

The CM or CWM Verification Mark

A previous article (The Two Richards) in small part considered verification marks used by the state or Common Wealth of Massachusetts (USA) on Pewter Measures that had been made in the UK. This article shows some other examples and repeats those shown in that article.

The following shows a W Bancks half gallon with a different CM mark and one which we have no reason to suspect is other than genuine. Whilst carelessly placed the script is different to that which our eyewitness (elsewhere) claims was false, the piece is marked by the well known maker of such pieces, the piece has clear signs of use and the patina has age – all factors that the unwary is advised to look out for.



Half-gallon bud baluster measure by William Bancks, Bewdley c1750-90 (OP238a & 239/PS71) his reversed name cast under the lid. Although it has a crowned WR' to the left of the handle, this is probably an 18th century export as it also has New England verification marks 'CM' and 'H'. Very prominent erect 'bud' thumbpiece, strap handle with strut at lower attachment point. Nice 'witness mark' to upper handle created by thumbpiece touching the same point each time the lid is opened. 3 pairs of incised lines to the body: one low, one mid, and one to the rim. The lid has 2 pairs of incised lines one at the very outer edge and one centrally. In excellent clean used condition, with light-medium grey surface patina. 10³/₄" high & 9" to rim, with 4¹/₄" & 4⁷/₈" mouth & base diameters.

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Quart bud baluster measure by William Bancks, Bewdley c1750-90 (OP238a & 239/PS71) his reversed name cast under the lid. An 18th century export to New England where it was verified 'CWM' to the left of the handle. Very prominent erect 'bud' thumbpiece, strap handle with short strut at lower attachment point. Nice linen mark to inner rim, and 'witness mark' to upper handle created by thumbpiece touching the same point each time the lid is opened. 3 pairs of incised lines to the body: one low, one mid, and one to the rim. The lid has 2 pairs of incised lines one at the very outer edge and one centrally. In excellent clean used condition, with light-medium grey surface patina. 8³/₈" high & 7" to rim, with 3⁷/₈" base diameter
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Thomas Matthews worked from 1711 – 1750 in London.

His mark is found faked on later baluster measures – but this is not the faked mark – that mark has a star or dot between the T and M.

This measure to the left as shown is a very fine piece with good verification marks and nice signs of wear and use. It has a bud thumb piece (not a DV – double volute)

Altogether a piece any collector could be proud of owning.

The owner of this piece comments as follows –

*A one gallon bud measure made by Thomas Matthews. This measure has all the marks of being a period piece. It has on the rim the letters CWM which is interpreted as **C**ommon **W**ealth **M**assachusetts. I would assume that these letters are correct and of the period. Note that the **M** in this image does not go as low in the middle as your image. Note that the **W** is not an upside down **M**. One must be aware that these letters were used over a period of time and may have been replaced. Also, the measures may have been stamped at different locations using different stamps*



The CWM mark found on the Thomas Matthews gallon bud baluster measure.





A credible eye witness, with considerable experience, personally in a unique position, relates that gallon measures had been made in the 1960s of double volute baluster measures in London, bearing this mark, aged, and exported to the USA, for sale in the antiques departments of well known stores. He personally says he bought one from Richard Munday for £45 in about 1970, and Munday was either making them or having them made.

It appears that a collector might reasonably look for such measures –

- 1) To be marked by the original maker
- 2) To show some signs of age and wear
- 3) To look for the mark made where the thumbpiece meets the handle
(known as the 'witness mark')

There is an another opinion –

- that in Massachusetts with its river and coastline there was more need for measures, so more single Gallons were bought, not all had maker's marks on them, and a number were kept for use in smaller ports. Many had little use and were kept very carefully. Different strikes of the letters are not unusual. To call fake the majority of such pieces is wrong.