

THE ALDERSON PEWTERERS

PART ONE –

THE RECORDED WORKING DATES AND SOME ALDERSON HISTORY 1702 to 1860

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Working from 1728 - George Alderson

Christened in 1702 at Bowes, Yorkshire, his father was Christopher, a Husbandman which in the medieval and early modern period was a free tenant farmer. Mother Mary Wharton. George was one of three children when his father Christopher died in 1708. His mother Mary's second marriage was also to an Alderson and there were 6 more children.

His apprenticeship document to Richard Heslop, Pewterer in 1721, records him as "from Shellum". [The only likely location is Shellum's Wood near Azerley, Kirkby Malzeard, Yorkshire]. Being 19 at the time, George could have been working on the local estate.

George is the first recorded Alderson pewterer.

His known touchmarks and those of his ancestors are listed in Cotterell and provided in these web pages.

He married Anna Maria Trueman and their male children, John and Joseph, were apprenticed in the pewter trade.

George is listed as operating a pewter business in Carnaby Street, London.

He had two known apprentices – a James Lethhard [5816, 1738-1745] and a John Holmes [4746, 1747] who was turned over to John Mitchell in 1749. This is the year he is recorded to have ceased working.

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Working from 1749 – Anna Maria Alderson

Upon the death of her husband George, Maria is recorded as continuing the pewter business in Carnaby Street from October 1749. Her sons - John [born c1743] and Joseph [born c.1747] also worked in the business and Joseph was apprenticed to her.

At the time of John starting his business in 1764 his mother had remarried.

Joseph did not continue his pewter apprenticeship, instead changing his career path to that of the sea and Ended up as a Captain of the Bombay Marine Service.

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Working from 1764 – 1792 John Alderson

John was made a Yeoman of the Workshipful Company of Pewterers by Patrimony, ie by right as his father was a member of the Company, rather than serving an apprenticeship. John married Mary Chamin in 1773 and there were five children.

From 1764 to 1792, John Alderson was described as a Pewterer and a Brazier. His business was at Carnaby Street, Carnaby Market in the City of Westminster.

His recorded apprentices were James Rawson [1767-774] and Charles Wintle [1774-1785]. It is also noted he had a servant James King perhaps a relative of the well known pewterer James King.

Touchmarks -

John's touchmarks are similar to those of his father George (with the Christian name changed).

Especially noted for the **I (small star) A [I*A]** touchmark found in the base centre of tankards.

The three or four lions passant.

Introduction of the distinctive crowned 'W R' verification mark and 'W S' hallmarks.

John Alderson's Tradecard can be seen in H H Cotterell Old pewter Its Makers and Marks plate VII and on the Pewter Society (UK) database. (this Trade Card detail is not part of the copyright of this history)



Working 1792 – Mary Alderson (dcd 1821)

From the death of her husband John in 1792, Mary continued to run the family business. She was bequeathed *all of the stock in trade and tools and the lease of dwelling house in Carnaby Street corner Tyler Street in the Parish of St James Westminster.*

Mary was an astute business woman and continued to use the I A mark of her husband.

The pewter business was listed in 1801 at 33 Carnaby Street, Carnaby Market and later moved to 16 Great Marlborough Street. Her sons George and Thomas worked in the business from an early age.

1804-1809 Alderson & Son

Mary is listed as proprietor and it is presumed that Thomas was the son she was in business with.

In 1808 Thomas is invited to join his brother George in a separate business.

The company name changes **1810-1832 M Alderson & Co.**

The Aldersons leased tin and lead mines in Wales and Yorkshire. In her ageing years Mary would still travel to Yorkshire with her sons to visit these mines.

Mary worked until 1819 and died in 1821.

Alderson Businesses

From trade references a number of Alderson businesses are recorded as continuing which is quite misleading because this can be years after the original proprietor had died.

Note also that information taken for trade took a year to catch up on changes.

From family records it has been confirmed that other members continued working, quite often using marks attributable to those who had predeceased them.

Working 1792 – (Sir) George Alderson (dcd 1826)

Born c.1779 George was son of John and Mary Alderson.

Working life from 1792 – 1826. Was free by Patrimony same month as apprenticed and presented by his mother Mary Alderson.

