

A. FYNDE – FOUND?

Richard Munday, for whom 1929 is the first documented evidence of dealing in Pewter, mentions the name Fynde in the edited version of his ‘Memories made of Pewter’. Richard recalls Fynde as a person who was, “*at that time probably the only dealer to specialise almost entirely in Pewter, a kind and gentle man ready to help and guide beginners*”. In other writings he describes him as, “*a delightful Southern looking gentleman with a goatee*”.

Fynde is such an unusual surname that even with ‘Soundex’; (a *phonetic algorithm for indexing names by sound, as pronounced in English*); not one Birth, Death or marriage registration for that surname appears in the U.K. between 1837 and 2006. Nothing is revealed in other records including Probate indexes and U.K arrival and departure Passenger lists. The name could of course have been ‘anglicised’; or someone of that name could have arrived in the U.K., after WW1 from Europe and returned post 1930; but at this stage evidence for either of these possibilities has not been forthcoming.

A.Fynde is also the name behind the eventual purchase in 1925 by the V&A Museum of the pewter item known as the ‘Grainger’ candlestick.

So who is this seller of Pewter; is the business name of A. Fynde a real person or a pseudonym with a clever play on words for an antique dealer?

Does currently available documentary evidence help answer this question?

1921 sees the beginning of the appearance of A Fynde in Directory entries, newspaper reports and newspaper and magazine advertisements, as well as amongst buyers listed on auction catalogues:

1921 Hughes London, Surburban and Provincial Directory

Fynde A Curios and Works of Art
13 [*sic*] Park Road NW1

1922 The Times Saturday Jan 21

Under the heading ‘**Antiques, Curios &c.**’

PEWTER, FURNITURE &c. Stocktaking sale until Jan 31.

Early closing Thursdays.

A Fynde 16 Park Road NW1
(Baker Street station)

Among a number of advertisements in The Connoisseur Magazine is the 1922 August Issue:

P E W T E R

17th-Century
ENGLISH
FLAGON.
Height to top, 9 in.
Diam. of base,
6 in.

17th-Century
CANDLESTICK
(Continental).
9½ in. high.



A. FYNDE, 16 Park Rd., Regent's Park, N.W.1
(Three minutes from Baker Street Stations) Telephone—Paddington 6336

This advertisement includes what is known as the “Grainger” candlestick which was later sold by Dr. M.H. Bernath of Stuttgart, for the sum of £15 to the Victoria and Albert Museum. The sale took place in 1925, sometime before an article on the candlestick by Charles T. P. Bailey of the V&A appeared in the November issue of The Burlington Magazine. *



Pewter candlestick, dated 1616, by William Grainger. Height, 24.1 cm. (Victoria and Albert Museum)

A Historic Pewter Candlestick

1922 The Times Friday December 8

The Sale Room

Sale of the property of Mr. J Seymour Lucas R.A.(and others) - Christie's £2,500 was realized in the adjoining room, Mr. J.S. Lucas's old English pewter dish and three pewter tankards selling for 60 guineas (A.Fynde)

1922 The Times Saturday December 02 & December 16

Christmas Gifts

Pewter nearly 2,000 pieces, from 2s.0d to £45 - A. Fynde 16, Park Road NW1 Three minutes from Baker Street Station Telephone Padd 6336

For a whole year in 1924, commencing on the 5th of January, advertisements appear in "The Art News – A weekly International Pictorial Newspaper of Art published in New York.

1924 The Art News Vol XXII no. 18 - Weekly New York, February 9, 1924.

The front page of this issue included: *This important Old English pewter flagon of about 1650, is 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches high to the top of the thumb-piece and has a diameter of 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches. It is reproduced courtesy of A. Fynde, 16 Park Road, London.*



Old English Flagon



This important Old English pewter flagon, of about 1650, is 11-8 inches high to the top of the thumb-piece and has a diameter of 5-3-8 inches. It is reproduced by courtesy of A. Fynde, 16 Park Road, London.

An example of one of the standard advertisements that appeared throughout that year in The Art News is for Saturday May 10:

XVIIth, XVIIIth and Early XIXth Century

PEWTER

*Phone : Padd 6336
3 minutes from Baker
Street stations*

*A. FYNDE
16 Park Road, Regents Park,
London, N.W.1*

Further documentary evidence can be found in:

An annotated catalogue for a sale including Pewter at Sotheby's on 19 December 1929, which apparently reveals that those buying Pewter at the time included 'dealers such as *Fynde, Kimball, Casimir, Munday and Cotterell*'.

1930 The Times Saturday May 31, pg 1 Issue 45527

Connoisseurs Guide

A.Fynde, For PEWTER - XVIIth and XVIIIth and early XIXth Century pieces - 16 Park Road Regents Park NW1. Three minutes Baker street station PADD 6336

London Telephone Directories list

Fynde A, Pewter &c., 16 Park Road PADD 6336.

These entries appear from 1922 upto and including 1932 before the name then disappears.

