

*1751 - 1752*

**GEBELEIN**  
*Silversmiths*

*79 Chestnut Street, Boston 8, Mass.*

July 19, 1963

Mr. Cornelius C. Moore  
112 Bellevue Avenue  
Newport, Rhode Island

Dear Mr. Moore:

A subject that has come up for discussion again with Colonel Laurence Eliot Bunker is the differentiation between the silver marked BB by his antecedent Benjamin Bunker of Nantucket and that by Benjamin Brenton. He has left some spoons with me on our observation that these are rather by Brenton than Bunker.

These spoons are of the upturning tipt style c.1750, except one of the teaspoons which is backtipt but bears the same mark as the upturning three and has like engraving. The mark on the four teaspoons is however a different punch than on the table spoons. It is struck once on each teaspoon. On the table spoons BB is struck twice, a pair and a single struck across the handle stem, the punch being the same as on your porringer fig.125, another single struck along the handle stem and a different punch apparently same as on Mr. Carpenter's creamer fig.107 but with similar style engraving on all four table spoons. This makes three different BB punches on these spoons. There was still another punch that was considered from standpoint of later period pieces and the study by Everett U. Crosby in "97 Per Cent Perfect" as applicable to Bunker. Col. Bunker has a porringer like that illustrated by Crosby.

The discrepancies of dates published for Brenton prove puzzling, suggesting there may have been more than one Benjamin Brenton.

Your rat-tailed spoon shown at right as c.1715-1730 in fig.132 (Carpenter's "Arts and Crafts of Newport" is obviously of the age of Brenton if his dates are as there given 1686-1740.

The Boston Museum, as printed in Currier's book of marks, gives b.1710, apparently merely taken as given by Hollis French in the Walpole Society book of 1917. Ensko's book gives 1695-1749, with further detail: Freeman, 1717 Born September 8. Married Mary Butts, November 12, 1719. Died April 2, 1749.

Doubtless Mr. Carpenter had a factual record for his 1686-1740,

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although under the illustration of your porringer he has it dated c.1740-1745.

Bunker's dates were 1751-1842, son of Wm of Newport and as stated by Mr. Carpenter spent much time in Nantucket. This infers that Bunker also was likely to have left evidence of work done in Newport.

Besides the four table spoons and four teaspoons above described which have been left with me by Col. Bunker, we have a shell backed teaspoon with the mark as shown on your porringer.

Reverting to Boston again, in my last I should have mentioned a recent acquisition although a spoon, a special case: by Thomas Edwards the elder son (1701-1755). Like another which you now have, it is marked T.Edwards in rectangle and has the plus feature of an engraved coat of arms back of handle, with owners' initials T

A S  
also engraved within the armorial shield. The detail of the arms is argent a fess indented sable between 2 crosslets (above) and a rose (below). This spoon is priced 137.50.

Today I am informed the second party given a look at the Samuel Edwards cann when I did not snap it up for cash, has bought it. Whether the buyer was collecting for himself, or whether it might turn up offered over again by the purchaser to me, remains to be observed. In the previous instances of the additional Edwards items I had the exclusive offering therewith allowed to time my acquisition of the pieces.

Very truly yours,

GEBELBIN SILVERSMITHS, INC.

By *A. Herbert Gebelin*

G/P