George Alderson took over the lead pipe manufacturing business of J Wilkinson of Rotherhithe, Surrey and in 1808 entered into a partnership with his brother Thomas. This business traded as *Canal Lead Works Thames Bank at Chelsea GEO. & THO^S.ALDERSON: Lead Merchants and Manufacturers of Dry & Ground White Lead, Milled Sheet Lead, and Patent Lead Pipe 16, Great Marlborough Street, London* [Tradecard]

In 1809 George borrowed £3,000 from a bank with an annuity of £300 with security on the premises and all fixtures and machinery from then and in the future. [Noted because of later importance to Thomas]

In 1817 George was appointed High Sheriff of London and Middlesex.

Following this appointment, George's passage through the Worshipful Company of Pewterers was swift. On 17 April 1818 he was Knighted. His marks are similar to those of his father and brother Thomas Alderson.

It was reported in *The Times* on 10 April 1826 that he “*died yesterday at his house in Great Marlborough St, Sir George Alderson much regretted by his family and numerous circle of friends*”.

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Working 1796 – Thomas Alderson (dcd 1852)

Born c.1782 Thomas was son of John and Mary Alderson.

He was apprenticed to his mother in 1796 and from 1804 to 1810 the business was listed as **Alderson & Son**.

In 1808 Thomas was invited and went into partnership with his brother George (see above).

The business was very successful and it was of great importance to be commissioned “The King’s Pewterer” for the Coronation Banquet of King George IV in July 1821.

Thomas continued with the Alderson trademark similar to that of his father and grandfather and added the London Superfine touch with large ‘X’ and for specific pieces for the George IV Coronation, the Royal cipher.

When Sir George Alderson died in 1826, this is when Thomas found out that his brother had borrowed £3,000 for his own purposes [see above]. Thomas was not a party to this agreement and unaware that the contents of the property were included in such a deed. The business had grown considerably and the creditors pursued Thomas as the remaining proprietor.

Bankruptcy proceedings commenced in 1832 and continued until 1844. The court report stated *Thomas Dean Alderson of Great Marlborough Street, Middlesex and of Warwick Square, Golden Square, Pewterer, Lead Merchant, Dealer and Chapman*.

[Tradecard] *Thomas Alderson Lead Merchant Warwick Street, Golden Square London*.

In 1833 a notice was issued that the business of Thomas Alderson was combining with G.D. Alderson & Co.

Suffering ill health like so many members of this family, Thomas moved to France in 1833 where he died in 1852 leaving his small estate to George Freeman.

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Working 1833-1845 – George Douglas Alderson

Born 1809 as George Douglas, he is the alleged son of [Sir] George Alderson. Sir George made ample provision for him and his sister Eliza Douglas [alleged daughter]. George’s upbringing was entrusted to Thomas Alderson and Eliza’s to Mary Kent [Sir George and Thomas’s sister].

George Douglas worked with George and then Thomas Alderson. Prior to 1833 he changed his name to George Douglas Alderson and is listed as the proprietor of *G.D. Alderson & Co. Pewterers & Beer Engine Manufacturers, Blenheim Street, Gt Marlborough St, London* [Tradecard]. He then added products and advertised as *Lead, Glass & Colour Merchant Manufactory, 110 Broadwalk, Blackfriars – White Lead*,

Sheet Lead, Lead & Tin Pipe, Pumps, Block Tin, Solder, Brass Work, Linseed Oil, Turpentine, Crown, British plate and other Glass [Tradecard].

He married Eliza Jones in 1835 and they produced three children, all given the Alderson surname.

The marks of George Douglas Alderson have never been officially recorded but having a sound grounding in pewtering with his Uncle Thomas and perhaps advised to change his name to Alderson, would have ensured continuity with the name he would have felt entitled to use.

George [1843] and his wife Eliza [1841] died at an early age like so many people who worked with lead.

George bequeathed the co-partnership of **G.D. Alderson & Co.** to George Freeman [husband of his sister therefore keeping it in the family]. This was on the condition that the clear profits [GDA's share] from the business went towards the maintenance and education of the three Alderson orphans until attaining 21 years.

In 1849 there was a disastrous fire on the premises. Henry Bentley Wrixon was taken in as a partner some time later but this was not a good business decision. Debts started to mount up and by 1859 the business was bankrupt.

A last noted entry in a trade directory for this firm claimed – “*lead, glass, oil colour and varnish manufacturers, tin pipe makers, brass founders, wholesale pewterers, maker of music plates and beer engines* – at Lambeth and Blackfriars”.

In 1860 the youngest of G.D. Alderson's children attained 21 years so George Freeman's obligations were fulfilled. George Freeman with his three children and second wife Selina packed their belongings and boarded a ship to South Australia.

