

STEIN COLLECTORS INTERNATIONAL

PROSIT



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The Beer Stein Magazine

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My Jungfraubecher "Family"

By Salvatore Mazzone



The Stein That Finally Came Home

By Tom Levenson

Mettlach at the AMOCA Museum

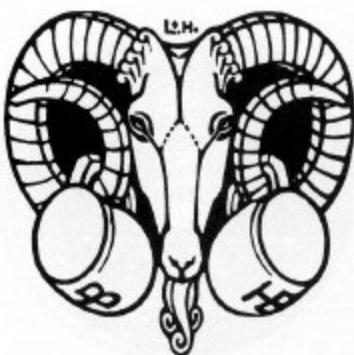
Mettlach Artists, Motifs and Styles - Part 5c

By Roy De Selms



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Longtime SCI member Ronald "Ron" E. Gray



Our Stein collector friend Ron Gray passed away suddenly on April 25th, 2022. Ron was a dedicated family man, highly respected in his community and by all those who knew him, especially his fellow members of Arizona Stein Collectors.

Ron was an active member of SCI for 54 years. Over the last 22 years, Ron authored 46 articles for Prosit and the SCI web site and has been SCI's most prominent voice on SteinTalk as "Ron". Frequent chapter meetings at Ron and Jean's home in Sun City, AZ, were always special occasions, especially Ron's well researched presentations.

Ron will be greatly missed by all his friends, as well as by those that did not know him personally, but enjoyed reading his many contributions to Stein knowledge.

—Arizona Stein Collectors

FLASH NEWS!

Ron Gray was announced as the winner of BOTH the Master Steinologist Award and the Jack Lowenstein Editor's Award for best article of 2021.

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Pewter Fittings Through the Ages by John McGregor, SCI Master Steinologist (dec.)

This article was printed earlier in Prosit in two parts, the second part providing additional information which the author had discovered. The two articles have been combined, and it is hoped that collectors will again find the information very useful. Ed.

When I first started this project, I had hoped to be able to link pewter usage to the political and economic pressures of the time. I thought that when times were good and tin could be easily obtained that the amount of pewter used on each stein would be at a maximum, and the amount of pewter would be minimal when times were bad. This only seems to be the case after the Franco-Prussian War. Before that, it would appear, the opposite was true.

Prior to the late seventeenth century, tin, the major ingredient in pewter, was mined in only three European countries, England, Saxony and Bohemia; but production had dropped off in Saxony and Bohemia after the 30 Years War (1618-1648), and the deposits were pretty much played out by the time the Dutch started to import tin from Siam (Thailand) in 1680. So, after 1680, Germany was dependent on England and Holland for its tin imports.

During the 58 years between 1690-1748 many of the steins being manufactured were utilizing the maximum amounts of pewter. For example, they had footrings, lid rings, large fancy lids, large ball-type thumblifts, handle reinforcement straps and general repairs made from pewter. Bavaria and a number of other German states including Prussia were at war with England and Holland for at least 32 of those 58 years, and tin should have been difficult to come by.

On the other hand, from 1748 until 1914, no German state was at war with either England or Holland, and except for internal struggles, greater Germany appears to have been at peace until the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71. The Napoleonic Wars of 1804-15 were an exception, of course, but besides getting a lot of French and Prussian soldiers shot up, Napoleon did very little damage to the rest of Germany. True, Prussia stood up to him, but the other German states either sided with Napoleon or simply chose not to oppose him. As a reward, he made Bavaria and Württemberg kingdoms, established the Federation of the Rhine and in all these places saw to it that the people were given social and economic freedoms that they had never experienced before. Prussia was forced to extend these same freedoms to its people, but it retracted most of them after Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo in 1815. The two things that Napoleon did which had the greatest effect on European society were: 1) giving the peasants the right to own land, thus allowing farmers to move to the towns and burgers to relocate to the countryside; and 2) disbanding the large merchant and craftsman guilds. Napoleon decreed that each man had the right to earn as much money as he was able through the occupation of his choice, and that competition was the key to economic well-being. This meant that the unregistered and itinerant craftsmen including pewterers known as *Bonhasen* (ground rabbits), who had been a major irritant to the guilds by undercutting their prices, were now free to settle down, open shops of their own and compete freely.

However, during those 166 years of relative peace (1748-1914) when tin was readily available and labor costs had apparently come down because of the competitive market, instead of massive pewter fittings as we might expect, we see the amount of pewter being used on each stein becoming less and less. There can only be two reasons that this would occur, one is a matter of preference and the other necessity.

The pewter on our steins is entirely protective in nature: the lid protects the contents, and the lid ring and footring protect the rim and base from chipping and other damage, just as a handle support strap protects the handle. Regardless of how fancy these fittings are, their function is strictly utilitarian. Faience and glass are both subject to easy damage, so I doubt that the reduction in size and eventual deletion of some of these fittings was one of preference. I must conclude that this was a matter of necessity, and that the industrial revolution and the demand for tin in the manufacturing arena placed such a premium on the price of tin that it simply became too expensive for everyday use on beer steins. During the 1850-65 time period, we find that pewter fittings were reduced to the barest minimum: small diameter hinges, lids made of thin rings holding either glass or ceramic inserts, and fragile thumblifts.

After the Franco-Prussian War the price of tin must have gone down, because from 1875 to about the turn of the century, the less expensive steins, stoneware and glass, tended to have fancy pewter lids and thumblifts, but the more expensive steins, such as the Mettlach chromolith pieces, in order to remain competitive, were still supplied with ceramic inlaid lids. Fancy pewter was an option of course, but due to the cost of producing the steins, the increased cost generally put them out of the range of the average working man.

There seems to have been no shortage of tin for pewter right up to 1914 and the beginning of World War I. After the war Germany couldn't buy tin because of its strategic importance and, of course, the fittings on our beer steins suffered particularly during the years 1919-1924. Later, during the 1934-1939 time frame, due to the armament build up preceding World War II, we also find a shortage of pewter.

In dating our steins, we usually can't date them to an exact year, but we can date them to a time period such as c.1725 or c.1920, etc. All pewter styles, as well as body and handle styles overlap somewhat so a study of body and handle styles can help narrow the time period in which your stein was manufactured. However, the scope of this article precludes my covering this aspect and is limited to the pewter. If you are interested in learning something about body and handle styles I suggest Gary Kirsner's *The Beer Stein Book* and a video available through SCI by John Stuart called *Dating Glass Steins*.

Dates appearing on steins mean very little. About the only steins we can be sure were made at the time of the dates that appear on them are Mettlach steins, Regimentals and Official Fest Krugs such as a stein commemorating the 1910 Oktoberfest, etc. The reason a study of body and handle styles is important is that you will encounter steins where the body and the pewter are from different time periods. Although no time period is immune, I find this occurs most often on steins from the 1830-1860 time period where the pewter has either worn out, was contributed to a war effort or lost for any number of other reasons, and was replaced at a later time after the pewter styles had changed. This usually means that these steins will be found with open hinges. This does not mean that open hinges were used prior to 1860. You must keep in mind, that once you have learned all the rules for dating your steins that the most important rule to remember is that there are exceptions to every rule.

Because I'm going to mention closed and open hinges from time to time I better explain what they are for those who might not know. If you look at the end of a hinge, and it is smooth with no pin showing, that is a closed hinge. If the pin shows as a small circle in the middle of the hinge, that is an open hinge. Basically, the closed hinge was used until 1870-75 when the open hinge came into general use. Because this didn't happen overnight and the open hinge was phased in gradually over a number of years, you will find there are a number of opinions as to when it actually took place. I personally have never seen a stein, verifiably made before the Franco-Prussian War, with original pewter that had an open hinge.

I've divided the historic timeline of steins into eight periods and included line drawings of representative styles of pewter for each period. In order to save time and space I've used cut-away drawings and hope this doesn't confuse the issue.

Prior to 1680: The Early Years

Pewter fittings prior to 1680 were boringly repetitious and provide little in the way of clues as to when they were made. The pewter usually consisted of a domed lid with a tiered finial, a large, closed, five ring hinge; and the thumblifts were, for the most part, small and mounted over the hinge. Some of the earliest pictures we have of lidded vessels are stoneware jugs in the drawings of Albrecht Dürer from the early 1500s. Figure 1 is an example of a stoneware jug typical of that time period. Figure 2 is pewter of exactly the same type as that used on the jug in figure 1 and is from a Raeren stoneware jug c.1600. Figure 3 is the pewter from a Westerwald jug c.1675. As you can see, little had changed in 150 years.

1680-1725 Early Baroque

The Siamese tin that the Dutch were importing quickly entered the market place and soon after 1680 we see the pewter fittings on steins reflect the increased amount of tin that was available. Fittings became more massive with large, ball type thumblifts, lid rings and handle reinforcement straps, and we still have the large, closed, five ring hinge. See Figure 4.

You will notice that the thumblift has migrated to a place of prominence over the lid. By 1700, virtually every stein being manufactured had a large, ball type thumblift over the lid. In the previous time frame, prior to 1680, stoneware dominated the market, but now faience was coming into popularity and would eventually push most stoneware out of the picture. Except for continuing production in the Westerwald, Duingen and Altenburg, most stoneware factories began to shut down, or at least discontinued beer stein production.

