As well as the furnace, Plummer was equipped with tools for hammering, turning and finishing, but at the time of his death possessed no moulds. Certainly, there were moulds in 17th century Grantham (3), and it is possible that he was able to hire or share these locally. Alternatively, he may have bought in some or all of his pewter from Lincoln.

Plummer seems to have had no surviving offspring and wrote a simple will at the end of 1668, a month before his death. In it he bequeathed his whole estate to his wife Jane, 'except, item, I give unto John Plummer son of Francis Plummer, when my wife gives over the trade or marries, all the working tooles that belongeth to my shopp greate and small'. In the event, the young John was to receive the tools sooner rather than later since four months after Plummer's death his widow Jane did re-marry and became the wife of the Lincoln pewterer John Robinson, who had been a searcher of pewter in Lincoln in 1658. The speed with which this marriage was arranged suggests that Robinson already knew the family well, and it is possible that he himself had been a supplier of pewter to the Grantham business.

REFERENCES

(1) LAO. Inv 105, 112, the inventory of pewterer Richard Lakeland, a freeman of Lincoln who spent the latter part of his working life in Grantham and died there possessed of brass moulds valued at £25 - a considerable quantity.
(2) LAO. Inv 119, 119 (M 1754).
(3) LAO. Inv 105, 112, the 1608 inventory of the pewterer Richard Lakeland, a freeman of Lincoln who spent the latter part of his working life in Grantham and died there possessed of brass moulds valued at £25 - a considerable quantity.
(4) LAO. LCX wills 1669/66.

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A RE-ASSESSMENT OF 'SPRAY' BALUSTER MEASURES

by John Douglas

This group of rare measures has been re-examined in depth in an attempt to relate them to other measures, both lidded and lidless. In the process their various features have been critically studied and previous deductions reassessed (Holt, 1979, Douglas, 1980 and 82, Myrtle, 1983).

Twelve examples have been noted over the years and nine of them have been inspected again in detail. Unfortunately the current whereabouts of the other three are now unknown but luckily some of their details had been recorded previously. A photograph of the seven which were brought to the 2002 Autumn Meeting of the Society appeared in the Newsletter P.S. News. (2002). The five pint-sized Sprays present are shown in Figure 32.
The objectives of this study were to determine (i) when, where and by whom the measures were made, (ii) the range of sizes made and to which standards they conform and (iii) how they relate to other styles or measures.

Before addressing these questions, the physical features of the measures were examined and their idiosyncrasies identified. Additionally, to find out when and where Spray measures were made the makers' marks, any inscriptions or dates and where individual measures first came to light were analysed. Finally the Sprays were compared with other styles, both lidded and lidless, which have been found in similar and adjacent locations.

EXAMINATION OF THE FEATURES

Thumb-piece

The elegantly simple thumb-rest had various names such as plume (Myrtle 1983), splash (P.S. Cat. 1969), splayed (Myrtle 1983), splayed feather (Myrtle 1983) and sprayed (P.S. Cat. 1962) before it was called a Spray (Peal, 1971) by Chris Peal. Its attachment to the lid in front of the thumb-rest resembles a series of layered triangles and is similar to that found on bud baluster measures. One difference from other thumb-pieces on balusters is that the thumb-rest meets the lid forward of the hinge lugs as on tankards and flagons rather than in line with the lugs as on other lidded measures (see Figure 33(a)). Perhaps the thumb-pieces were originally intended for use on flagons or lavers of a type of which there are no known surviving examples. There is a ridge on the connection between the thumb-rest and the hinge lug in line with the lug on all except one measure (see Figure 33(b)). The exception is the quart in the V & A Museum where the ridge is absent but there are two incised lines which are parallel to the hinge pin (see Figure 33(c)). These grooves are unusual on tankard thumb-pieces but they do occur on a group of flat lids which have a bombé thumb-piece and a handle with a scrolled terminal and which are thought to have been made in Wigan by Christopher Baldwin.

Finally all the thumb-pieces, except that on the quart in the V&A, are the same size, show the same asymmetry on the fronts and have the same casting flaws on the backs (see Figure 34(a) and (b)). This indicates that they were cast from the same mould which in turn indicates that the manufacture of the measures was confined to a small region in which either the thumb-piece moulds were shared or the pewterers bought-in thumb-pieces from the same producer.
Body

In addition to the eponymous thumb-piece another distinguishing feature of these measures is the characteristic outline of the body. They all have a low belly and the larger ones are slim, some being very slim. There are at least two variants of the basic profile. One variant has an almost straight waist (Figures 35. upper and lower left), whereas the other is more curvy (Figures 35. upper and lower right). A characteristic of the former profile is the sharper change of contour at the junction of the collar and the body, which can be clearly seen in Figure 35. upper left.