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Marks known or attributed to members of the Alderson Family

The following notes have been written about pieces of English pewter made by members of the Alderson family in London, c 1790's to 1830's. Little has been written about this pewter-making family other than article by A J Muir that was published in the Journal of the Pewter Society, Autumn, 1983, pps 42-44.

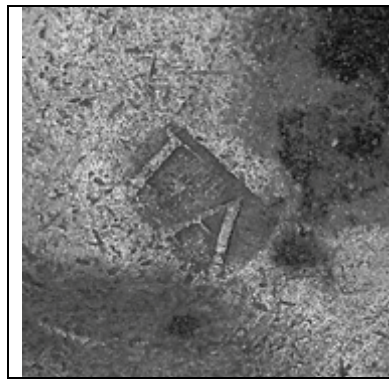
Marks

There are at least two known touch marks attributed to members of the Alderson family which are found on London-made tavern-ware; *Sir George Alderson, {Cott 38}*, and *John Alderson, {MPM 5393B}*. The mark of **Sir George Alderson** is a circular **ALDERSON**, struck inside the centre of the base of pots, all of which are of Imperial capacity. (2 could be the workman's number)



He is known to have been in business from **c 1817 to 1833**.

That of **John Alderson** is **I.A.**, struck within a serrated rectangle, also inside the centre of the base of pots. He was in business from **1764 to 1792** but the “I.A.” mark is found on pots of Imperial capacity that must have been made well after his death.



His widow, Mary, and son (s), continued to use his mark until c 1825, and perhaps later by a son

Secondary marks, being either three or four lions, passant, facing left, were used by both makers.

These were always struck on the left side of the body, close to the rim near the top handle join.

Pints and half-pints usually have three lions whilst quarts have four.



Not all pots have these marks.

Other verification marks found on pieces include the City of Westminster 1826 Portcullis mark,

Crowned WR, early county marks such as Suffolk or Berkshire and post 1878 crowned VR marks.

*Below is taken an extract from the work of H H Cotterell who in 1929 first published a work detailing **the known pewter marks then** – this shows some of those I have only been able to previously describe above and some of which the pewterware shown here do not carry - so this may help readers tie makers marks to names*

37. ALDERSON, GEORGE, London: 20 June 1728, Y.
Touch, 887 L.T.P.



38. ALDERSON, SIR GEORGE, London: July 1817, Y.;
21 Aug. 1817, L.; 1817, f.S.; 1817, f.R.W.;
1821, U.W.; 1823, M. Sheriff of London
1817. Died 1826. Touch, 1084 L.T.P.



39. ALDERSON, JOHN, London: 21 June 1764, Y.;
20 June 1771, L.; 1777, f.S.; 1782, R.W.;
Touch, 1010 L.T.P. In 1792 was in business at
33 Carnaby Market. See his Trade Card.



39A. ALDERSON, MARY, London: In 1817 was at 15
Great Marlborough Street.

39B. ALDERSON, M——, London: In 1801 was at 33
Carnaby Street, Carnaby Market.

40. ALDERSON, THOMAS, London: c. 1790-1825. He
made the pewterware for the Coronation Banquet
of George IV., much of which is at Pewterers'
Hall and some in private collections. (See
Sketch below.)



A selection of Alderson Pewter

Note 1: Touchmarks and date verification

Alderson touchmarks are known to have been used well after the originator had died, especially in the case of the widow of John Alderson and sons George and Thomas Alderson who continued the businesses.

After the death of Sir George Alderson, Thomas Alderson continued in the business and even though bankrupt in 1832 and died in France in 1852, he kept an interest in the business of George Douglas Alderson & Co until that time.

Piece 1

Pint by George or Thomas Alderson c1824-26

Imperial capacity truncated-cone pint with a “cranked handle”. The City of Westminster 1826 portcullis mark is on the body as well as three lions passant over a crowned WR marks with I*A in base.



Piece 2

Pint by George or Thomas Alderson c1824-26

Bulbous pint measure of Imperial capacity that has been attributed to the Alderson family due to the three lions passant that have been stamped in a triangle with three Cs under the base – this grouping is not identified. There are no other marks to link this to the Aldersons. The City of Westminster portcullis 1826 mark is stamped on the rim.



Piece 3

Quart by George or Thomas Alderson c1826-30

“U and fillet” side spouted quart of Imperial capacity which has the circular mark of Sir George Alderson inside the base. It has ownership initials ‘HW’ inscribed in cursive, with flecking, on the front of the body. Here lion passant marks are to the left of the handle. Also stamped QUART and 8.



