

GEOFF LOCK WRITES ABOUT SMALLER POT BELLIED MEASURES

This was prepared to assist with a talk given to the UK Pewter Society in Autumn 2007
The types referred to are shown elsewhere on the website and repeated here at the end of this document.

These types of measures may still be found quite readily in the UK and need not cost a lot.
This article reveals some of the interest that can be found in collecting 'bellied measures'.

Readers might be interested to know that in Adelaide Australia there is a group of interested Pewter Collectors who meet on an informal basis about three or four times in the year and those interested might contact Geoff by email at – geofflock@hotmail.com

Photo 1: 3 Pre-Imperial Baluster Measures

These are baluster-style, L-R, all being stamped WR, OEWS standard, not really 'Pot-Bellied' probably 'Transitional'. The 'WR' mark on the gill and ½ gill, as shown, is likely to be of Birmingham origin and the crowned 'WR' under the base on the other ½ gill is most likely to be from Bewdley. These pieces were bought in Britain, 1995-1998 and weren't included in the article that I wrote last year because of their pre-Imperial capacities and slender baluster-body style.



Photo 2: Pot-Bellied Measures, c. 1820's - 1835

The plain-bodied measure probably dates from c. 1825-30 and has 'GILL' as well as 'G IV' on the rim, being what I called 'Type 1' in my article about ½ gills. The other piece has a 'G IV' mark on the rim, together with 'IMPERIAL' which suggests c. 1830's. This style carries over to ½ pints



Photo 3: Pot-Bellied Measures, c. 1825 - 1850's

L-R Type 5a: 'Rat-tail' example with 'QUARTERN' struck on the rim. Centre, Type 3b: with NSW inspection marks on the rim. Type 2b: with 'G IV' mark on the rim, together with 'MR' marks underneath. The 5a 'Rat-tail' has a Yorkshire mark and is rather late with the 'QUARTERN' mark, c. 1850.



Photo 4: Pot-Bellied Measures, c. 1825 - 1835

These measures, both of 'Imperial' standard, show the variation from simple 'Pot-Bellied', being a squat-type Wigan example and a Liverpool example. The Wigan piece is by 'B & W' and the Liverpool example is by KING, c. 1820's-1830's. 'Wigan'



Photo 5: Base of 1/2 GILL OEWS WR mark, probably Bewdley

I bought this in Portobello Road in '01 for £10 and no-one wanted it at the time, except me!!



Photo 6: 2 ½ PINTS, Transitional Period c. 1825-1830

The piece on the right has OEWS baluster characteristics and is marked 'HALF PINT' together with a 'Deal' mark and would fit in as an example of 'Type 1' – also has Westminster 1826 Portcullis mark. The other piece is of similar date, having '1826 WOODLEY' struck on the rim, together with numerous inspection marks from c. 1830 onwards and is an early example of 'Type 2a'



Photo 7: 2 ½ PINTS

The example on the right is a 'Type 3a' with ball finial, reeding to upper body and central banding, dating c 1850's – 1860's. Left-hand item is a late style 'Type 5a,' by Gaskell & Chambers c 1900. Similar pieces by Yates and Birch are often found in Australia as they exported to Australia for the latter part of the 19th Century ad up until WW1. Both of these ½ pints have NSW marks (New South Wales) c 1800 – 1900.



Photo 8: ½ Pint examples

Both examples are c 1820s – 1830s. Left –side piece is perhaps Liverpool and has an Oxford verification for 1834 together with numerous 19th Century marks. The other example is a Wigan piece by B & W c 1820s with a dropped-belly style, typical of that maker.



Photo 9.

This shows two early pot-bellied measures, both of Imperial capacity which I call “Type 2a”. Both have reeding to the upper body and ball terminals to the handle. The one on the RIGHT is by Yates Birch and Spooner c 1828ish with a G IV mark on the rim together with numerous inspection marks. The LEFT-hand example is similar in shape and by Yates and Birch ,c 1835, and has a YNR mark on the rim for York, North Riding. Both of these are noticeably wider in the centre of the body than later examples of this capacity and MIGHT BE called “Squat”.



Photo 10.

This shows two pot-bellied pints of Imperial capacity, both c 1820's to 1830. The left-hand side piece has probably been stretched as it has a noticeable longitudinal split near the handle. It has a plain body, somewhat baluster in style and would be called "Type 1." Rim has County mark of DEVON in circular form. Right-hand side example is a "Type 2a" with G IV mark on rim together with inspection marks under the base for Dorset. This piece was written up in the Journal by John Richardson in 1995 together with photos of the marks.



Photo 11.

A further two pot-bellied pint measures of Imperial capacity. The left-hand side example is by Gaskell & Chambers, c 1900 and has NSW inspection marks for New South Wales. You will notice a rounding to the rim which is typical of late pieces of this form. The right-hand piece is by James Yates, c 1860's and has a pre 1879 mark for Birmingham. Both of these pieces were bought here.



Photo 12.