Although all thumb-pieces, except one, were cast from the same mould, at least three different sets of moulds were used for 'pint' bodies and two sets for 'quart' bodies. In general, the bodies were decorated with pairs of incised lines. The bases are higher than might be expected, approx. ½", and often have been bumped up to reduce the volume. This can be seen in Figure 36. and also that the walls are usually quite thick, resulting in a heavy measure.

Handle

Handles on Sprays resemble those on Scottish baluster measures as can be seen in Figure 35(a). There is a 'long straight' at the top which sometimes tips up away from the body and then has a fairly tight curve ending with a very simple terminal. Unlike Scottish handles however there is no cylindrical strut at the lower attachment to the body. Another quirk is that the handles were often attached skew with a small anti-clockwise twist as seen in Figure 37. Myrtle (Myrtle 1983) said that some were cast in position and others soldered but in my opinion they were all soldered.

Lid

The flat lids also have a Scottish feature, that of having a cast circular flange on the underside. However its profile is different. On Scottish lids both sides of the ring are at right-angles to the plane of the lid, whereas on Sprays the outer edge slopes
producing a V-shape profile (see Figure 38.). A similar flange occurs on some English hammerhead measures. The purpose of this ring is unclear. It is obviously not to reduce the wobble of the lid as its diameter is often considerably less than the internal diameter of the measure. This is especially true on quarts. On two pints and a quart bearing the same touchmark (seen in Figure 38.), the diameters of the flanges are the same even though the diameters of the lids are different, resulting in a neat fit on the pints and a very sloppy one on the quart. One theory is that the flange was there to aid gripping the lid during turning on a lathe.

![Scottish flange and Spray flange](image)

**Figure 38. Undersides of two lids showing the flanges.**

**Capacity**

Sprays have been found in only two basic sizes ‘pint’ and ‘quart’ but there is considerable variation in the actual capacities. It can be seen in Table 1 that the capacities of the seven known pint measures fall into the following 3 groups:

(a) approx. 15.0 fl oz corresponding to Scottish Sterling capacity.
(b) 15.9 to 16.5 fl oz corresponding to 1/5th Ancient Guild Hall gallon
(c) 20.2 fl oz corresponding to Old English Ale Pint

The Queen Anne wine gallon of 1706/7 is equivalent to a pint of 16.7 fl oz whereas its predecessor, the Ancient Guild Hall Gallon, was equivalent to a pint of 16.1 fl oz.

Thus the second group conforms to the pre 1706 Q.A. Wine Standard. The ale pint Spray (Myrtle 1966), which has lost its lid but luckily not its thumb-piece, has a very slim body with a typical low belly.

The capacities of the quarts all more or less conform to the Ancient Guildhall Gallon.

**OTHER EVIDENCE**

**Inscriptions**

The measure seen in Figure 39. used to be in Townend, a National Trust house at Troutbeck near Windermere until it was stolen in the 1970s along with some other pewter. On the handle is the ownership triad B E and the date 1704. Townend was in the ownership of the Browne family for over 300 years and in the reign of Queen Anne it was owned by Benjamin and Elizabeth Browne (Holt, 1979). This measure thus provides important evidence that a Spray baluster measure was in use at Troutbeck in 1704.

![Spray formerly at Townend](image)

**Figure 39. The pint Spray formerly at Townend, Troutbeck bearing the touchmark of ‘B E’ within a heart on the lid and ‘B E’ and 1704 on the handle. The bogus arms were added by a de cendent of Benjamin and Elizabeth Browne in the 19th century (Holt, 1979).**

Where found

Where measures first came to light gives an indication of where they were used and hence where they might have been made. The map (Figure 40.) shows these locations, where known. This distribution points to an origin in the Lancashire - Yorkshire area, possibly Liverpool, Wigan or York. But it is more likely to have been in Lancashire.

**Makers' marks**

Touchmarks are an obvious further source for clues of origin. Luckily five of the measures have clearly
visible marks. Having established that all the makers would have been working within a small area, I looked for an area where there was a match for all the initials found on the marks.

Three of the measures, shown in Figure 41, all bear the mark of 'AB' over a bird within a 'scalloped' circle.

The Townend measure had a clear mark of 'IH' within a heart on the lid. This mark has been seen on a number of objects in the Lake District. In fact there was also a slim ball & bar baluster measure of 1/2 mutchkin capacity bearing this same mark on display in Townend before the theft!

