

# HnS (unknown maker)

Likely active period:

Born/baptised : unknown

**Before and after 1798**

Died : unknown

The identity of this silversmith is perhaps one of the greatest mysteries in Cape silver. The device mark accompanying the maker's mark is generally the same as that used by Daniel Heinrich Schmidt, and indeed some of the items are similar to those produced by Schmidt – for example rope-twist handles with floral-and-leaf attachments, such as those on the sugar bowl that is almost identical to Schmidt's except for the finial and base. A similar bowl, however, also with a different finial, bears the mark of Daniel Beets.

There are however some notable differences between items bearing the DHS and HnS marks:

- Many of Schmidt's pieces have cast and applied feet; I have not seen this feature on pieces bearing the HnS mark, which generally have pedestal feet. One exception is the sugar box, but this may have been made by Hausenius and only finished or retailed by HnS.
- All HnS finials I have seen are of the pineapple-and-leaf form; Schmidt's are generally elaborate cast floral and foliate finials.
- Schmidt produced several footed boxes (sugar boxes and tea caddies), but I have seen none by HnS who seems to have produced mainly vase-form sugar bowls (a form only occasionally seen with Schmidt's mark). Again, the one exception is the sugar box which may have been made by Hausenius.

I have seen a number of arguments advanced as to the identify of HnS, which could explain these differences:

- He was another silversmith who worked with Daniel Heinrich Schmidt, possibly his son. It seems odd however that no mention has been found of the other silversmith, given the significance of his output.
- The HnS punch is in fact simply a worn punch of Daniel Heinrich Schmidt. While this could explain the different style of product (the worn punch would presumably have been used on his later output), I would have expected to observe a progressive deterioration in the mark, yet this is not the case. It is hard to imagine how the letter 'D' of Schmidt's punch could wear to the 'H' shape of the more clearly stamped HnS marks.

Much of the silverware bearing this mark is typical of the Continental European forms of Welz's 'Dutch East India Company Period (1652-1795)', including hanoverian pattern flatware and vase-form sugar bowls with their beaded borders, drop-ring handles and pineapple-and-leaf finials. Other pieces demonstrate an English influence, often still retaining Continental European characteristics, and would appear to fit most comfortably within Welz's 'Heterogeneous Period (1795-1830)'. These include the Old English pattern flatware, snuff box with engraved decoration, coffee pot with pedestal foot rather than three cast-and-applied feet, and embossed stiff leaf decoration on a sugar bowl.

Flatware is mostly in the Hanoverian pattern, although Old English with feather edges is also found, and includes table spoons and forks, teaspoons, konfyk forks, soup ladles and basting spoons.

A navette-shaped snuff box has extensive bright-cut engraved decoration.

Other pieces include a coffee pot and sugar baskets and bowls. Welz illustrates one of a pair of covered communion cups with an inscription dated 1798. I have seen one sugar box bearing this silversmith's mark, but it appears to be over stamping the mark of Georg Friedrich Hausenius who may have been the actual maker of the box.

