

FISH PLATES AND PLATE WARMERS

Here follow some examples of items mentioned by Peter Hayward in his article. These illustrations are not provided by Peter nor do they relate directly to any pieces mentioned in his article but are shown here simply as examples of two of the types of pieces mentioned.

Pewter 13½” circular fish plate – early 18th century (1700-1725)

This is a rare item because of both its size and circular shape. Oval ones are more common (see article by Peter Hayward in Journal PS Spring 2002,) It was made from a special mould used to cast what are erroneously called ‘scale plates’, which were actually used as cutting boards for cheese or pies at table. (See figs 54 & 55 in Pewter at Colonial Williamsburg for two examples.) The holes were drilled specially to assist drainage, being wider on the upper face, as if they were countersunk. In excellent condition, faint trace of what may be a maker’s mark to reverse, which also is struck with the letter ‘T’. Weighs 2lbs 11ozs



Pewter Fish Plate in oval shape and well made with draining holes in a slightly dish like form. This would have sat in a pewter dish of larger size that just held it so that when served the juices would have run off through the holes into the dish below. What a good idea! No more serving of fish swimming so to speak in their own cooking liquor. This also has an interesting armorial of a stallions’ rearing head with reins flying loosely. This is a maximum 16” long and 12” wide and weighs 3 lbs.



An Awesome Pewter Hot Water Plate. This large serving dish measures without the handle 20" X 15 1/2" at the widest points, it stands close on 3" high and weighs more than my 12 lb scales will record. The water container is deep; the whole thing must have been very heavy to serve. There is a well or depression at one end made to take the juices of the cooked meat perhaps. There are no marks. One handle shows a little deterioration and the oxide on the dish is flaking in a couple of places. A formidable piece of pewter tableware.



A Pewter Hotwater Plate. Unusual in that this has fixed handles and in that the serving side is actually shallower than the underside which is also formed as a hot water plate. So maybe the handles are fixed so that it can be used either way Hence the plug would have had to be good to keep the water in. There are no maker's marks. This measures 8" diameter and stands 1 3/4" above the table. It weighs some 2 lbs 14 ozs.



A few more examples of Hot Water plates in essence a container for hot water so made that a plate could sit on top and keep warm. Mostly these are in the region of 8 to 9" diameter. Two were seen at Towneley Hall, Burnley. The first is by Henry Joseph and the second by Sarah or Stephen Cocks.





Values – whereas the Fish Plates to a collector who wants one are valuable and do command higher prices - there is difficulty in finding a price for hot water plates, as these are hard to sell reasonably – they are simply not fashionable in 2010 with collectors (nor have ever been to the writer’s knowledge.). Pieces by a maker who is collected might attract a higher price than expected.