

# FOTHERGILL OF BRISTOL (1718-1845?)

## A VERY DISTINCTIVE (UNIQUE?) SHAPE OF MEASURE



**Named Fothergill, Bristol pewterers, the little history as is available to this writer in April 2010.**

William Best Fothergill worked from 1718 – 1745 in Bristol and is mentioned as a customer of John Duncumb of Bewdley, so it is unknown if he was actually a pewterer or if he simply sold pewter wares.

Mark Fothergill son of William Best Fothergill worked from 1752 – 1800, he had been apprenticed to a Benjamin Collier and his wife Elizabeth in 1745 (so likely born late 1720s?). The date of his fathers death being the same year as he started his apprenticeship does not help us to understand how his father worked. Mark is also unlikely then to have been very active when M Fothergill & Sons was formed (trading perhaps 1793 – 1845).

M Fothergill & Sons was a working pewtering business from around 1793 to 1835. There were three partners. Mark Fothergill, William Fothergill and Arabella Fothergill. Although this trading business was dissolved in 1805 it likely continued after 1826 as there are imperial measures found. But the partners may have changed after that date.

William Fothergill working 1793-1819 in Redcliff Street Bristol was a partner in the above business. The relationship with Arabella is not understood by this writer.

Henry Fothergill worked from 1819 to about 1845 mentioned in trade directories in 1845 and before in 1840 he may have been a partner with William before 1819

(A John Fothergill with no known connection worked in Newcastle on Tyne in about 1653)



Matching pair of quart & pint by Mark Fothergill & Sons Bristol c1793-1835 (OP1740) their circular mark under base. All conical measures are rare, and a matching pair is almost impossible to find. These are Tall ovoid body form with tongued thumbrest ball terminal handle. They are Verified in the mouth with early City of Bristol verifications: crown over BC (struck through) and crown over BC over E. Usually marked IMPERIAL under lip. These are in superb condition, and with medium-dark grey original surface patina. The ovoid shape meant the easiest way to finish these measures was by hand scraping, and faint traces of the vertical scrape marks remain on the bodies and handles. 7 1/8" & 6 1/8" overall heights, and 4 1/2" & 3 1/2" base diameters.



*Now here is the NUB of the question did the Fothergills make this very idiosyncratic style (almost impossible to clean out!) in any other size – are any of the others shown actually theirs?(actually made by them!)*

*Is this indeed, in the above style - unique to the Fothergills of Bristol!*

**This design is the very reason for their inclusion on this website, it was not copied (until the 1920s) that the writer knows of.**

*There will be a book shortly it is understood concerning these pewterers but this website has been unable to obtain confirmation or otherwise regarding the information offered here!*



***Is this a Fothergill? A mystery?***

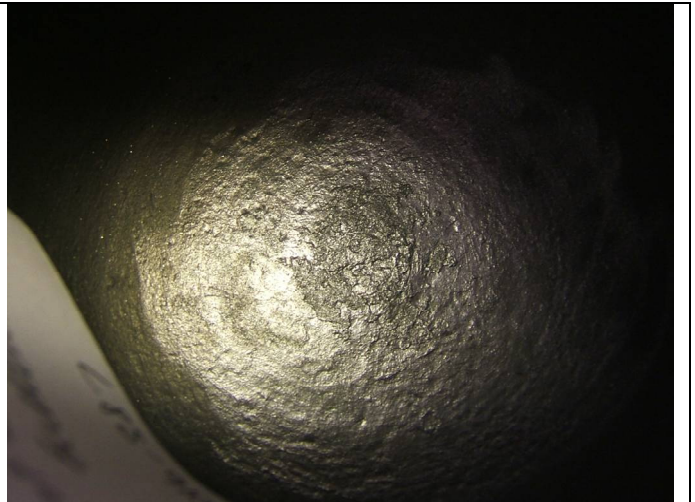
*To quote the owner today* - It is a half-gallon bought years ago when the contents of Barrington Hall, near Ilminster Somerset were sold. It came from the collection of Col Lyle who restored Barrington as the first National Trust lessee. He was the Lyle in Tate & Lyle sugar. Perhaps it might be an Exeter piece with the double scroll handle and other unusual features. It is verified for Somerset, and has a unique cross of two pewter straps under the base, which you might assume was to add extra strength although it is a massively cast piece.

*The neck looks more like the Australian pieces and they are more likely made by Gaskell & Chambers towards the very end of the 1800s but surely this appears older?*

**Exceptional Pewter Pint mug by Mark Fothergill & Sons,  
Bristol c1825 (OP 1740)**

For a very brief period, these were made using 18<sup>th</sup> century ball terminal handle moulds. The very unusual body is not 'extended', as the lip and body are cast in one piece. Quart and half-pint examples are also known, but all are very rare. Struck with the maker's mark only very faintly remaining in the base, and their distinctive 'IMPERIAL' label to the left of the handle. This is verified twice for the City of Bristol. . 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ " high. Rim diameter 3  $\frac{1}{2}$ " Footrim diameter just under 3  $\frac{1}{2}$ " Weight about 14 ozs.