## Spoons and forks

Hanoverian pattern

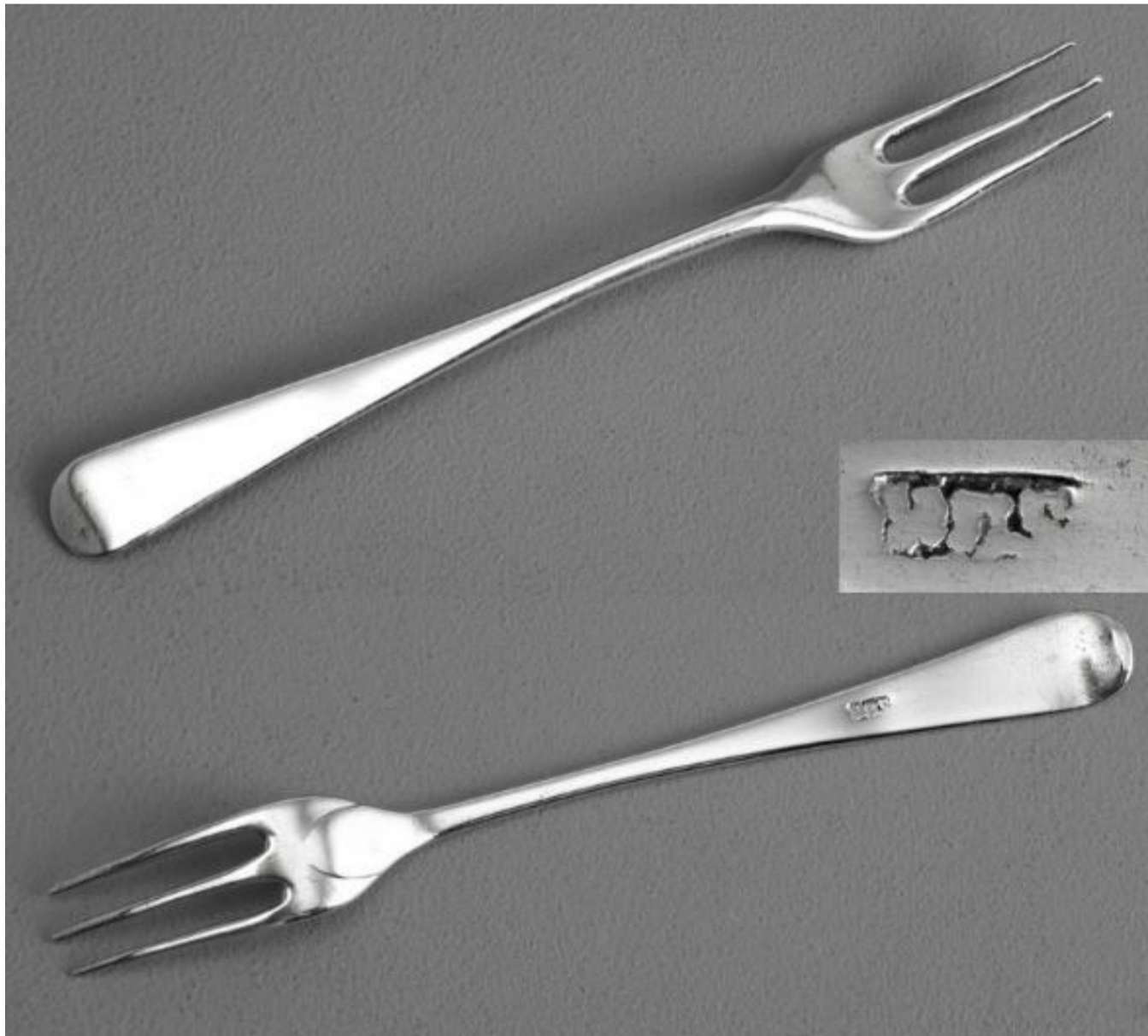


Old English Pattern



**Serving flatware**

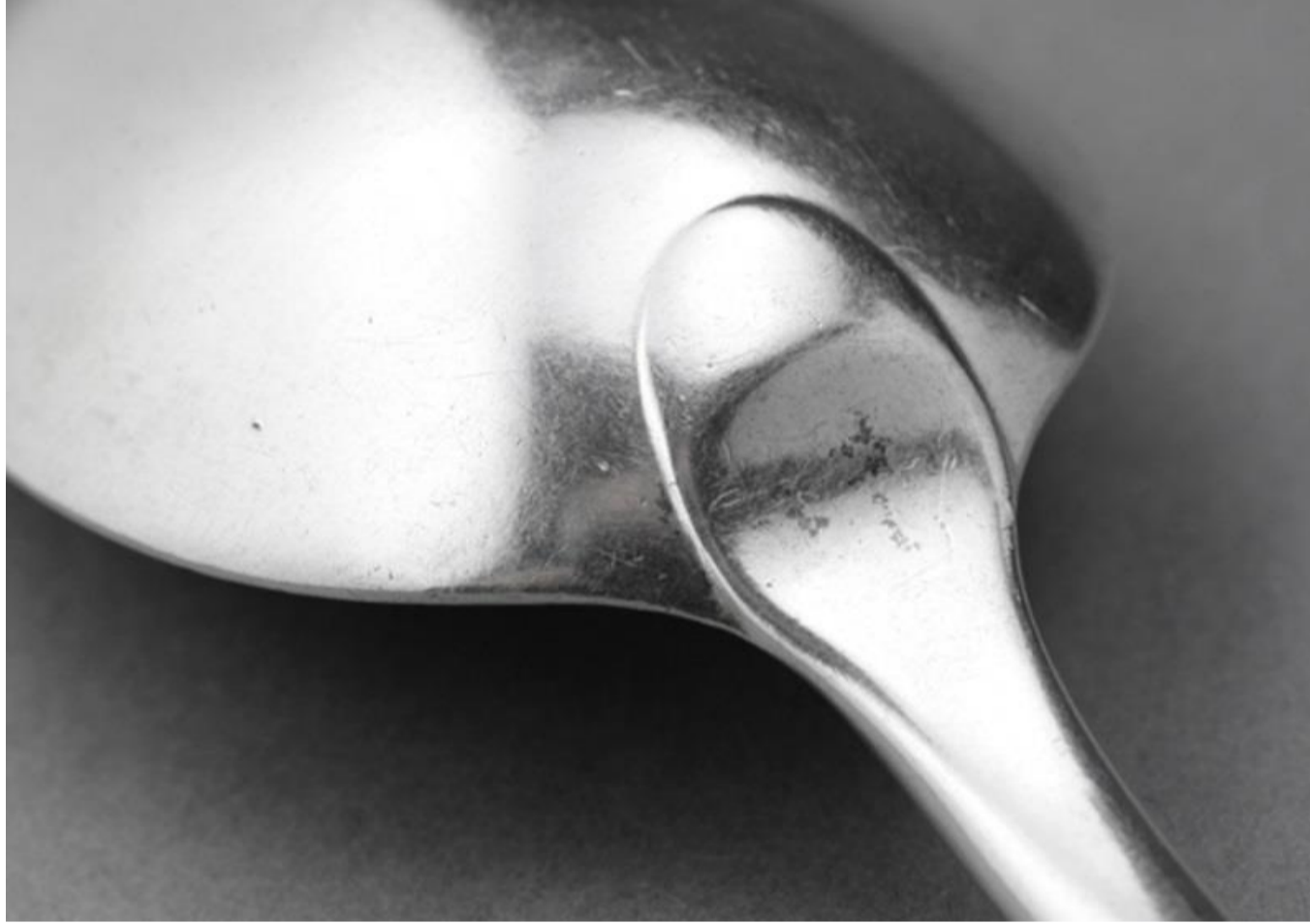
Konfytt Fork



Soup Ladles



Basting spoons



Other pieces

Coffee Pot



Sugar Basket



Sugar Box



Note: one of the maker's marks on this sugar box appears to be over-stamping that of another maker, apparently Georg Friedrich Hausenius whose device mark (a dove with olive branch) is also present.

Sugar Bowls

Wm. & Wm.



## Marks



## Rarity indicator

Flatware	Scarce	Snuff boxes	Rare	Other items	Scarce
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Note: a set of flatware of the same category and by the same maker is counted as a single item.

Key (relative rarity within each category):

Available	more than 5% of items in our database
Scarce	1 to 5% of items in our database
Rare	fewer than 1% of items in our database
None	No items encountered

## Auction price history

Note: only sales of single items by public auction, including online auction platforms, are shown here. Unsold lots and job lots have been excluded. This list does not purport to be complete.

Sale date	Item category	Item description	Price realised	Price type *
1991/02/11	Ladles - soup	Hanoverian pattern soup ladle by HNS, 260g	ZAR850	1
1991/07/08	Snuff boxes	Navette-shaped snuff box by HNS, lid and base engraved with floral motif within wavy borders, the sides with formal bands, solder line on cover split, 50g, 6,5cm wide	ZAR1600	1
1999/10/11	Ladles - soup	Hanoverian pattern soup ladle by HNS, terminal initialled 'FDW', 350g	ZAR4950	2
2011/03/07	Coffee pots	Coffee pot, unknown maker HNS, the body moulded with ribbon and beaded swags, the hinged cover with beaded border, cone-shaped finial and elongated leaves, with a spreading circular beaded footrim, raised on a square base, 510g, 24,5cm high. PROVENANCE: The Du Plessis family collection. Barend Louis du Plessis (1753 -?) of Stellenbosch married Elisabeth Blignaut in 1774. Johannes Petrus du Plessis (1778 - ?) married Susanna Sophia de Villiers in 1823. Jan Hendrik du Plessis (1826 - 1891) married Harriet Barker. Johannes du Plessis (1868 - 1935) married Aletta