Master that twelve spoons with a similar mark to his—WW—were at a burnishers and 1 oz. worse than standard, and would injure his character if such spoons be sold.'

On 15 November 1798 John Bayly declared that he made the spoons for W. Ward, shopkeeper in Limerick of silver melted by said Ward, and the punch used was that of W. Ward of Limerick. The spoons were forfeited and Bayly was cautioned for not working sterling and for selling work not having his own punch.

The illustration (Fig. 13) taken from a spoon handle shows the mark of William Ward, c. 1798-1810. His mark also appears with WW in script stamped twice on either side of STER.

Fig. 14 is a circular Limerick freedom box, the lid engraved with the arms of Limerick (the castle of that city within scale mantling), and an inscribed border 'Insignia Armorium Civitatis Limerici Aug:25: 1726', the underside with a long Latin presentation inscription to the Rt. Hon. Richard Tighe, M.P., and the base of the box with his arms, crest and motto. The rim has reeded borders and the box is 3½ in. in diameter and weighs 5 oz. The maker's mark is IB for Jonathan Buck.

The story of the Limerick silversmiths is a tiny fragment in our civic social history. But their surviving works—now few and rare alas—show them to have been craftsmen worthy of any city, and men proud to produce noble and beautiful works of art. Limerick was the third most important silver manufacturing city in Ireland after Dublin and Cork and it is to be hoped that research will discover more about them and



that more of their creations will come to light.

The following is a list of Limerick silversmiths compiled by Dudley Westropp:



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ROBERT BRADFORD	1770
COLLINS BREHON	1768 died
GEORGE BRUSH	1769
ADAM BUCK	1725 died
JONATHAN BUCK	1725-1740
THOMAS BURKE	1784, 1800 died
CALEB COLBECK	1720, 1730
JOHN COLLUM	1751, 1788 died
PATRICK CONNELL	1784, 1788
HENRY DOWNES	1788 died
GARRETT FITZGERALD	1768, 1780 died
MAURICE FITZGERALD	1760, 1810
WILLIAM FITZGERALD	1800
WILLIAM FITZGERALD & SON	1820
JOHN GLOSTER	1755
JOHN HACKETT	1770, 1784
GEORGE HALLORAN	1766, 1804 died
HILL	1727
GEORGE HURST OF PALLASKENRY	1842 died
JOSEPH JOHNS	1731, 1773—MAYOR
SAMUEL JOHNS	1765, 1795 died
JOHN LAING	1846
GEORGE MOORE	1768, 1784
W. D. MOORE	1779

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## OTHER IRISH GOLDSMITHS

ROBERT O'SHAUGHNESSY	1802, 1842
EDWARD PARKER	1731, 1782 died
FRANCIS PHIPPS	1788
JOHN PURCELL	1787, 1813
SAMUEL PURDON	1800, 1846
GEORGE ROBINSON	1750, 1768
JOHN ROBINSON	1730, 1739
JOSEPH ROBINSON	1767 died
H. SMITH & R. WALLACE	1832, 1840
JOHN STRIT or STRITCH	1771, 1784
JOHN WALSH	1846
MATHEW WALSH	1784
PHILIP WALSH	1777, 1784
T. WALSH	1806, 1846
WILLIAM WARD	1798, 1810
JAMES WATSON	1774



### 3 Other Provincial Goldsmiths

According to the records of the Goldsmiths Company a certain amount of plate was assayed for goldsmiths in towns throughout Ireland. Probably the only existing piece of silver outside the counties of Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Galway is the trowel by H. Gardner of Belfast (see below).

A certain amount of silver was manufactured in Galway during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, the best-known goldsmith being R. Joyce or Joyes, who appeared to be in partnership with a Mark Fallon; it is not uncommon for the initials RI and MF to appear on the same article, as is the case with a chalice in Westminster Cathedral, London, which has MF and an anchor stamped on the octagonal base while on the bowl the initials RI are stamped twice with an anchor. The chalice is inscribed 'Pray for the souls of Mr Patrick Fitzgerald and Mrs Cecily D'Arcy, his wife, who caused this chalice to be made for theirs and their posterity. Anno Domini 1719'. Most Galway silver had either an anchor or a ship stamped with the maker's initials although the ship is more likely to appear on late seventeenth century silver than on the Georgian pieces. The English towns of Barnstaple and Weymouth also had ship marks and occasionally confusion arises over the identification of this particular punch.