During the reign of William and Mary II of England (1689-1702) and that of Queen Anne that followed (1702-1714) the amount of tin reaching Germany probably remained fairly constant as the pewter on steins produced throughout that period would seem to indicate. However, in 1714 when Anne died, having outlived all seventeen of her children, the Act of Settlement of June 12, 1701 took effect, which declared that no Catholic may become king of England, and when the Stuart family no longer had any Protestant heirs Great Britain must turn to the German house of Hanover. So, George, Elector of Hanover, the Grandson of James I, became George I of England, the first Hanoverian king (1714-1727). This marked the beginning of the golden age of German pewter.

1725-1775 Baroque

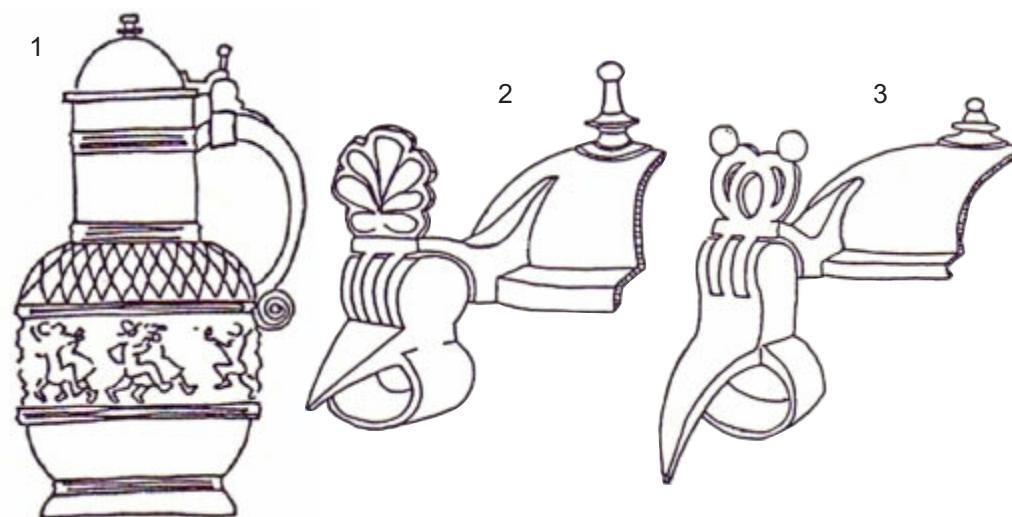
During this period there seems to have been so much tin available that pewterers were hard pressed to find ways to use it. It was no longer sufficient to be a technically proficient pewtersmith, one also had to be an artist. See Figures 5, 6 and 7.

Obviously, it was necessary to protect the faience steins, which are very fragile, with a certain amount of pewter, but the amount of pewter being used far exceeded that which was necessary. Pewter was so abundant that it was even used to make repairs during this time period. Sometimes a hole in the bottom of a stein would be repaired by forming a false bottom of pewter that was part of, and held in place by, the foot ring.

Figure 8 shows a handle repair made by replacing the lower portion of the handle with a pewter sleeve or boot soldered to the handle reinforcement strap. It is held to the body by punching a hole in the body of the stein through which a pewter plug extended from the sleeve to the inside of the stein. This plug was then flattened on the inside of the stein, effectively forming a rivet holding everything in place.

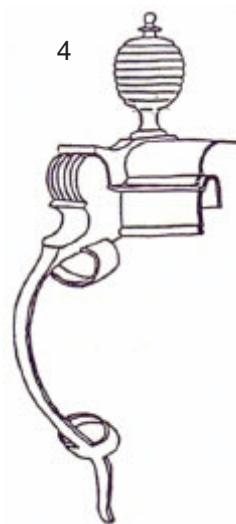
Figure 9 is a very early, closed three ring hinge that I've included simply as a point of interest as it is certainly an exception from the norm. This hinge is on a 1.75 liter stoneware stein attributed to Saxony and dated 1749. The pin extends through all three rings and is soldered into place on the thin outer rings, leaving the thicker, inner ring to pivot on the pin. Even with the thin outer rings, this appears to be quite a strong hinge.

Prior to 1680 The Early Years



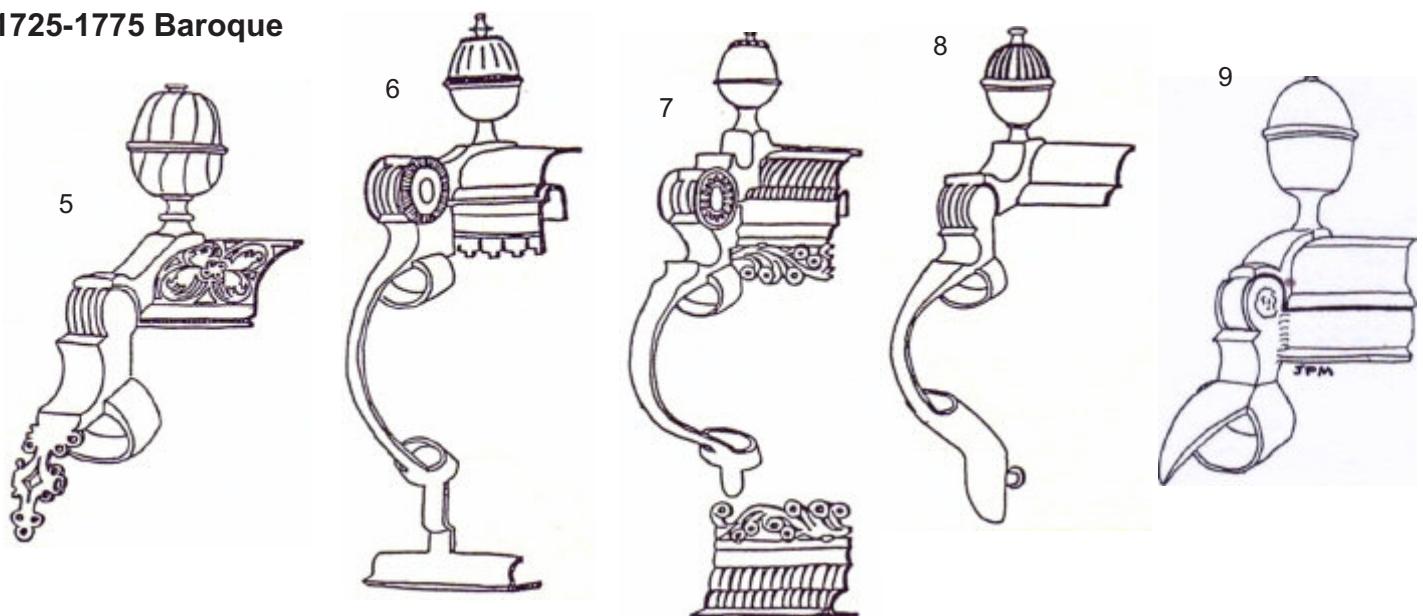
1. A stoneware jug typical of the 16th century, and a type similar to illustrations by Albrecht Durer.
2. Pewter from a stoneware jug of Raeren c.1600.
3. Pewter from a stoneware jug of the Westerwald c.1675.

1680-1725 Early Baroque



4. Pewter from a faience Stein of Frankfurt c.1680.

1725-1775 Baroque



5. Superb pewter from an Ansbach faience Stein c.1720.
6. Pewter from a Berlin faience Stein c.1735. Note the hinge rosettes or skirts and all the pewter is tied together into a single unit.
7. Another Berlin Stein c.1725 was the source of this fantastic pewter.
8. Another Berlin Stein ca. 1750. Pewter repair to the bottom of a broken handle. A stud through hole in body of stein is formed as a rivet holding everything in place. The space around the stud is sealed with a resin.
9. Pewter from a Stein from Saxony ca. 1749. An atypical closed three-ring hinge

1775-1825 Early Biedermeier

I called this age Early Biedermeier, but could just as well have called it Early Industrial Revolution or simply the Age of Revolution. In 1776, Britain's American colonies revolted and produced the world's first democratic republic. France soon followed with its own revolution in 1789, but the man responsible for the greatest revolution of his time was a Scot by the name of James Watt who was the inventor of the steam engine which made the Industrial Revolution and the modern world possible.

By the 1780s the pewter on steins was already showing the effects of the Industrial revolution. The pewter we now see is similar to that on steins from c.1680 except there is less of it. We no longer find handle support straps and the thumblifts are smaller. See figure 10.

Just as there is little to determine the exact dating of pewter made between 1500 and 1680, there is also little to determine the exact dating of that made between 1680 and 1775 except perhaps by the quantity used and the artistic level achieved. However, from 1800 on and for the next 150 years, a number of changes take place which makes our determination of a stein's age a simple process—comparatively speaking, that is.

