

PEWTER IN POETRY

Pewter is not a subject you might expect to occur in poetry - but in reading this writer has managed to find a few lines from the 1660s that have some relevance to pewter collecting.

In "Hudibras" Samuel Butler's satire EPIC POEM of the Civil Wars, published in the 1660s - which was an anti-puritan - royalist classic - attacking bigotry and fanaticism - we find the ordinary and everyday (some pewter!) transformed -

*Did they coyn Piss-pots, Boulds and Flagons,
Int' Officers of Horse and Dragoons,
And into Pikes and Musketiers
Stamp beakers, Cups and Porringers,
A thimble, Bodkin and a Spoon,
Did Start up living men as soon
As in the Furnace they were thrown.*

This reflects the oriental dragons tooth of legend turning into fighting soldiers - here common household stuff perhaps emerges as armed soldiers -

The Restoration in 1659-60 had brought with it a limited tolerance for other religious views and for the political and social views of the citizens to find expression in pamphlets, theatre, engravings, and various publications and in looser social behaviour. The opening of the coffee houses encouraged men to gather and gossip and to exchange views, a freedom and tolerance new to the citizens of London, of whatever means. This did not necessarily extend to the poorer regions in the same way.

By giving these freedoms Charles II was intent on enjoying his life without the troubles that befell his father.

Someone might know perhaps, what a STAMP BEAKER – was?