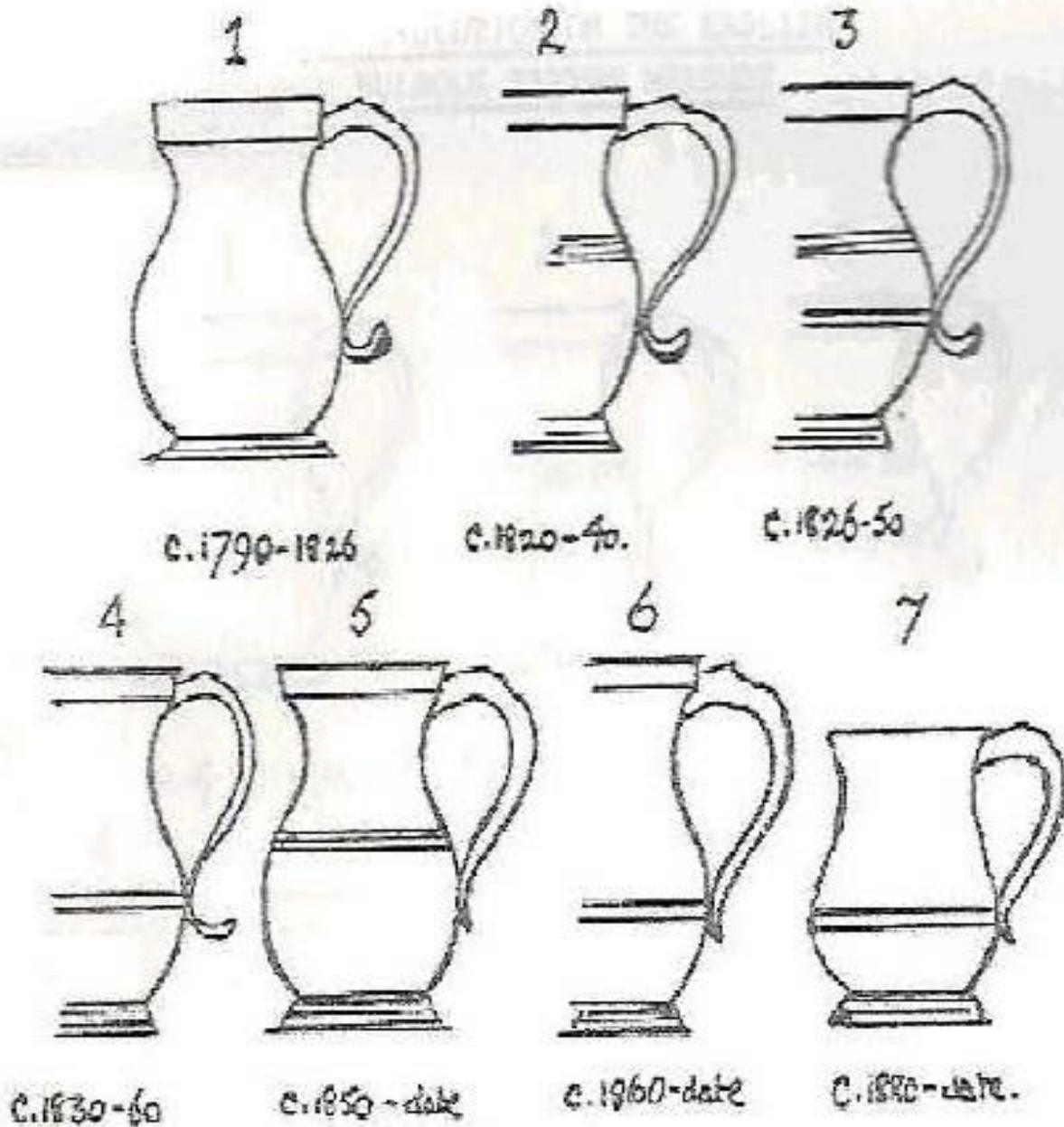


The Evolution of The English Bulbous Tavern Measure



Type 1 c1790 – 1826 Type 2 c1820 – 1840 Type 3 c 1825 – 1850 Type 4 c1830 – 1860
 Type 5 c1850 – to date Type 6 c1860 – to date Type 7 c1880 – to date

This tentative dating may require further amendment as more study is undertaken.

The distinctive features of all excluding no 7 are –

- a) the collar at the neck

- b) the incurved waist and bulbous belly (and the seam at this point where the two castings are joined)
- c) the molded splayed foot rim, hollow on the underside
- d) all were made in at least six regular sizes of quart, pint, ½ pint, gill, 1/8th pint (half gill) and 1/16th pint (1/4 gill)

Hogarth's Gin Lane published c1760 shows hanging signs of almost this shape. In 1790 capacity standards were likely the Old Ale Measure (known as 1688 Customary Ale measure and of 20.62 fl ozs to the pint). And also the Queen Anne Wine measure of 1707 (16.69 fl ozs to the pint). The imperial standard of 20 fl ozs to the pint came into force in 1826.

The Old Ale Standard was so near to Imperial (being just a bit more) that the inspectors from 1826 accepted and 'sealed' them. Only Types 1 and Types 2 are likely to be of pre-imperial capacity.

Type 1 – has no engraved or cast bands of reeding. Contours vary somewhat as there were not normalized. Some are squatter, slimmer, and some have a deeper collar. All have a handle similar to 'double volute' measures, with a ball or semi ball terminal. Found in the six sizes and in Gallon and ½ gallon. (an exception has been found of QA wine pint.)
Provisional dating then of 1790 – 1826

Type 2 – all the above features but bands of reeding at the waist. A long or semi ball handle terminal with sizes as for type 1.
Provisional dating of 1820 – 1840. After 1826 the makers stamped many with capacity marks.

Type 3 – bands of reeding at the waist and a thick band at the belly (strengthening). Six sizes found. and long ball or semi ball handle terminal
Provisional dating of 1826 - 1850

Type 4 – as three but with one heavy band only at the belly. Slimmer handle similar terminal types. Six regular sizes found.
Provisional dating 1830 – 1860

Type 5 – most regularly found, bands of reeding at waist only, handle now more bulky and cast hollow on ½ gill upwards sizes, with a short pointed handle terminal only. Gallon, ½ gallon and diminutive sizes also including 1/10, 1/12, 1/18, 1/20, 1/22, 1/24, 1/30, and 'pin' of 1/32 (1/14 and 1/25 have been mentioned)
From 1850 to the present day (1966 date of article)

Type 6 – six regular sizes, heavy band at belly only, short handle as type 5.
From 1860 to date

Type 7 – late type, no collar, single heavy band at waist only (usually). Six sizes plus 1 Gall and ½ gal.
From 1880 onwards.

Groupings shown may have anomalies amongst them, but insufficient to rate another group and usually maker specific.

This paraphrases a talk given and article written by R. F. Michaelis at Peterborough in March 1966.