After the Napoleonic Wars, between 1815 and 1840, while the amount of pewter being used on steins was being reduced everywhere else, the town of Schrezheim produced a last flash of pewter greatness. From mid-point in the eighteenth century Schrezheim produced some of the most remarkable pewter to ever grace a beer stein and nearly all of it went onto the faience steins produced at the local factory which was founded in 1752 by a wine merchant named Johann Baptist Bux. He operated it until his death in 1800 when his heirs took over and operated it until 1833 when it was sold to Franz Heinrich Wintergeist whose family had done all the painting of the faience since the factory had originally opened. The factory was one of the last to close and shut its doors in 1872. However,

the demand for faience had already begun to drop off about the time old Johann passed away, and glass was fast becoming the material of choice. The quality of Schrezheim pewter was amazingly consistent over the years. I don't know if it was applied at the Bux factory, or done outside at an independent pewterer, but it appears to have always been done by the same pewter shop. Whatever the case may be, the decision was made, probably because of the decline in the faience business, to start applying pewter to the products of other manufacturers. So, in the early years of the nineteenth century Schrezheim pewter was applied to glass and stoneware steins as well as whatever faience was still being produced. Once you have seen pewter produced in the Schrezheim factory you will always be able to identify it, it is that distinctive. Figures 11, 12 and 13 are all samples of Schrezheim pewter from this time period. I didn't show it in these drawings, but all three of these steins have footings which match the lid.

Faience was devised as a substitute for porcelain, but now that porcelain had been available for about 100 years the faience factories were shutting down. Glass was cheap, easy to make, easy to keep clean and was becoming the material of choice. Between 1825 and 1875 glass steins were just about the only kind available.

Even the stoneware factories in the Westerwald stopped producing steins around 1825 and except for sporadic production runs in the 1850s didn't produce steins in any numbers until the early 1870s. Figure 14 is the pewter from what must be one of the last stoneware steins to come out of the Westerwald about 1825. The pewter is plain, very basic and has a small thumblift. It is a hint of what is to come.

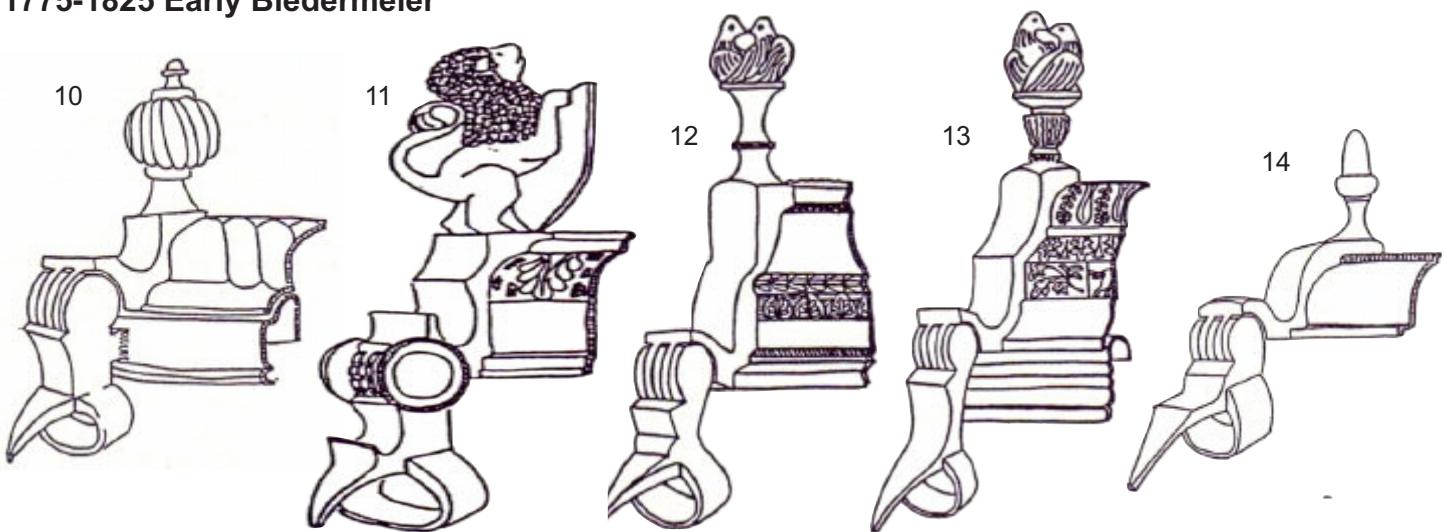
1825-1875: Industrial Revolution

The majority of steins we see from early in this time period are what we call the Biedermeier Wedding Stein, an enameled, 1-liter stein with a wide flared base. The pewter is similar to Figure 14 except they have a larger,

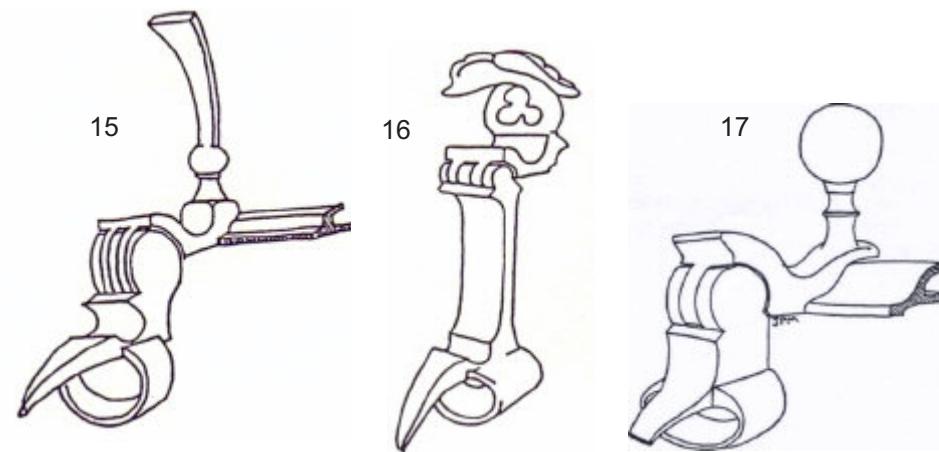
urn shaped thumblift and prior to about 1835, a footing to protect those wide flared bases, but the rising cost of tin took its toll and the footings disappeared, and when they went, the wide flaring bases had to go also. By 1840 we see the .5 liter glass stein, either etched or enameled, becoming predominant. The lids on these steins are now flat slabs cast to appear like they have a medallion inset in the middle. At this point the steins still have parallel walls, but soon many are tapered toward the top to further reduce the amount of pewter required. Finally, about 1850 the lid becomes a simple pewter ring holding either a glass or ceramic insert, and the thumblift is very thin and narrow as in Figure 15. Some still felt a need to reduce the amount of pewter being used even further, and around 1865 we find steins that are tall and narrow so that the lid diameter is reduced even more. These pieces also have very small diameter hinges and thin shanks as in Figure 16.

As I was working on this article I encountered a pewter fitting I had not seen before. The pewter on a blue and gray stoneware stein c. 1870-1880 which appeared to be from the Reinhold Hanke factory had a heavy three-ring hinge like those I attribute to 1870-1895, but it had a closed hinge. I subsequently acquired another c. 1870-1880 piece from the Reinhold Hanke factory, and to my surprise, it bore the same heavy, closed, three ring hinge. Since then I have acquired a third example, a glass stein with inlaid porcelain lid which is c. 1870-1880. See Figure 17.

Not knowing where the glass stein was made, or who made it, I'll have to use the Hanke piece as the basis for analysis. Reinhold Hanke launched his stoneware business in 1868, and by 1875, like everyone else, his steins were being fitted with open three ring hinges. That means that this type hinge was used sometime between 1868 and 1875. My personal belief is that the window is much smaller, and toward the end of that short period.

1775-1825 Early Biedermeier

10. From a faience stein of Gmunden dated 1777. I have exactly the same lid and thumblift without the lid ring on a glass stein dated 1788.
11. Schrezheim pewter on a stoneware stein c.1820. Note that in addition to the hinge skirts, the hinge has been cut to look like meshing gears.
12. Schrezheim pewter on an engraved glass stein c.1820.
13. Schrezheim pewter on a cold-painted faience stein c.1830. Figures 11, 12 and 13 all have footings decorated to match the lids.
14. Pewter from a stoneware stein of the Westerwald c.1825.

1825-1875: Industrial Revolution

15. Pewter from a glass stein c.1850 with a glass or ceramic insert.
16. Pewter from a glass stein c.1860-65. Note the thin shank and the small diameter hinge. The lid is the same as Figure 14, but only two-thirds the diameter.
17. The anomalous three ring closed hinge, ca.1870.

The existence of this hinge presents us with two questions: Where exactly does it fit into our chronology, and why are there so few of them? I can only theorize, but keeping in mind that this was a period of transition from closed hinges to open hinges, I think the following answer is pretty close to the mark.

It's reasonable to think that while a majority of pewterers were changing over to the open three ring hinge, a small number wanted to retain the clean, finished appearance of the closed five ring hinge. Unfortunately, there was an inherent weakness in this design which soon curtailed its use. The three ring *open* hinge was made such that the pin extends all the way through the three hinge rings. In order to use the same casting process, a *closed* hinge was created by shortening the pin to two stubs extending from the center ring only part way into the outer rings. Any lateral movement of the lid or thumblift caused the center ring to exert pressure against the outer rings, causing them to gradually move outward, allowing the hinge pin to pull out of its receptacles, resulting in hinge failure. The open three ring hinge with the pins extended completely through the outer rings didn't suffer from the same weakness, and so, out of necessity, became the hinge of choice.