Helena Albertyn in 1917. Jean Henri du Plessis (1917 - 1981) married Elise van Heerden in 1947. Thence by descent to the current owners. NOTES: Jan Hendrik du Plessis (1826 - 1891) served as N G Kerk minister at Cradock from 1861, commissioner of the N G Kerk at Cape Town from 1884 to 1887 and temporary minister at Pietermaritzburg where he died. He married Harriet Barker (1831-1900), daughter of the Rev George Barker, a well-known LMS missionary at Theopolis, at Bethelsdorp and Paarl. It was at du Plessis' prompting that the NG Kerk in Cradock is based on the model of James Gibb's church of St. Martins-in-the-Fields, London. Johannes du Plessis had an extraordinary career as N G Kerk minister, traveller in Africa, missionary expert, author and professor of theology. The well-known heresy case against him was based on his views as professor at Stellenbosch, on the inspiration and authority of the Bible, the acceptance or rejection of the results of the "higher criticism", and the divine authority of Jesus. Proceedings in the Presbytery of Stellenbosch then in the Synod of the N G Kerk and finally in the Cape Supreme Court, continued from 1928 until his eventual dismissal from the Seminary in 1932. There was considerable support for du Plessis at Stellenbosch and his supporters commissioned a life-size statue of him in rose-pink marble which became popularly known as "Pink Piet". The statue by Florenci Cuairan stood until recently in the gardens of the Stellenbosch museum and is now in the grounds of the N G Kerk. LITERATURE: Stephan Welz, Cape Silver and Silversmiths, Balkema, Cape Town, 1976, illustrated on p60. "The Du Plessis specimen, made by the unknown maker HNS, dates from the same period as those of Schmidt and Hilligers, although it already shows strong classical influence with beaded borders and pedestal foot." p63. This coffee pot was used for the design of a 50 cent postage stamp, 5 November 1985. A First Day Cover accompanies this lot.	ZAR512440	3
2011/03/07	Sugar baskets	Sugar basket, unknown maker HNS, oval, urn-shaped with everted beaded and pierced rim, the sides applied with a pair of beaded handles, the body engraved with a guilloche	ZAR490160	3