Fig. 1 shows a beautifully engraved trowel which was made for the laying of the foundation stone of Donaghadee Harbour near Belfast. It was made by Henry Gardner, a watchmaker of Belfast, and is the only piece of identifiable Belfast made silver which is extant.

Henry Gardner sent silver to Dublin to be assayed in the early 1820s. Mr Seaby, former director of the Ulster Museum, supplied the following information:

Henry Gardner 1805 (?)–1837. Clock & Wmr., dentist, silversmith & jeweller, optical and mathematical instrument maker; worked with Job Rider 1805 to 1809; and succeeded him in 1809 at 27 High Street. Given in Fennell & Bailie. Worked with Robert Neill 1809–1818 'at the signe of the watch' and a verge watch in the Victoria and Albert is inscribed: Gardner & Neill. A long-case clock c. 1810 with white enamelled face, showing in arch, figure of Hope resting on anchor awaiting the arrival of a ship (probably an allusion to the Peninsular War) is at Waringstown. Long case clocks bearing the name of Gardner, Belfast, are also known; and a double-faced clock with this inscription is inserted in the wall of hall and cloakroom at Carnrael, near

## APPENDIX C

NAMES OF LIMERICK GOLDSMITHS  
REGISTERED IN THE BOOKS OF THE  
DUBLIN GOLDSMITHS COMPANY IN 1784  
AND FOLLOWING YEARS

An Act of Parliament 23 and 24 Geo. III C. 23 (1783) enacted that 'from and after 9th September 1784 no person being a merchant, manufacturer or dealer in gold or silver wares should sell or expose for sale, buy or exchange or export any wares of gold or silver or both or any jewels either set or unset without first registering his name and place of abode with the Company of Goldsmiths in Dublin in a book to be kept by the said Company for that purpose under a penalty of £100 for every offence.'

Consequently the following persons connected with the trade in Limerick complied with this order and signed their names in the register at Goldsmiths Hall Dublin:

THOMAS BURKE	Registered 1784
Quay Lane, Limerick	
WILLIAM CARROLL	1805
Bank Place, Newtownperry, Limerick	
PATRICK CONNELL	1784
Main Street, Englishtown, Limerick	
JOHN CULLEN	1784
Ballsbridge, Limerick	
EDWARD DARTNELL	1786
Main Street, Rathkeale, Co. Limerick	
MAURICE FITZGERALD	1784
Main Street, Englishtown, Limerick	
WILLIAM FITZGERALD	1800
15 Patrick Street, Limerick	
JOHN HACKETT	1784
Pennywell Road, Limerick	
GEORGE HALLORAN	1784
Main Street, Englishtown, Limerick	
JOHN HAWLEY	1784
Main Street, Irishtown, Limerick	
SAMUEL JOHNS	1784
Main Street, Limerick	
ARTHUR LYNCH	1784
2 Mongret Street, Limerick	
JAMES LYNCH	1784
Margaret Street, Limerick	

ROBERT LYNCH	1784
St John Street, Limerick	
DANIEL LYSAGHT	1786
Main Street, Limerick	
GEORGE MOORE	1784
Quay Lane, Limerick	
ROBERT O'SHAUGHNESSY	1802
Charlotts Quay, Limerick	
H. SMITH & R. WALLACE	1830
34 Patrick Street, Limerick	
JOHN STRIT (STREET)	1784
Main Street, Limerick	
MATTHEW STRITCH	1788
20 Broad Street, Limerick	
MATHEW WALSH	1784
Quay Lane, Limerick	
PHILIP WALSH	1784
Main Street, Limerick	
THOMAS WALSH	1806
6 Charlotts Quay, Limerick	
WILLIAM WARD	1798
Ballsbridge, Limerick	