London Electoral Registers:

In 1918, the only occupants of 16 Park Road are Albert Joseph Smith, a Builder, and his wife Annie McKay Smith. Frank Bevan makes his first appearance at that address in 1919 and continues as the other name on the Electoral Register until 1932 when the 1933 Electoral register reveals he has moved and Albert and Annie Smith are joined by the Misses Granger, Hartley and Richards, as well as Ethel and Frederick Barrington (who actually live at 117 Prior Road NW6).

The 1934 London Post Office Directory shows Mrs. Ethel Barrington operating as a Works of Art Dealer at 16 Park Road.

The appearance and disappearance of Frank Bevan from this address coincides with the appearance and disappearance of the business known as A.Fynde. So is Frank Bevan the elusive A. Fynde or is that pure coincidence?

Well may the question be asked, because an additional name appears on just one Electoral Roll, and that is in 1930 when **Alfred Fynde** is listed along with Frank Bevan and the Smith's. So will someone named Alfred Fynde be confirmed as a real person at some stage in the future?

Perhaps not; because, as well as appearing in the First List of Subscribers, A. Fynde Esq., supplies a photograph to Howard Herschell Cotterell for his 1929 book, *'Old Pewter Its makers and marks'*



a
ENGLISH FLAGON, c. 1650. Height to lip, 9½". Mark No 3092 (Robert Marten). Photo courteously supplied by A. Fynde, Esq., London.

Then in the preface of that book, H.H. Cotterell writes *'the courtesy and helpfulness of so many collectors and others, demands, even at the expense of a somewhat lengthy list of names, that my indebtedness to many of them be recorded individually, lest I lay myself open to the charge of discourtesy, by 'lumping' them together in a meaningless "omnium gatherum".'*

Within that list, which includes such 'pewter' names as Mrs. Carvick-Webster, Miss Chichester, T. Charbonnier, Walter G. Churcher etc., there appears the name, not of A. Fynde, but of Frank Bevan!

Or is that just a coincidence?

Christine M. Ellis

January 2012

*Update April 2012 - The electronic newsletter published by the Worshipful Company of Pewterers, *The Pewterer Vol. 3 No. 1*, contains an interesting article about the Grainger Candlestick by Angus Patterson, (Curator, European Base Metals and Arms and Armour, Victoria and Albert Museum) , in which it is mentioned that M.H. Bernarth apparently paid £12 in London for the candlestick.

[http://web.me.com/alanwilliams4/The Pewterer, 3.1/The Grainger Candlestick.html](http://web.me.com/alanwilliams4/The_Pewterer,_3.1/The_Grainger_Candlestick.html)

April/May 2012

ADDENDUM

Christine M. Ellis

What is known about Frank Bevan, possible candidate for the name behind the antiques and pewter business of A.Fynde?

Frank was born in 1874 in Regents Park London, the second son of William J. B. and Marion Bevan. His Father, a Seed Broker, died when Frank was only three years of age and by the age of 6 Frank was at boarding school.

While one brother becomes a Barrister and another a Physician, Frank enlisted as a Commissioned Officer in the Northumberland Fusiliers, being seconded for service with the Colonial Office in Lagos in 1897. Towards the end of 1899 Frank landed with the 1st Battalion of the Northumberland Fusiliers in Cape Town South Africa during the Boer War and was injured while taking part in the Belmont Reconnaissance.

In 1900 Frank was promoted from Lieutenant to Captain, and by early 1901 was stationed in Aldershot, Hampshire; shortly afterwards being seconded as Commander of the depot of the Royal Garrison Regiment in Warley, Essex.

In 1903 Frank was placed on temporary half-pay on account of ill health but fully retires in 1904. He was then appointed as a King's Messenger with the Diplomat Corps.

By 1911 Frank Bevan, a Hospital Secretary, was living in St Martins Lane London ; this was also his address in 1913. It is not known if his occupation remained the same, but in the latter half of 1915, he was recalled from the Reserve of Officers for service in World War 1.

Towards the end of 1916 something occurred which would appear to have a dramatic effect on the life of Frank Bevan, when after a Court Martial, he was cashiered from the Army.

Frank had moved to the Marylebone area by 1918 and is now known to have moved to Park Road in 1919. As can be seen from the article on the pewter dealing business known as A. Fynde, he left that address in 1932. Between that date and 1937, Frank remained in the same area, with his three subsequent addresses being within two miles of Park Road.

After cancelling a First class sailing to Port Said in 1934, he eventually sails in September 1935 returning in April 1936. He must have returned to the area later in the year as on the 31 January 1937 Frank died in Tunisia North Africa.

June 2012 - The last piece of the puzzle falls into place and with it the confirmation that Frank Bevan is the name behind A.Fynde.

The Librarian for The Pewter Society informs me of his discovery in the library of a letter head which reads:

A. FYNDE
PROPRIETOR : F. BEVAN
ANTIQUES

16, PARK ROAD
REGENT'S PARK
N.W.1