1875-1895 Early Modern

The Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 seems to have been a turning point in many ways. Whatever the reason, the price of tin must have fallen dramatically, and the stoneware factories felt it was time to reintroduce the stoneware stein. By 1875 we find factories in both the Westerwald and Regensburg areas producing stoneware steins with large, fancy pewter lids and thumblifts. The thumblifts have also been moved back

over the hinge as in Figure 18. This is also a time of transition from the closed hinge to the open hinge as in Figure 19. Both of the hinges, in Figures 18 and 19 can be classified as c.1875. The first open hinges, as in Figure 19, are the heavy, open three ring hinges and these were used until about 1895 when the five ring, open hinge became the hinge of choice as in Figure 20.

In 1892, international trade agreements were signed requiring countries exporting goods to mark them with the name of the country of origin. Germany produced a plethora of cheap steins for export which had pewter fittings of very small dimensions that, I am sure, did not meet the fineness requirements for pewter being sold in Germany. The pewter is very soft and has a tendency to bend or break quite easily. See Figure 21. Although this is also an open, three ring hinge, don't confuse it with the heavier three ring hinges seen in Figure 19. These puny fittings of low grade pewter were used on export steins from 1892 until at least World War I. Figure 22 is how you will quite often encounter this fitting.

1895-1945 Modern

In the mid 1890s the open, five ring hinge came into use as we saw in Figure 20, and this hinge is still the predominantly used hinge today. After World War I, Germany found it couldn't buy tin because it was classified as a strategic material. What tin or pewter Germany had on hand was needed for other purposes, so many beer steins ended up with nickel plated metal lids like the type in Figure 23. This lid is found off and on right up through the end of World War II. The majority are found on steins produced between 1919 and 1924, and again from 1934 through 1939.

Figure 24 is from a Third Reich stein and is typical of the 1934-45 period. What makes this pewter different is the fact that the lid, the tang, the thumblift, and the upper portion of the hinge are cast together as one piece. Quite a process improvement for the time, as it eliminated several steps in the lidding process, thereby increasing production and reducing costs, highly desirable results in a war-time economy.

1945 to Date, Post War

While we find all kinds of hinges and fittings being used today, the fittings in Figure 25 are some of the most common postwar fittings and are c.1950. Note that it uses a closed, five ring hinge. This does not mean it was made prior to 1875. Another characteristic to note is the sweeping curve from the tang right up to the tip of the thumblift. This pewter exhibits casting and stamping marks, is overly shiny, and usually marked inside the lid with the letters D.B.G.M. Most modern pewter from about 1960 on has a velvety, sandblasted texture to the surface and the hinges are often rough appearing with what seem to be file marks.

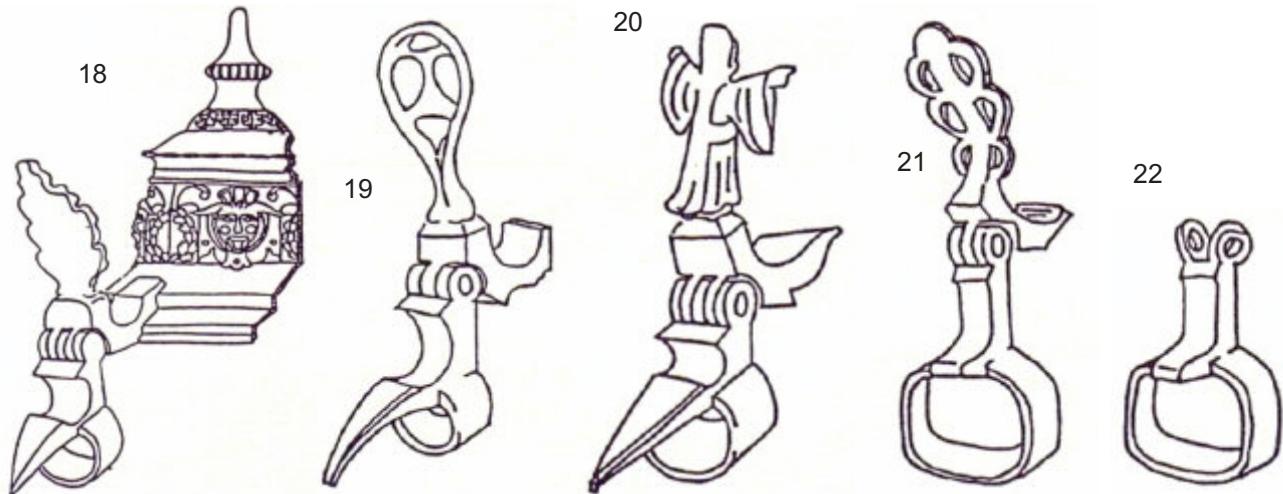
While this article won't make you an expert on dating your steins and their pewter, I hope that it will give you some useful clues and a degree of confidence when considering a purchase at your local flea market.



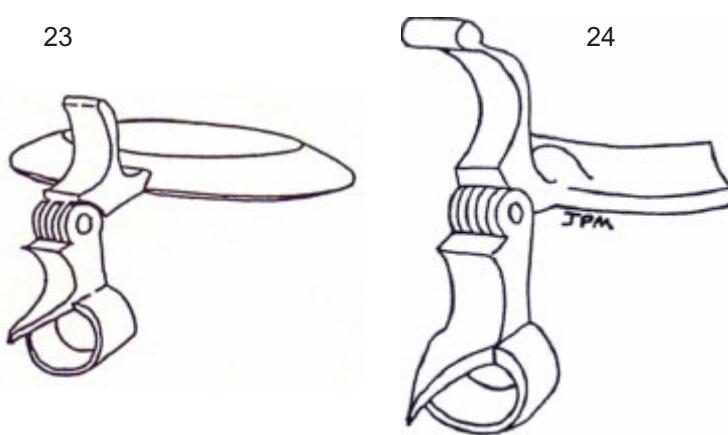
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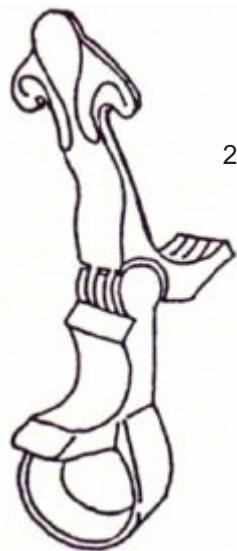


1875-1895 Early Modern

18. Pewter from a stoneware stein c.1875. Note that the thumblift is back over the hinge and that the hinge is still a closed, five ring affair.
19. Pewter from a glass stein with a 4-F lid inlay dated 1882. This type of open, three ring hinge started to come into use c.1875 and continued in use until c.1895.
20. Pewter from a Mettlach stein c.1900. Still the preferred hinge today.
21. Don't confuse this puny, open three ring hinge with Figure 19. This one was used on export pieces after 1892 and is easily damaged.
22. How Figure 21 is often found, if at all.

1895-1945 Modern

23. Fittings from a post World War I. stein. Lid is nickel plated metal and major usage was 1919-1924 and 1934-1939.
24. Mounts on a Third Reich stein, typically used between 1934-1945.

1945 to Date, Post War

25. Pewter is c.1950. Note the curved shape of tang to thumblift. Lid is probably marked D.B.G.M. inside.

Marzi & Remy Decoration Numbers

By Randy Satterfield
Dixie Steiners

I've been collecting Marzi & Remy for some time now. When you collect a specific maker like this over time you begin to notice things that aren't readily apparent such as patterns, tendencies, methods of manufacture, outliers, etc. One of the things I noticed years ago I simply thought "that's a little strange" and gave it no more thought. But recently I've explored the issue and believe I've come up with a new insight with one small mystery remaining. This concerns a series of steins sold by Marzi & Remy likely in the 1910 to 1920 range. For want of a better word I'll call these triptych steins. First let me introduce the series and then look into the reason for this article.

All these steins feature a particular style of decoration—they have a central image with text on the sides, usually enclosed or semi-enclosed within a decorative frame. Marzi & Remy weren't the only maker to use this type of decoration, notably so did Merkelsbach & Wick (see picture 1), but Marzi & Remy turned our far more than anyone else. The style is reminiscent of tapestry steins (with the exception of Villeroy and Boch), but tapestry style steins are etched. Pictures 2a,b,c show a typical example of these steins.



These are transfer decorated and consequently have more detailed designs than the etched tapestry steins. The central decoration often involves street scenes, sometimes in Biedermeier dress, but also feature other types of scenes as well. For instance, Picture 3 shows two steins with Kegel scenes. Both feature a typical bowling scene of "the celebrating pinsetter" (aka "the pin boy").

These are hardly noteworthy steins, they are not all that appealing to most and might be considered mediocre steins at best. So why the attention here? It's not the steins themselves, it's what's on their base that I find of interest. Typically there is a hand written

four or five digit number in black ink. The five digit numbers start with 15. The same number identifies the steins in Marzi & Remy old catalogs and in The Beer Stein Library. This has always seemed odd to me as there are no other cases that I'm aware of where Marzi & Remy hand wrote mold numbers. In every other case, if a mold number is present it's impressed. After I finally got around to giving the matter some thought the answer was obvious, these are not mold numbers, they're decoration numbers.