I checked with lists of makers from Wigan, Liverpool and York and found that Wigan was the only centre where makers could be found to fit all initials in the right period. The possibilities are shown in Table 2.

Cotterell (OP 222a) attributed the mark of 'AB' above a bird in a 'plain' circle to Adam Bankes of Milngate, Wigan. It is possible that the two variants of this mark, bounded by either a plain or a scalloped circle, could thus be those of father and son, Adam Bankes III (fl. 1671-1705) and Adam Bankes IV (fl. 1704-16).

Where, when and by whom the measures were made has thus been established as well as the sizes and the standards to which they conformed, but how do they fit into the general pattern of measures?

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER MEASURES

Myrtle (Myrtle 1983) said: 'A study of the few available examples of this rare type of baluster measure seems to indicate that it is a hybrid type with no place in the fairly well ordered development of English balusters from the 16th to the 19th century. Nor does it wholly fit into the family of later Scottish balusters with ball and bar, spade and shell thumb-pieces.'

In an attempt to find a pattern, the study was extended to include other measures with similar body profiles whether lidded or not.

Other Lidded measures

(a) Hammerheads in Cumbria

There is a group of four low-belly balusters with hammerhead thumb-pieces all belonging to churches in the Penrith / Carlisle area. Three of them have been described and illustrated by Michael Finlay (Finlay 1985) but the fourth, which is unmarked, has only recently come to light. Apart from the thumb-pieces, the similarity with 'Sprays' is very striking. The three which have previously been described (Finlay 1985) all have the mark 'IG' on the lid, which has been attributed to John Grave.
of Penrith, who died in 1717. One of them is shown in Figure 42. Not only are the bodies similar to those of Spray balusters but the lids, on the two which I have examined, also have cast flanges on the underside. The existence of these measures in these churches indicates that the popularity of this body style extended much further north than Wigan at the start of the eighteenth century.

\[\text{Figure 42. A hammerhead measure at Scalby Church with many Spray characteristics.}\]

(b) Slim ball & bars.

One of the hammerheads by John Grave (Finlay 1985) has a slimmer body and a cylindrical strut at the lower handle attachment, which is typical of late hammerheads. It is in fact very similar in profile to a group of slim ball and bar baluster measures which all have V-shape flanges on the underside of the lid (Douglas, 1980). They are found in \(\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{4}\) and \(\frac{1}{8}\) mitchkin sizes. One of them has the mark of ‘TL’ in a heart on the lid, probably Thomas Leatherbarrow I of Wigan and at least three bear the mark of ‘III’ in a heart on the lid including the one which was stolen from Townend along with the Spray bearing the same mark. These measures are thus contemporary with Sprays but are in smaller capacities conforming to Sterling standard.

\[\text{Figure 43. A quart bud by William Bankes V and a quart Spray by ‘RB’. (probably Robert Bankes IV or V).}\]

(c) William Bankes’ buds

On the left in Figure 43, is a wine quart bud baluster made by William Bankes V, (fl.1691- d.1725). Next to it is the quart Spray by ‘RB’ (possibly Robert Bankes IV d.1722 or Robert Bankes V fl.1722-1726), which was once owned by Michaelis. A careful comparison of the dimensions, allowing for the photos being taken from different angles and that the base of the bud is not visible, indicates that the two measures could have come from the same or very similar moulds.

My hypothesis is that in Wigan the Spray thumb-piece was a short lived pre-cursor of the bud thumb-piece which evolved between hammerhead and normal bud thumb-pieces. Although the photographic evidence of Figure 43, doesn’t prove the hypothesis at least it doesn’t contradict it.

It is known that in London some makers of bud baluster measures made the smallest size in the range (half gill) with a ball & wedge thumb-piece. It seems possible that in Wigan there could also have been a range of measures with a mixture of thumb-pieces - the ‘quart’ and ‘pint’ having Spray thumb-pieces and the smaller sizes ball and bar thumb-pieces.

So I suggest that in Wigan in the early 18th century, the series of measures was ‘quart’ and ‘pint’ (or chopin and mitchkin) with Spray thumb-pieces followed by ball and bar thumb-pieces on the smaller sizes.