This a close-up of two pre-Imperial baluster style measures, both bearing Crown WR mark on rim for Birmingham. Plain body "Type 1", no other marks on gill but ½ gill has mark underneath for O.A. 1826 and G IV. Bought from John Richardson in 1997 and 1998.



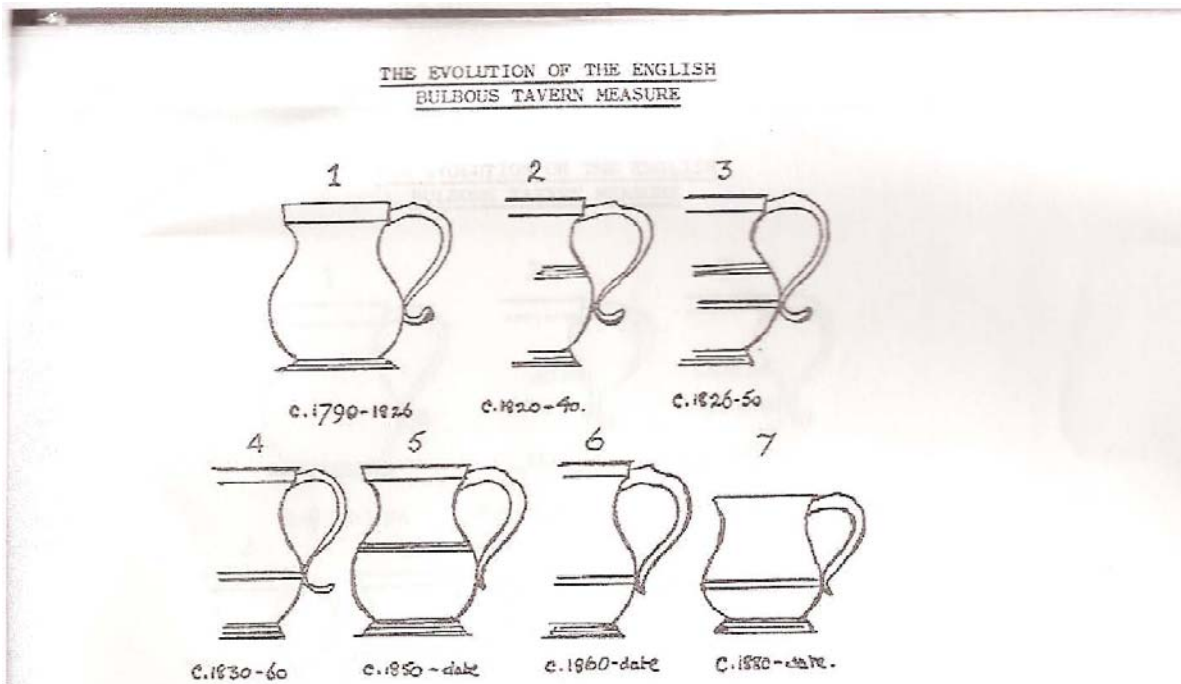
Photo13.

This a close-up of the marks underneath the base of two Imperial standard gills. Left-hand piece is on piece by "B & W" { see photo 4, left-hand example} and right-hand mark is on gill in photo3 {right-hand side}. Both have the inspection marks for J.D. together with Crown GR IV and year date 1831. Right-hand piece also has MR for Manor Rochford. This was also written up by John Richardson in a journal back in the 1990's. I bought these separately from Albert Bartram in 1986 and John in 1993 yet both have the same inspection marks.



BULBOUS TAVERN MEASURES – TYPES COMMONLY FOUND AND A GUIDE TO DATING THEM

- from a talk given by R F Michaelis at Peterborough in March 1966



No real research has formerly been done on this well-known type of English pewter measure, but as it appears that there is now a danger of specimens of some of them fast disappearing overseas, I have compiled a few notes from the numerous examples which have come to my notice. These are my personal findings; and it is not suggested that the notes are exhaustive, nor that the tentative dating will, necessarily, not require further amendment as more study is undertaken.

The distinctive features of all (excepting No. 7, which will receive special mention later) are:-

- (a) the collar at neck;
- (b) the incurved waist and bulbous "belly" (and the seam at this point where the two half castings are joined);
- (c) the moulded, splayed, foot-rim, hollow on the underside;
- (d) all were made in at least six "regular" sizes (of quart, pint, $\frac{1}{2}$ -pint, $\frac{1}{4}$ -pint (gill), $\frac{1}{8}$ th pint ($\frac{1}{2}$ -gill), and $\frac{1}{16}$ th pint ($\frac{1}{4}$ -gill));
- (e) the shape is uniform, and quite distinct from the well-known baluster measure, and also from the, so-called, "tulip-shaped" tankard or measure (the latter having no collar, and a slightly different, but, nevertheless, distinctive contour).

A drawing, by Hogarth, entitled "Gin Lane", published c.1760, shows hanging tavern signs of this almost identical form, but although no actual specimen, in pewter, of that early date has come to light, it now seems quite reasonable to assume that the form was, at least, well known in the last quarter of the 18th century, and that it became increasingly more so from c.1790 onwards.