All of these steins are mold number 990. Molds 990 and 992 were the most prolifically utilized of all their many "various subjects" stein bodies. On the SCI website there are two Marzi & Remy catalogs included in the Old Stein Manufacturers Catalogs section. In the first, the older one, drawings of both 990 and 992 are shown on page 48. Both are plain, undecorated and lidless. This is how Marzi & Remy thought of these "various subjects" steins, as blanks. You only occasionally see the 990 or 992 mold numbers on the steins themselves. Many of the 990 and 992 steins that we see were undoubtedly decorated elsewhere. So Marzi & Remy were using an entirely different number to identify these steins according to their decoration.

Decoration numbers were not common or used at all by most manufacturers. Villeroy & Boch of course commonly used them on their "various subjects"





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steins, such as forms 1526 and 1909. Villeroy & Boch separated the mold number and decoration number on the base. Merkelbach & Wick used them on their "various subjects" molds 1703, 1709, and 1717, hand writing them on the base, separated from the mold number by a slash. So Marzi & Remy are doing the same as Merkelbach & Wick except they are not including the mold number. Each of these triptych steins utilize the 990 Stein body. Picture

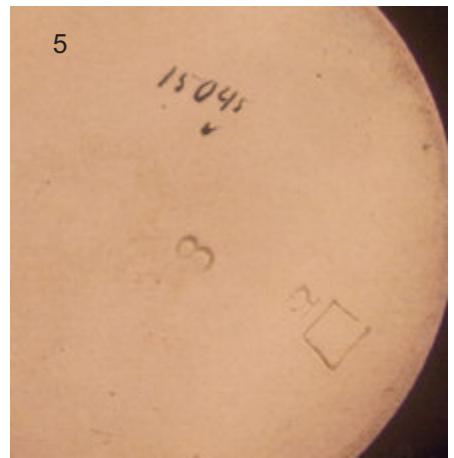
4 shows two typical 990 steins, the first a Frankfurt souvenir Stein, signed by Franz Ringer; the second is a bricklayer's occupational. I propose that the most specific way to refer to these steins with hand written numbers is the Merkelbach & Wick method. For instance, the Stein shown in Picture 2 has the number 1384 on the base and is so listed in the catalog and The Beer Stein Library. More specifically, it should be 990/1384.



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I have a spread sheet tracking various aspects of these steins. I have eighteen listed so far, all but one I own. Some notable things from this small study is that in no case is there a mold number present; in about 70% the makers mark is present; and about 30% of them have the 10/20L capacity mark (a Marzi & Remy indicator).

Picture 5 shows the base of a typical triptych Stein—the Marzi & Remy impressed trademark, and the hand written decoration number, 15045.



The second catalog in the Old Stein Manufacturers Catalogs on the SCI website shows these steins on four pages. Page 12 shows a total of 25 form number 990's, 13 of which are triptych designs and 12 are others. Numbers range from 1311 to 1360. Page 16 has six number 990s, all triptych, with numbers ranging from 1371 to 1378. Page 22 has 29 number 990s, 23 triptych and six others. Numbers range from 1887 to 2220. Finally, page 37 has 24 number 990s, 17 triptych and seven others, with numbers ranging from 1884 to 15026.

The final mystery is this. On each of these pages the triptych steins are mixed in with other form 990 steins. Logically you should see some of these non-triptych steins with the hand written decoration number on the base, but I've yet to see one. Surely some will turn up in time.



The Umbrella Men Stein

By Salvator Mazzone

Florida Sun Steiners

I was shocked! It was like learning there was no Santa Claus. My “Schierholz Umbrella Men” stein (Picture 1) was not actually made by Schierholz at all. The Horror!

To my knowledge, there has never been an article about this stein in *Prosit*; at least I could not find one. And the only *Featured Stein* article about it I could find was on the SCI website during the month of April 2002. It was titled “*The Schierholz ‘Umbrella’ Stein*” by Ron Gray and, as the name implies, asserted that the maker was, indeed, Schierholz & Sohn of Plaue, Thüringen, Germany.

But, in a recent email dialog with Frank Loevi, founder of The Beer Stein Library (BSL), I was informed to my shock-and-awe that my “Schierholz Umbrella Men” stein was not actually made by Schierholz and that it is not known who the maker was.

“This cannot be,” I told myself, and began searching through the various resource materials at my disposal to prove Frank wrong. But I found in my copies of Kirsner’s *The Beer Stein Book* and Manusov’s *Encyclopedia of Character Steins* that, though shown, there is no maker attributed to the stein. Further, excepting the Gray article, this stein can be found neither in any of the extensive Schierholz stein information published in *Prosit* over the years nor in the SCI resource material archives.

I may be the village idiot of the stein collecting community, but I don’t think that I’m the only one that’s been laboring under the misapprehension that this was a Schierholz stein. The seller from whom I purchased it eons ago cited it as a Schierholz. Internet searches yield results from reputable sources such as The Stein Auction Company, Kovel’s, and Worthpoint that cite Schierholz as the maker of the stein.

1



But, alas, the stein has none of the markings that would signify Schierholz – no “Mustershutz”, no hash mark, no crown & shield. The only marking to be found is a “½ L” capacity mark painted in black on its exterior – which should be noted as being different from the way Schierholz marked capacity with a “0.5 L” marking hand-painted *inside* the stein, a rather convincing indicator that it was not made by Schierholz.

So, then, who made this stein?

Out of the blue while pursuing unrelated research, I came across Ron Fox’ “*Photos from the Road*” feature in the March 2014 issue of *Prosit*. The very last stein in the feature was an Umbrella Men stein with an obscure attribution to the *Amberg Porcelain Company*.

In all the literature and all the auction materials I have scoured over the years I had never seen this stein attributed to Amberg. So, I contacted Ron, asking, “*Did you then and do you now believe the maker to be Amberg? If not, do you have a belief as to who the maker was?*”

He responded, “*Yes, I am convinced Amberg Porcelain was the maker of the men under the umbrella stein.*”

I followed up, asking what it was that lead him to believe that it was made by the Amberg Porcelain Factory.

His answer was, “*Each factory has certain traits that are unique to themselves. When you put it with other Amberg steins, those traits and similarities scream at you. When you put it with a group of Schierholz steins, the differences are quickly apparent.*”

Picture 2 shows an example of an Amberg Monk character stein. To my knowledge I have never held an Amberg stein in my hands, but I have seen photos of many of them. To my eye, in those pictures the Ambergs don’t have the same look at all as the Umbrella Men stein, and apparently to the eyes of many others, the Umbrella Men stein has more of the look of a Schierholz stein than that of an Amberg.

Further, note the handles of the two steins. In the same March 2014 issue



of *Prosit*, in an article titled "Steins from Amberg/Hirschau" by SCI Master Steinologists Dr. Roy DeSelms and Chris Wheeler, it is pointed out that Amberg handles have a distinctive "?" shape, as can be seen in Picture 2. The handle of the Umbrella Men stein does not conform to this norm.

Ron is the Master and I the Grasshopper, so I am not about to question Ron's call on this. Yet I confess that I am less than 100% convinced that Amberg was indeed the maker of the Umbrella Men stein, although I am convinced the maker was not Schierholz.

So, I'm issuing a call to all SCI Master Steinologists to put your heads together, reach a consensus once and for all as to who the maker of this wonderful stein was, and determine what other steins they produced. And then, of course, share your findings with me and my fellow Grasshoppers in an upcoming issue of *Prosit*.



An 18th Century Glass Marriage Stein

By Walt Vogdes, SCI Master Steinologist

This clear glass, cut and copper wheel engraved stein is dated 1777 on the body. It has a wide strap-shaped handle, a ball thumblift, five-ring closed hinge with a medallion in the center of the lid. Most of the body surface is

wheel-cut in a quilted diamond pattern. The engraved detail, which was originally gilded, includes two sets of initial beneath a crown (F. C. Hz and F. H. Hz), and the date 1777. Based on the pairing of initials I have always felt this

stein commemorates a marriage, or perhaps an anniversary. The third initial in both cases is actually a ligature of the two letters, H and z. The crown obviously suggests royalty, so might it be possible to attribute this stein to a royal family? Hmm... What German royal family might use the conjoined letters Hz? Well yes, of course, the possibility that this celebrates a Hohenzollern marriage is too tempting to resist, although I have never been able to find a historical record of such a Hohenzollern marriage in 1877.



The Stein That Finally Came Home

By Tom Levenson, Pittsburgh Stein Society



A couple of years ago I penned a sad tale about a particular occupational stein that I lost at an SCI convention auction due to my lack of conviction (and money). The title of that article was, "The Stein That Got Away," and it appeared in the Sept. 2020 issue of *Prosit*. The auction was a Ron Fox Auction and the time frame was the 2018 SCI Convention held in Richmond, VA. The stein is a beautiful ½-liter porcelain occupational in mint condition with the original owner's name, Philipp Freiermuth, shown boldly on the top of the stein body. The occupation depicted on this great looking stein is that of a Petroleum Coachman. The coach driver is seen driving two large horses which in turn are pulling a wagon advertising petroleum. The most interesting part of this very colorful and graphic stein, at least to me, is the inscription on the wagon which translates to "Pure Pennsylvania petroleum, the best of all American verities." Being a lifelong resident of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and an occupational stein collector as well, I thought that I just had to have this stein referring to Pennsylvania and Pennsylvania oil. As the bidding progressed I found myself in a two-person contest, and my opponent seemed pretty determined. After doing a quick calculation of where the bidding was going plus a 20% com-

mission plus shipping costs, I stopped my pursuit when the bidding hit \$500, and the other bidder walked off with "my" stein. A sad day for me and I've thought about that stein ever since. I thought that I would never see the stein again and probably would have to be happy with one similar to it although not as detailed nor as beautiful. Oh, well !!