Lidless measures

A few lidless baluster measures are known which have low bellies, and roughly the same body contours as Sprays. They are found with three different handle types: (i) a single curve with ball terminal, (ii) an early form of double-curve with fishtail terminal and (iii) a single curve with flush terminal. The five examples known to the author are shown in Figure 44. The double curve handle with the fishtail terminal on the extreme left of this photo is identical to the handle on a high-band mug which has other Wigan characteristics and was discovered in the Lake District.

\[\text{Figure 44. Five lidless low-belly baluster measures.}\]
(i) Capacities

Table 3 shows that the capacities of 'Lidless Sprays' again fall into 3 groups: approx. 15 fl oz, 16.5 - 17.0 fl oz and 19 fl oz, which again correspond to Scottish Stirling, Old English Wine and approximately Old English Ale standards. However in the case of 'lidless' measures the Wine Standard is that of Queen Anne whereas for the 'Sprays' it is that of the earlier Ancient Guildhall standard. This indicates later manufacture of the lidless measures.

(ii) Body Contours

![Figure 45. A Spray and a lidless low-belly baluster measure both with "straight" waists.](image)

It can be seen in Figure 45, that the bodies of the 'straighter' Sprays and the lidless version with a ball terminal handle, second from the left in Figure 44., are virtually identical. They have the same contour, including the same sharp change at the collar, and the same dimensions, including the height of the bases. It is therefore not surprising that the capacities are almost identical being 15.1 & 15.0 fl oz respectively, which corresponds to Scottish Stirling standard. The two bodies could easily have come from the same mould.

Figure 46. shows an example of a more curvy pint Spray together with another lidless measure with a ball terminal handle and the one with the double-curved handle and fishtail terminal. Again the body profiles and dimensions of this Spray and the 'fishtail' are very similar. The capacities are slightly different because the base of the Spray has been knocked up. All three are clearly related.

As with Spray balusters, the lidless measures with a straighter body are of Stirling capacity whereas those with a more curvy body are of wine standard.

Like the Spray measures the bases are high, approx. 1/2", with the exception of one which has a capacity of just less than an ale pint (second from left in Figure 44.), where the height is only 3/8". Figure 47. shows the bases of three of the lidless Sprays. On the left is the ale pint, in the centre is the 15.0 fl oz measure (left of centre in Figure 44.) and on the right is the 17.0 fl oz measure with the flush handle terminal which has much thinner walls and is therefore noticeably lighter and was made later in the century.

![Figure 47. Bases of three lidless low-belly balusters of ale pint, 15.0 fl oz, and 17.0 fl oz capacity.](image)

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Baluster measures with Spray thumb-pieces were made in Wigan at the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries in 'pint' and 'quart' sizes only. All the thumb-pieces, with only one known exception, were cast in the same mould. Measures of smaller capacities of Sterling standard were made concurrently with slightly slimmer bodies but with ball and bar thumb-pieces. A small group of measures of 'quart' capacity with roughly the same shape bodies but with hammerhead thumb-pieces are known, which were made coevally by John Grave of Penrith. This same low-belly baluster shape continued to be used for some time on lidless measures in the north west of England. The lidless wine measures conformed to the Queen Anne standard of 1707, whereas those with Spray thumb-pieces conformed to the earlier Ancient Guildhall standard.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very grateful to all those who patiently responded to my requests for information and especially Anthony North for allowing me to examine the quart in the V & A. All the data have been tabulated but it would have been too detailed to publish.

I am also extremely grateful to the members who brought their measures to the meeting and especially David Moulson and Charles Hull for arranging for the Company’s measure to be present. They made possible an historic display.

I would also like to thank David Lamb for many useful discussions and for his help with photography along with Peter Hooper, David Moulson, Jan Gadd, Ian Robinson and Sylvia Toothill. The photograph of the Spray in the V & A is published by kind permission of the Board of Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum and the photograph of the Scaleby hammerhead by kind permission of Michael Finlay.

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(3) Finlay, J.M. Private communication.

Table 1

<table>
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<th>Capacity</th>
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<td>Pints</td>
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<td>Lamb, ex Allen collection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roberts</td>
<td>15.9 fl oz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Douglas, ex Holt collection</td>
<td>16.0 fl oz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.C. of P., ex Peal collection</td>
<td>16.1 fl oz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little</td>
<td>16.5 fl oz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Gallery of N.S.W.</td>
<td>20.2 fl oz</td>
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| Quarts                  |           |
| V&A (ex Croft Lyons coll.) | 31.5 fl oz |
| Little                  | 31.5 fl oz |
| Ex Kydd collection      | 32.0 fl oz* |
| Chapman                 | 32.8 fl oz* |
| Ex Michaelis collection |           |

Note
* Capacity not rechecked as current whereabouts unknown!

Table 2

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Table 3

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