		border, the beaded stem raised on a rectangular base, 230g, 18cm wide over handles. PROVENANCE: The du Plessis family collection. Barend Louis du Plessis (1753 -?) of Stellenbosch married Elisabeth Blignaut in 1774. Johannes Petrus du Plessis (1778 - ?) married Susanna Sophia de Villiers in 1823. Jan Hendrik du Plessis (1826 - 1891) married Harriet Barker. Johannes du Plessis (1868 - 1935) married Aletta Helena Albertyn in 1917. Jean Henri du Plessis (1917 - 1981) married Elise van Heerden in 1947. Thence by descent to the current owners. NOTES: Jan Hendrik du Plessis (1826 - 1891) served as N G Kerk minister at Cradock from 1861, commissioner of the N G Kerk at Cape Town from 1884 to 1887 and temporary minister at Pietermaritzburg where he died. He married Harriet Barker (1831-1900), daughter of the Rev George Barker, a well-known LMS missionary at Theopolis, at Bethelsdorp and Paarl. It was at du Plessis' prompting that the NG Kerk in Cradock is based on the model of James Gibb's church of St. Martins-in-the-Fields, London. Johannes du Plessis had an extraordinary career as N G Kerk minister, traveller in Africa, missionary expert, author and professor of theology. The well-known heresy case against him was based on his views as professor at Stellenbosch, on the inspiration and authority of the Bible, the acceptance or rejection of the results of the "higher criticism", and the divine authority of Jesus. Proceedings in the Presbytery of Stellenbosch then in the Synod of the N G Kerk and finally in the Cape Supreme Court, continued from 1928 until his eventual dismissal from the Seminary in 1932. There was considerable support for du Plessis at Stellenbosch and his supporters commissioned a life-size statue of him in rose-pink marble which became popularly known as "Pink Piet". The statue by Florenci Cuairan stood until recently in the gardens of the Stellenbosch museum and is now in the grounds of the N G Kerk. LITERATURE: Stephan Welz, Cape Silver and Silversmiths, Balkema, Cape Town, 1976, illustrated on p. 96. This sugar basket was used for the design of a 12 cent postage stamp, 5 November 1985. A First Day Cover accompanies this lot.		
2014/03/17	Ladles - soup	Hanoverian pattern soup ladle, unknown maker's mark 'HNS', 19th, 250g	ZAR5855	3
2014/03/17	Spoons - teaspoons	Set of four Old English Feather Edge pattern teaspoons, unknown maker's mark 'HNS', each engraved with the initials 'LA', 65g	ZAR7612	3
2015/10/12	Sugar bowls	Two-handled sugar bowl and cover, unknown maker HNS, urn-shaped with beaded borders, the sides applied with a pair of rope-twist handles, on a spreading circular foot and square pierced base, the corners engraved with the initials 'SFVA', the semi-domed cover with bud and leaf finial, one leaf lacking, 370g, 16,5cm high	ZAR261464	3
2016/10/10	Sugar bowls	Two-handled sugar bowl and cover by HNS, urn-shaped with beaded borders, the sides applied with a pair of rope-twist handles, on a spreading circular foot and square base, the semi-domed cover with bud and leaf finial, 405g, 16cm high	ZAR215992	3

\* Price types:

1 - Auction result hammer price

2 - Auction result including buyer's commission

3 - Auction result including buyer's commission and VAT