

# A Seedsman's (?) Pewter Measure

made by Abel Grove II

for Phillip Harris of the Bull Ring Birmingham

(adapted from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

**Philip Harris Ltd** was a British laboratory supply company, with a long history that has now been subsumed into a succession of larger businesses.

In its heyday the company was known to all science teachers in the UK (and many world-wide) as one of the two "first-call" suppliers for the peculiar needs of school science.

The company was originally based in Digbeth, Birmingham and started by Thomas Ellis, a Surgeon, in 1817. At the time Philip Harris would have been only 15 or 16 years old. He joined Ellis in 1825.

The company traded as a wholesale Chemical Laboratory Company occupying its Bullring site until 1889 (when according to their 'Catalogue of chemical and physical apparatus and chemicals', dated 1889, Silver Nitrate was selling for 9 Shillings per ounce!). They moved to 144-146 Edmund Street at some time around the turn of the century.

They started manufacturing medicines and drugs in 1866, adding to their sales of chemist and surgical products.

## Abel Grove II working 1815 - 1845

He was trading under his own name from 1823. He is listed as a pewterer, candle mould, tutania and pewter spoon manufacturer in directories from 1825-1828, and as a Britannia metalware manufacturer, tutania and pewter spoonmaker and pewterer in an 1833 directory. From 1835-1845 (after he had sold his main business to Yates Birch & Spooner), he is listed as a liquor fountain and beer engine manufacturer. He worked as below -

|                              |                                                                                   |                                                                                         |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Birmingham -<br>Warwickshire | 13 Prospect Row (1823-1828); 107<br>Dale End (1833); 17 Prospect Row<br>(1835-45) | c.1815 c.1845 These are the addresses at which<br>he was trading under his own<br>name. |
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The owner says - *My father (a retired corn merchant) thinks that it could well be a seedsman's measure.*