Piece 4

Quart by John Alderson c1780-1800

A truncated-cone quart, with a tongyed handle thumb-rest. This piece has the mark I*A in the base that is attributed to John Alderson. The front of the body is inscribed "G Scott, Maid of Mecklenbury, New James Street Oxford Street" within a wiggled circular border which indicates the piece was made in the late 18thC. A rubbed crowned WR is evident to the left of the handle. The top of the thumb rest is marked 'S' over 'GM' for ownership, probably Scott; initials for first names. The piece has been highly polished which indicates that it has been 'dipped and stripped' during its lifetime.



Piece 5

½ Pint by Sir George or Thomas Alderson c1826-30

A delightful lidded side spouted ½ pint “U and fillet” which has the circular mark of Sir George Alderson in the base. The handle is a typical “scroll” style used by the Aldersons on “U and fillet” pieces having the spur near the thumb-rest and a “ballerina-toe” finial. The lid has an open-chairback thumb piece and has a double dome typical of the period c1780’s to 1830’s. There are three lions passant struck on the body to the left side of the handle. Made of Imperial capacity.



Piece 6

Pint by Alderson c1824-25

A truncated cone pint that has the I*A mark of John Alderson in the base, secondary marks being three lions passant struck on the body to the left of the handle. There is also a rubbed crowned WR mark. These marks indicate it was made before Imperial standard was introduced in 1826.



Piece 7

½ Pint Pair of beakers by Thomas Alderson c1830

Both have four lions passant within rectangular borders struck on the bodies near the rim. It is unusual to see four lions struck in such a small capacity item and the rectangular body varies from the usual wavy edged border. No other markings.



Piece 8

½ Pint Beaker by Thomas Alderson or George Douglas Alderson c1830-1840s

A “bucket and ridge” ½ pint beaker that is stamped with three lions passant, being secondary marks used by the Aldersons. It is stamped ½ pint and the body has ownership initials inscribed ‘JBT’ with flecking and a Middlesex county mark.



Piece 9

Lidded Tobacco Container by Sir George Alderson prior to 1836

A well worn circular mark of Sir George Alderson stamped inside, no other markings, Good condition



Piece 10

Bulbous Salt by Sir George Alderson prior to 1836

Well worn circular mark of Sir George Alderson stamped inside.



Piece 11

Balsalm Inhaler by Sir George Alderson prior to 1836

Has a wooden handle and a well worn circular mark of Sir George Alderson stamped inside.



Piece 12

George IV Coronation Plate by Thomas Alderson 1821

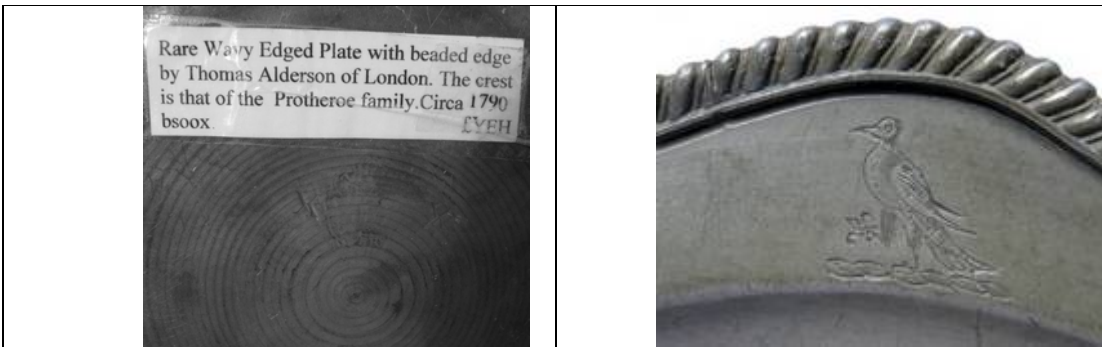
Very fine condition and rare. Distinct bouge marks and clear Thomas Alderson touchmark though double struck. Also 'London Superfine'



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Wavy Edged Plate with a beaded edge c1790

Interesting piece with "Protheroe family crest" stamped on face. Reverse shows two clear Xs with only two letters visible, "er", of a possible or fudged strike mark. The plate is devoid of tapping marks and appears moulded, is light in weight compared with other pewter pieces. Width 9 nches. Sold as an Alderson piece but quite doubtful.



Piece 14

Warming Plate by John Alderson c1770-1800

Touchmarks – “Carnaby Street London”, “John Alderson”. Also stamped “Superfine” and has a Crown with X underneath.