The Standards of capacity in use at that time were, almost certainly, the Old Ale Measure, known as the 1688 "Customary Ale Measure" (of 20.62 fluid ozs. to the pint), or the Queen Anne Ale Measure of 1704 (of 19.59 fl. ozs. to the pint), and also, of course, the Q.A. Wine Measure of 1707 (of 16.69 fl. ozs. to the pint).

The "Imperial" standard (of 20 fl. ozs. to the pint) did not come into force until 1826 (legalized in 1824), and superseded all former standards.

There is no doubt that the earlier of the lidless tavern measures known to us of this form were made to the Old Ale Standard, and seem to date from about 1790. When still in use in 1826, these were checked for capacity, and found to conform so closely to Imperial that they were "sealed" by inspectors. It is believed that the only measures of pre-Imperial capacity are to be found in the two groups, 1 and 2.

GROUP 1 has a body entirely bereft of engraved or cast bands of reeding. The normal shape which becomes a feature of all later specimens had not yet become "stabilized", and the contours will be found to vary somewhat, one from another. Some are more squat in form; some are slightly slimmer than normal; and some have slightly deeper collar. All in this group have a handle of the type somewhat similar to that on "double volute" baluster measures, i.e. with a "ball", or "semi-ball" terminal. The type has, so far, been found only in the six regular sizes already mentioned, but may also have been made in $\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 gallon.

(A single exception to the above may be mentioned, which is a Q.A. Wine pint, of 16.25 fl. ozs., in possession of Dr. R. Roberts.)

The type is given the provisional date of c.1790-1826 (see note beneath group 2).

GROUP 2 combines all the above features, but had bands of reeding at the waist. It has the long "ball", or "semi-ball" handle terminal, and is found in the six regular sizes, and also the $\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 gallon.

Date c.1820-40.

(NOTE. Examples of both above groups were made in pre-Imperial measure, and in these cases it is unlikely that the makers, themselves, stamped them with capacity marks; in 1826, however, this became a frequent practice, and measures with such a mark may reasonably be classed as c.1826, or later.)

GROUP 3 the shape now stabilized. Bands of reeding at waist, and an additional thick band at the belly (this, evidently, to strengthen the weak spot at the seam of juncture). Not a prolific type, but found in the six regular sizes. Long "ball", or "semi-ball" handle. c.1826-50.

GROUP 4 as above, but with heavy band at belly only. The slightly slimmer handle with long "ball", or "semi-ball" terminal handle. Not a prolific type, and probably made only in the six regular sizes. c.1830-60.

GROUP 5 the most common group found today. Bands of reeding at waist only. The handle now of more bulky construction, with short pointed terminal only slightly projecting at the lower end. The handle cast hollow except in the smaller sizes (usually $\frac{1}{4}$ -gill and under). Made in all regular sizes, and also $\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 gallon.

In addition, this group contains the unusual diminutives of the pint (not found in any other group), as follows: the 1/10th; 1/12th; 1/18th; 1/20th; 1/22nd; 1/24th; 1/30th; and the "pin", of 1/32nd. (A 1/14th and 1/25th are believed to exist, but I have not met them.) A very prolific type, probably commencing in c.1850, but continued to the present day.

GROUP 6 another late type, with single heavy band at belly only. Short handle, as 5, above. Probably made only in six regular sizes. c.1860-to date.

GROUP 7 a very late type, the distinguishing feature being the lack of a collar. Mostly with single heavy band at belly only, but occasionally found with no band at all. Similar short handle, as above. (This should not be confused with a "tulip-shaped" bodied tankard which usually has a "double-curved" handle; the shape of group 7 is quite distinctive, and more closely resembles all former types.) Known in the six regular sizes, but may include the $\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 gallon. A fairly prolific type. It is doubtful if it came into use until c.1880, and is certainly still made today.

I have indicated the strong features which enable me to confine this type of measure into seven "main" groups, but would stress that each group probably contains individual specimens with some minor variation in contour, banding or foot shape; these are considered to be merely vagaries of a particular maker, rather than significant factors, and one would not expect any of the minor varieties to have been made prolifically, or even in sufficient quantity to justify a separate grouping.

(A talk given by R. F. Michaelis at Peterborough in March 1966)

INTERESTING ADDITIONAL PIECES NOT PART OF GEOFF'S ARTICLE

But related to his topic

(shown here for interest and to fill a page space)



Left – Quart verified for Monmouth – unusual coffee bean terminal to the lower handle likely made in Bewdley on the cusp of Imperial measure.

Centre – Pint similar but perhaps a little earlier than above Crown over GRIV over 1825 to the under base which has been knocked up perhaps to have it to conform to the new Imperial Measure, rather than to cheat the customer. Verified for Oxford County.

Right – Included here as these coffee bean type handle terminals were only found in the Quart and Pint size smaller sizes having the ball terminal. This half pint however was made in Wigan by Bolton and Wyld about the same time as the others.