But wait, lo and behold, as I browsed through the May 18, 2022 TSACO (The Stein Auction Company) auction catalog, to my great surprise and delight, there it was; my Pennsylvania Petroleum Coachman stein !! The name Philipp Freiermuth is boldly displayed and the reference to Pennsylvania petroleum is clear and defining, just as it was back in 2018 in Richmond, VA. What to do? What to do? Well, the answer to that question was simple, this stein was going to be mine even if I had to pay twice what I think the market value is. I'm not letting this stein be "The Stein That Got Away" once again.

The online bidding started slowly with the first bid starting out at \$150. In the end, there were twenty-three bids made on "MY STEIN"; I made 1/3 of them as I was not about to be outbid. The hammer fell with my last bid finally winning the long

sought-after prize. The shout of joy that came from deep within me was so loud that it was heard by my wife, two floors below my computer room where I was making my nervous bids. After settling down a little, I calculated my winning bid amount plus the buyer's commission plus a shipping charge and came to the realization that I just paid less than the amount this Pennsylvania Petroleum stein sold for back in 2018. I would have paid a whole lot more to have this stein in my collection. It now sits in a prominent place on a book shelf in our family room and every time I look at it, I think to myself, "here is the stein that finally came home."



Oil Falls from \$10 to 10¢ per Barrel!

Yes, that's right. In 1861 the price of oil fell from a previous high of \$10 per barrel to only 10¢. This was a result of the same laws of demand and supply as apply today. Here's the story.

Prior to the 1850's, the use of petroleum was limited. It was only available from oil seeps, areas where petroleum rises to the surface like a spring. It was used by Native American tribes as an ointment, skin coloring, mosquito repellent and for medicinal and ceremonial purposes. Although such seeps were widely known in western Pennsylvania, there was no method to "mine" them.

One form of "mining" that was profitable at the time was salt-water wells. Wells were sunk into salt deposits, water was introduced to dissolve the salt, and then the wells were pumped for salt brine. The valuable salt was extracted from the brine by evaporation. Many saltwater wells in western Pennsylvania were plagued by the presence of petroleum in the brine, an undesirable contaminant. In the 1850's Samuel Kier recognized that the chemical makeup of the oil from his saltwater wells was the same as the medicine being prescribed for his wife and he began to drill for crude. Kier and a partner, John T. Kirkpatrick, began to distill the oil for use in lighting,

and Kier invented a lamp which eliminated the odor and smoke of earlier lamp oils. At the same time, the machinery of the industrial age was calling for more forms of lubrication, and the existing sources—whaling and seeps—were unable to meet the rising demand. Crude oil suddenly seemed more desirable!

In 1857 in the small Pennsylvania village of Titusville, Edwin Drake began drilling for oil. He was not very successful initially, and had to rely on a personal line of credit to continue his efforts, but in 1859 he struck oil at 69 feet below ground, enabling the first large scale extraction of petroleum. This set off an oil rush in western Pennsylvania, and Titusville became a boomtown. Much higher quantities of crude were pumped due to the proliferation of wells, and prices fluctuated wildly.



The first U.S. commercial oil well, drilled by Edwin Drake in 1859 on the banks of Oil Creek

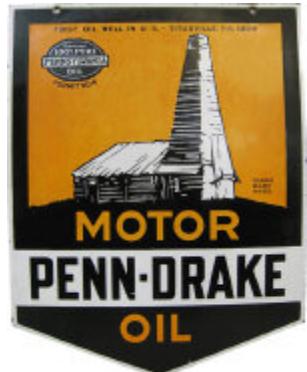
In the early years of the rush, oil was floated by skiff down Oil Creek to the Allegheny River. Two thirds of the cargo was lost through leaks, and 40% of the flimsy skiffs were lost to the river rocks. In 1862 the Oil Creek Railroad connected Titusville to other railroad lines, greatly improving access to large markets for crude oil.

Total domestic output of crude oil in 1859 was 2,000 barrels, but with the number of wells skyrocketing and distribution improved, production mounted quickly to 4M barrels by 1869, and 10M barrels just four years later. For much of the 19th and 20th centuries, the US was the largest oil producing country in the world. Those were the days!

Is it any wonder that Tom prizes his stein?

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The History of Gnomes

By Alain Steenbeeke

Pacific Stein Sammler

As you have most likely seen, gnomes are depicted on many steins, both old and new, and by various stein makers. They are cute little humanoids that are often depicted as having fun and, on many steins, drinking beer and smoking. But what do we know about these mythical figures? I will provide you with a brief background on the history of gnomes.

The word Gnome comes from Renaissance Latin *gnomus*, which first appears in *A Book on Nymphs, Sylphs, Pygmies, and Salamanders, and on the Other Spirits* by Paracelsus, published posthumously in Nysa in 1566 (and again in the Johannes Huser edition of 1589–1591 from an autograph by Paracelsus). However, gnomes started to become really popular in the early 1800's. It can be argued that this rise in popularity began in Northern Europe, but at approximately at the same time they also became popular in Scandinavia. Travel between the two regions was frequent so the word spread fast among the countries.

The depiction of gnomes has changed quite often over the years and remained different in different cultures. Originally many of them were conceived of as ugly, ground dwelling creatures that were less humanoid than the gnomes of today. In fact, they were more akin to small goblins and disfigured faeries and acted more like animals than human beings. In contrast, modern sources often depict gnomes as diminutive, stout humanoids who wear tall, pointed conical caps and dress in solid colors such as blue, red, or green, and the male gnome always has a long white beard. They have the intelligence of a human (are sometimes thought to be wiser) and have human-like personalities.

While their appearances may differ, the older and newer traditions do share a similar belief in gnomes' capabilities: They are said to move as easily through the earth as humans walk upon it, and the sun's rays turn them into stone. They are incredibly strong and fast, and said to possess almost supernatural abilities in the manipulation of natural material (although they also are said to fiercely guard against any unnecessary damage to the earth and wildlife).

In Scandinavia, the gnome usually has the name of Tomte in Swedish, or Nisser in Norway. In Finland, the name for the gnome is Tonttu. Other names are: Kabouterje in The Netherlands, Duende in Spain and Hob in England.

Scandinavian gnomes are similar in style to the ones you've probably seen in Western folklore. Small and bearded, these creatures are mischievous domestic spirits. Scandinavians believe that they're responsible for the welfare and protection of a farmstead and its buildings.



Painting of a gnome on a mushroom by Heinrich Schlitt

In Germanic folklore, including Germanic mythology, a dwarf is an entity that dwells in the mountains and in the earth. The entity is associated with wisdom, smithing, mining, and crafting.

Gnomes have a lot in common with humans as they are social creatures and like to spend time with other gnomes socializing and generally enjoying themselves when they have done their work. They have a great sense of humor which is another likeness to humans and they enjoy getting together to tell and listen to stories.

A group of gnomes is called a *donsey*. Gnomes are symbols of good luck. Originally, gnomes were thought to provide protection, especially of buried treasure and minerals in the ground. Gnomes mature at the same rate humans do and most are expected to settle into an adult lifestyle by around age 40. They can live 350 to almost 500 years.

At night, the garden gnome will tend to the garden, work on his or her own home or may choose to engage in pranks. They eat at night and all help to prepare the food. They are generally vegetarian and eat food like nuts, mushrooms, peas, beans, potatoes and fruit. They like to drink mead dew made from fermented honey, fermented raspberries and spiced gin as a nightcap. During the day they spend their time frozen which is why humans do not see them walking around. They only move at night.

Germany made gnomes famous in the mid-1800s with the first production of the garden gnome in the town of Gräfenroda in Thuringia, by Phillip Griebel. Griebel made terracotta animals as decorations and created the gnome based on local myths as a way for people to enjoy the stories of the gnomes' willingness to help in the garden at night. Gnome manufacturing spread across Germany, with numerous large

and small manufacturers appearing, each one having its own particular design. The popularity of garden gnomes soon spread to England when Sir Charles Isham brought several of Griebel's gnomes and they spread from there to many countries in the world.

Perhaps, famous German artist Heinrich Schlitt (1849-1923) helped make gnomes even more popular. Schlitt was known for his fantasy motifs that featured gnomes, dwarves and faeries. Schlitt's fanciful and imaginative illustrations of gnomes appeared in many books and periodicals, as well as on a large number of steins produced by Villeroy & Boch's Mettlach factory. Figure 1 is one of his very popular designs.



Hauber & Reuther, Diesinger, Reinhold Hanke among others used designs with gnomes on them as well. In addition to gnomes being featured on the main body, they also adorned lids, thumb lifts and even handles.

Even though gnome depictions aren't as popular now as they once were, they still capture the imagination of many people, and have strong appeal to stein collectors. Gnome steins can at times command a premium because of the images. Frankly, they make me smile.

Here are some more images of steins in my collection that depict gnomes.