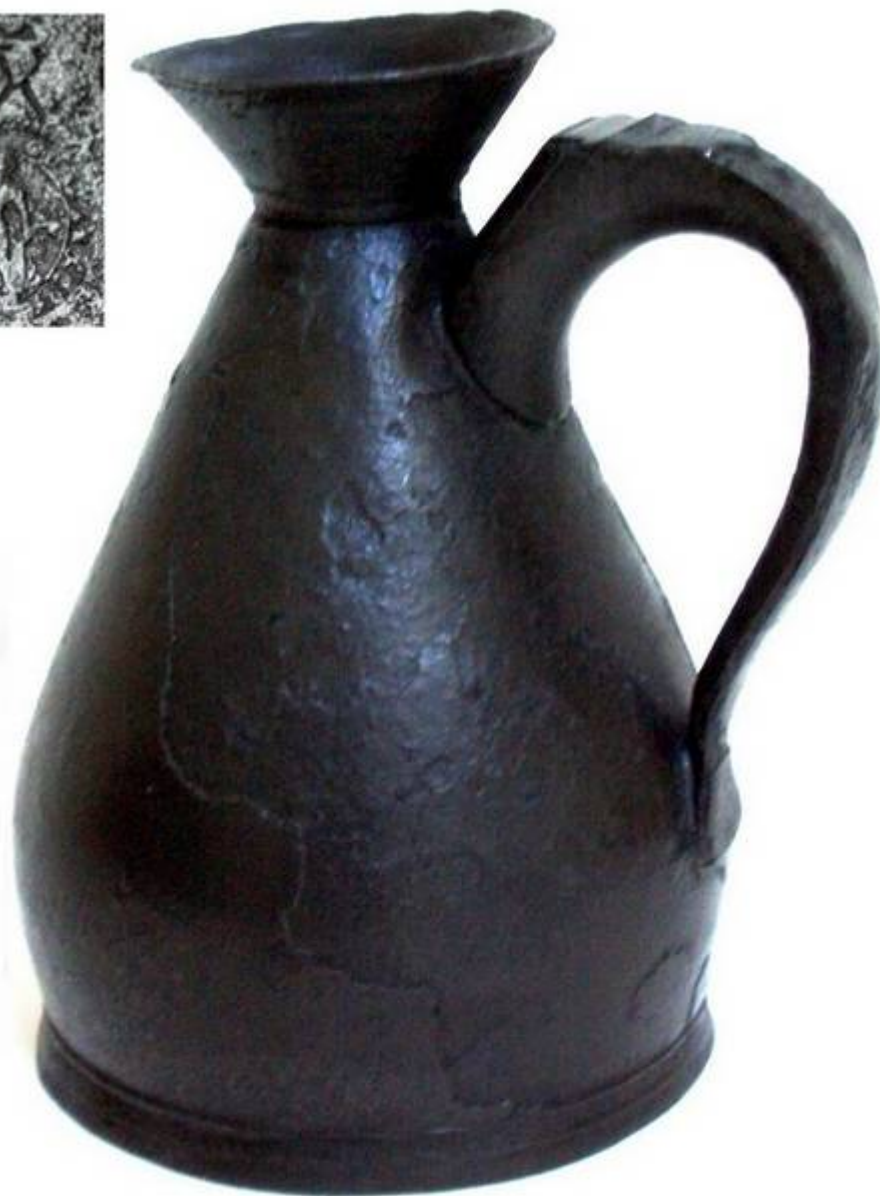
Reference MKOY-016 – 387 Photos 244 - 252 Collection





Although unmarked, this is guaranteed to be a Bristol made piece from the body shape, and distinctive form of ball terminal handle. Most likely, this is a Fothergill conical measure, and is a half-gallon, which is one of the rarest sizes. Indeed, only one other of this form is known. Well struck capacity mark '½ GALLON' below the rim. Verified for 'D' Division of Southampton County. Nice turning lines under the base. In exceptional condition, with attractive medium-grey original surface patina. 9" high, with 3⅝" mouth & 6" base diameters.

Images/photos provided by [www.pewtersellers.com](http://www.pewtersellers.com)



Something near

Very rare pre-Imperial ½-pint (Old English Wine Standard) conical measure by Edgar, Curtis & Co Bristol c1793-1801 (OP1266a/1508) their circular mark with an X struck under the base. This measure is in 'as found' condition. It is undamaged but has a very poor surface, which is uneven through flaking oxide. 4½" overall height, 3" base diameter.

The following shows Various 19<sup>th</sup> century styles of similar known measures but none have that elegance and difficulty that expresses itself so well in the uniqueness of the FOTHERGILL measure.



**IRISH HARVESTER MEASURES OF THE 1800S.**

### A rare set of West Country Style Pewter Measures

A scarce even rare set of West Country style measures but actually made in Birmingham. Sizes gill to quart. All have Birmingham verification marks, two smaller one VR over 6 and the two larger ones VR over a shield. Appears to be a very rare original set. No repairs known of. All bearing the size (Quart, Pint, ½ Pint, Quartern) to the left of the handle. Cleaned pewter patina. A few small grazes but remarkable condition, considering long usage. Dimensions as follows Quart – 2 lbs 1 oz Height 6” footrim 5 ½” Pint – 1 lb 3 ½ ozs Height 5 ½” footrim 4 ½” ½ Pint – 13 ozs Height 4 ¼” footrim 3 ¾” Quartern – over 7 ozs Height 3 ½” footrim 3”



### An Exceptional Pair of Pewter Conical West Country Measures with State of Victoria Australia Verification (late 1800s ?)

The wonderful shape of this very rare pair of measures and their delightful pewter patina and their rarity makes them exceptional. The larger is probably half pint and the smaller the gill size. Although West Country is the style many of these were made in the Midlands and in Victorian times although it is clear an unknown artisan made these to a very high standard and design of his own. The verification visible on both just to the right of the hollow handle is unusually for the State of Victoria in Australia. And there are no other marks. The half pint size weighs over 1lb 2 ozs stands about 4” with a footrim over 4 ¼” and has nice turning marks to the underbase. The foot is also heavy and strong.

The gill size weighs over 10 ozs and stands over 3” tall with a footrim about 3 ½” diameter.