2) Marked Germany, maker unknown

3) Hauber & Reuther #415

4) Marzi and Remy #1619

5) Girmscheid #1046 The Gnome Festival

6) Dümller & Breiden #86

7) Reinhold Hanke #1144

8) Diesinger ½ L

9) Mettlach PUG stein #2140/1047

10) Marked Germany 3/10 L etched stein

11) Mettlach #1476. This is the second stein in a series of 6 that depict gnomes preparing dirt, planting grapes, harvesting, pressing grapes, consuming wine and being carried home drunk by their wives. (I have all six in my collection)

SCI members Ron Hartmann and Peter Meinlschmidt have maintained a correspondence on regimental steins for a number of years. When Ron offered an article about the Feldartillerie-Schießschule stein, Peter offered a companion article based on material in his planned English-language book. These complementing articles are presented next.

Examining a stein from the *Feldartillerie-Schießschule Stein (Field Artillery Gunnery School)*

By Ron Hartmann, Gateway Steiners

Twenty years ago this ½-liter porcelain regimental stein named to Reservist Ochs was offered on eBay (Pictures 1a,b,c). Realizing that this was a rare and very desirable regimental stein, I had to have it. I bid on it and won, fortunately at a reasonable price. There was a lot to learn about the stein, especially to understand what the *Feld. Art. Schieß-Schule* (Field Artillery Gunnery School) was all about.

An Artillery Gunnery School was established in 1867 at the Tegel gunnery

range, near Berlin. Its purpose was to train artillery officers in commanding batteries in war time, as well as keep abreast of the latest technical development in artillery warfare and tactics. Several special training courses were organized each year for artillery officers from all federal states plus Bavaria.

In 1890 the school was reorganized into two separate branches, the Field Artillery Shooting School (*Feldartillerie-Schießschule*) and the Foot Artillery Shooting School (Fußartillerie-Schieß-

schule). The foot artillery used heavy guns with greater than 10 cm caliber shells. As technology advanced and the range of the guns increased, it was recognized that the proximity of the school to Berlin was not ideal, and it was relocated to Jüterbog, a rural area about 70 km south of Berlin which offered more open area for a gunnery range than the former Tegel area. From 1890 the schools gradually increased in personnel strength, reaching regimental strength by 1913.



The operational ranks for the gunnery range, including firing batteries, drivers and target construction, were recruited from the line artillery units after soldiers had completed their first year of service. The soldiers of the Field Artillery Gunnery School wore red shoulder boards with the yellow interlaced letters "FAS" (*Feld-Artillerie-Schule*) above a small flaming grenade. The Foot Artillery Gunnery School wore a white shoulder board with red interlaced letters "FAS" (*Fuß-Artillerie-Schule*). An illustrated section on shoulder boards can be found on pages 309-315 in Peter Meinlschmidt's excellent referenced book, information which is to prove crucial to our understanding of Reservist Ochs' service.

Referring to Pictures 1a-c, the motto of the artillery, *Kanondonner ist unser Gruss* (Cannon thunder is our greeting), encircles the rim of this stein directly above the dedication to Reservist Ochs. Above the base is the identification of Ochs' unit (the 4th Battery of the Field Artillery Shooting School), garrison city (Jüterbog), and the dates of his service (1905 – 07).

The center motif (Picture 2) is a very colorful and active scene of artillerymen pulling a cannon up a hill with their team of six horses. In the lower part of the scene are the crowned shoulder

board of the Field Artillery School surrounded by flags, cannon, a helmet, a banner with the words *Erinnerung an meine Dienstzeit* (In remembrance of my service time), and a second, smaller shoulder board. This secondary shoulder board is red with a yellow crown above a grenade. Meinlschmidt's book identifies this as the shoulder board of the 1. *Badisches Feldartillerie-Regiment Nr. 14* (1st Baden Field Artillery Regiment No. 14), garrisoned in Karlsruhe (the capital of the Grand Duchy of Baden), indicating where Reservist Ochs spent his first year of service. Ochs must have demonstrated a high level of skill to earn him the honor of being assigned to the Field Artillery School where he helped to train others.

The left side scene is of four artillerymen working on a field cannon. In the background horses pull several cannons into view. Below reads: *Noch einmal müßen stramm wir üben, dann aufs Paradefeld hinaus, Zuletzt am Bivakfeuer liegen, und dann geht's heim ins Vaterhaus* (Once more we must train vigorously, and then out onto the parade field, finally, we lie at the bivouac fire, and soon we go home to father's house).

The right side scene shows artillerymen preparing to load a cannon. In the background is a distant town and castle. Below is written: *Das allergrößte*



Kriegsheer kann ohne uns nichts machen. Die Siegesgöttin lacht nicht eher als bis Kanonen krachen. (The greatest army can do nothing without us. The Goddess of Victory doesn't laugh until our cannons roar.).

The lithophane is a typical farewell scene, as the soldier offers tender goodbyes before returning home.



It was great fun to learn the fascinating background connected with Reservist Ochs stein and to share this not always easy to find information with SCI members through *Prosit*.

References:

Meinlschmidt, P., *Reservistenkriege der Deutschen Kaiserzeit* (1890-1914), 2011.



Picture 4 - Field artillery gun and crew during an exercise ca. pre-1900

Examining a stein from the *Fußartillerie-Schießschule* (Foot Artillery Gunnery School)

By Peter Meinlschmidt - SCI Master Steinologist



The half liter porcelain stein shown here was owned by reservist Jakob Probst who served his first year with the 7th company of the Baden Foot Artillery Regiment No. 14 in Straßburg, and his second year with the 4th Instructional Company (*Lehrkompanie*) of the Foot Artillery Gunnery School at Jüterbog. The reservist's name and the units he served in appear in an inscription encircling the stein body just above the base. His service time is indicated as 1904 to 1906.

The center scene of the stein depicts several gunners preparing to fire a built-up C/72 siege gun (*Ringkanone*). Below the scene are an artillery spiked helmet (ball top), the white shoulder board of the gunnery school, crossed flags with

the Imperial colors, and a small grenade. At left, two gunners stand behind a thick-barreled gun in a wooded area. To the right, six gunners stand behind a short-barreled gun. The finial of the pewter lid is a gun with two-man crew; the thumblift is the crowned Prussian eagle with widely spread wings.



The soldiers serving with the Instructional battalion (comprising 4 companies) wore the uniform of the Guard Foot Artillery regiment. The white shoulder board of the Foot Artillery Gunnery School bears the interlaced letters FAS (*Fuss Artillerie Schule*) in red. (Except for the colors, the shoulder board is identical to that worn by the Field Artillery Gunnery School.)



The Gambrinus Stein Club



Celebration and Mini-Convention



November 4 – 6, 2022

Come join us for a fun and educational gathering of people of like minds, mainly, stein collecting. The price of admission includes: snacks and soft drinks/water each day, 50th Anniversary Reception Dinner (Saturday), and Lunch (Sunday).

Summary of Events

Speakers

Ron Fox Auction

Stein Sales Tables

Location: 21515 Zion Road, Brookville, MD 20833

How: Complete and mail the registration form ([page 39](#)) with your payment

Cost: SCI Members \$90 per person

Non-SCI Members \$115 per person

If you are not currently a member of Stein Collectors International (SCI), you will receive a one-year membership to access all features associated with the membership, including our quarterly journal, *Prost*, in digital form, and full access to all parts of the SCI website.

My Jungfraubecher “Family”

By Salvatore Mazzone
Florida Sun Steiners

My first beer steins were simple souvenirs brought back from trips abroad in 1979. When I started collecting seriously, I chose to form a broadly eclectic collection. Then, in 2015, I pushed my collection's eclecticism beyond beer steins, though still within the bounds of drinking vessels, and acquired my first *Jungfraubecher*, which is shown in Figure 1.



In German, *Jung-frau-becher* literally means young-woman-cup, and, as can be seen from Figure 1, that indeed accurately describes this drinking vessel. It is marked “925”, indicating its 92.5% silver content, thus achieving the percentage required for the Sterling standard. It also has hallmarks showing it was made by the Ludwig Neresheimer firm of Hanau, Germany and British import marks of the Chester assay office showing it was imported by the Boaz, Moses, Landek Company in 1911. It is 9-3/4” tall and weighs 9.55 troy ounces, or 10.5 avoirdupois ounces. Somehow it ultimately made its way to the USA.

Also known as *Jungfrauenbechers*, *Brautbechers*, *Hochzeitsbechers*, marriage cups, wedding cups, and wager cups, these drinking vessels appear to have had their origin in Nürnberg, Germany. In a June 1987 *Prosit* article, John A. Ey, Jr. asserted that the “first known wedding cup (was) made in 1540 by the master goldsmith Hans Kellner of Nürnberg.” However, my research showed Kellner was born later than this, either in 1551 or 1553, became a master goldsmith in 1582, and died in 1609. I was able to find reliable documentation that Kellner did indeed manufacture at least one

Jungfraubecher during his illustrious career as a master gold and silver smith. Figure 2 is a magnificent 24.8 cm tall Kellner-made cast silver, embossed, gilded, and hallmarked *Jungfraubecher* from the Museum Pfalzgalerie Kaiserslautern, Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany. They date its creation as between 1595-1602. Kellner certainly could have created others as well, both earlier and later than this one.



There is a more romantic legend of the origin of the *Jungfraubecher*, which goes something like this:

Centuries ago, in old Nürnberg, the noble mistress Kunigunde fell in love with a young and ambitious goldsmith. Although Kunigunde’s wealthy father, a powerful nobleman, did not approve of this pairing, it was clear that she wanted only the goldsmith as her husband, as she refused many titled and rich suitors who asked for her hand in marriage.

Her father became so enraged that he had the young goldsmith thrown into the darkest dungeon. Not even his daughter’s bitter tears could change her father’s mind.

To her father’s dismay, imprisoning the young man did not end his daughter’s love for the goldsmith. Instead, he could only watch as his daughter grew paler and paler as a result of the separation from her true love.

The wealthy nobleman reluctantly made the following proposal: He told his daughter, “If your goldsmith can make a chalice from which two people can drink at the same time without spilling one single drop, I will free him and you shall become his bride”.

Of course, he was certain no one could perform such a task.

Inspired by love, and with skillful hands, the young goldsmith created a masterpiece. He sculpted a girl with a smile as beautiful as his own true love's. Her skirt was hollowed to serve as a cup. Her raised arms held a bucket that swiveled so that it could be filled and then swung towards a second drinker.

The challenge was met. The goldsmith and the nobleman's daughter joined hands in marriage, and with the bridal cup set forth a romantic and memorable tradition as charming today as it was originally, hundreds of years ago.

3



The next *Jungfraubecher* I acquired is shown in Figure 4. Instead of a young woman, this example is in the form of a bearded man. (Since this vessel depicts a man instead of a woman, a more appropriate term might be *Jungmannbecher*, but I'm not going to belabor the terminology, you will know what I mean.)

Although not truly rare, male *Jungfraubechers* are vastly outnumbered by females. This one is quite tall, measuring 11



inches in height. It weighs 14.14 troy ounces or 15.5 avoirdupois ounces. Its only marking is ".925", indicating Sterling quality silver. It was probably manufactured in Germany in the early 1900s, but I am unable to ascertain beyond reasonable doubt by whom that might have been.

My next *Jungfraubecher* purchase was the young lady shown in Figure 5. Her cups are made of blown cranberry glass and her body is brass. She stands 8-1/4 inches tall and features some very nice ornamental gilded scrollwork. She is of Bohemian origin and was likely made by Fritz Heckert (1837-1887) of Warmbrunn, Silesia. Founded in 1866 originally as a refinery of mirrors and carved glass chandelier pieces, the Heckert Company expanded to produce magnificent glassware and grew to play an important role in the Bohemian glass industry.



My most recent *Jungfraubecher* acquisition, purchased to complete my *Jungfraubecher* "family", is shown in Figure 6. She is a simple yet attractive diminutive *fraulein* made of cast pewter. She is of German origin, dates somewhere between the early to mid-1900s, and stands 6-1/2 inches tall.

The right hand side of Figure 6 shows a hallmark that appears on the bottom of the small raised cup. It depicts an angel with a sword in one hand and a balance scale in the other. The words "FEINZINN" and the letters "ZMN" are imprinted around the angel. The symbolism of a woman with a sword and scales dates back to Justitia, the ancient Roman goddess of justice. The winged angel with sword and scales symbol, however, represents Saint Michael the archangel; it came into use by continental European pewterers in the early 17th century and was applied only to lead free pewter of the finest quality. The term "FEINZINN" came into use by German pewterers beginning in the 19th century also to indicate high quality no-lead pewter.



6



The initials "ZMN" connote the manufacturer, Zinn Menna Nürnberg. Founded in 1899 by Johann Baptist Menna, the firm was destroyed by the war in 1945, re-established in 1949, changed its name in 2006, and was dissolved in 2017. There is a great deal of *feinzinn* in this piece: she weighs in at a hefty-for-her-size 11-3/4 avoirdupois ounces.

Since their inception, these novel drinking vessels have been made from many materials – gold, silver, glass, pewter, ivory, and, reportedly, even wood. Today you can easily find them, new and old, on the internet. They range from nice looking, well-made expensive European and American silver and gold heirloom pieces to cheap Asian knock-offs.

Figure 7 was taken from an eBay "Marriage Cup" listing. It was represented as "like-new," came with the original box and had an accompanying tag bearing the name F. B. Rogers Silver Company, Taunton, Mass, which noted that it was "Printed in Japan". I suspect the cup itself also was made in Japan as several other identical marriage cups listed on eBay actually had "Made in Japan" stickers on them. It carried a Buy-It-Now price of just \$21.25. I've seen it reported that the plating on these, whatever it may be, is exceedingly fragile and has a tendency to flake off; there was a warning tag with this one saying not to use silver polish on it.



7

At any given time, one can usually find a plethora of these F. B. Rogers marriage cups and similar lookalikes listed on eBay, some misrepresented as "antiques from Nürnberg, Germany" with a hefty asking price. This one doesn't look bad in the photo, and it should serve the purpose in a wedding cup ceremony, but it is not one I would choose to own as a collector.

Hundreds of years old, the *Jungfraubecher* and the wedding cup ceremony are still alive and well today, as is the belief of the legend that love, faithfulness and good luck await the newlywed couple who drink from this cup.

The ceremony, I am told, is performed as follows:

During the reception dinner, at the appropriate time, the best man stands and lets everyone know that he has a special toast for the bride and groom and holds up the Jungfraubecher for all to see. The wedding couple then stands and faces each other and the groom takes the Jungfraubecher and turns it upside down so that the large skirt becomes a cup.

Champagne, or whatever may be the beverage of choice, is poured into the now upright hollow skirt. The jungfraubecher legend is sometimes read by the best man or other wedding party member as this is being done.

After the large skirt is filled, the bride takes the smaller cup in hand, swivels it upright, and allows it to also be filled.

The best man now gives the toast.

Together, the wedding couple raises their cups to their lips to drink together, being careful not to spill a drop, for if they can drink without spilling a drop, love, faithfulness and good luck will be theirs forever!

Some choose to delve even deeper into the old tradition and add "Who Rules the Nest" to the ceremony, wherein, just before the bride and groom drink from the wedding cup, the maid of honor stands and boldly announces: "Whoever finishes first without spilling a drop will Rule the Nest!"

Of course, since the bride has the smaller cup, she is likely to come out the winner. Which is entirely appropriate since she will undoubtedly be the Ruler of the Nest in any event!



Mettlach at the AMOCA Museum - Part 5c

Mettlach Artists, Motifs and Styles

By Dr. Roy C. De Selms, SCI Master Steinologist

This article continues our series describing 19th century German history, culture and folklore, and the artists, motifs, styles and techniques of the Villeroy & Boch firm at Mettlach (**VBM**) using items from the Wilson Mettlach Collection at the American Museum of Ceramic Art (AMOCA) in Pomona, CA.

Bob Wilson coined the term **Blue Bible** when referring to Anton Post's compilation of Villeroy & Boch Mettlach catalogs in the book *Mettlacher Steinzeug 1885-1905*, and we use that term occasionally. For convenience, when making reference to *The Mettlach Book* by Gary Kirsner, we use the acronym **TMB**.

This, the third part of our discussion of Mettlach artists/designers, addresses contributions made by Theodor Eyrich, Peter Winkel, Franz Ritter von Stuck, Matthias Hein, Alfred Stöcke, Carl Görig and Hermann Gradi.



1



2



3



4



5

Theodor Eyrich (b. 1838 Nürnberg - d. 1907 Nürnberg) is a lesser known VBM artist, not mentioned in TMB or the Blue Bible. Attribution of his works for VBM derives from two sources: two signed plaques in the 1044 series (Delft style #5062 and #5063), and an 1892 article in *Die Kunst für Alle (Malerei, Plastik, Graphik, Architektur, "Neue Trinkgeschirre"*, J. Stockbauer https://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/kfa1892_1893/0126/image.info) which included pictures of four steins and one round-bodied pitcher attributed to him (Faience styles #5002, 5004, 5006-Nürnberg, 5013-Rothenburg and 5019). Figures 1-5 show these steins in that order, from left to right, and Figure 6 is "Delft" plaque #5063. (See also De Selms, Schamberger, Wilson - *Prosit* June 1999.)

At the end of 1890 VBM conceived of a new product line modeled after early Franconian and Delft articles. Since the largest collections of such wares were in the Nürnberg museums, they turned to Theodor Eyrich, a trained architect and Nürnberg native to provide designs. These new lines were to be faithful to the original shapes and colors, but adapted to new materials and production technologies.



The new Delft- and Faience-style items first appeared in an 1893 VBM catalog titled *Altfränkischen- u. Delfter Artikel* (Old Frankish and Delft Articles), followed by annual supplements bearing the same title (1894-1898). All five of the *Trinkgeschirre* (drink wares) attributed to Eyrich in the 1892 article mentioned above appear in the 1893 catalog, and the two plaques appeared in the 1894 supplement. Nineteen lidded steins and pitchers in the faience style appear on a single page of the 1893 catalog, including all five of the pieces directly attributed to Eyrich. The other models seen on that page are of a very similar style, and their decorations were probably also produced by Eyrich. We draw similar inference from the plaques #5062 and 5063: owing to their similarities, #5037, 5038 and 5064 were almost certainly by Eyrich, and probably more. These pieces show strong archi-

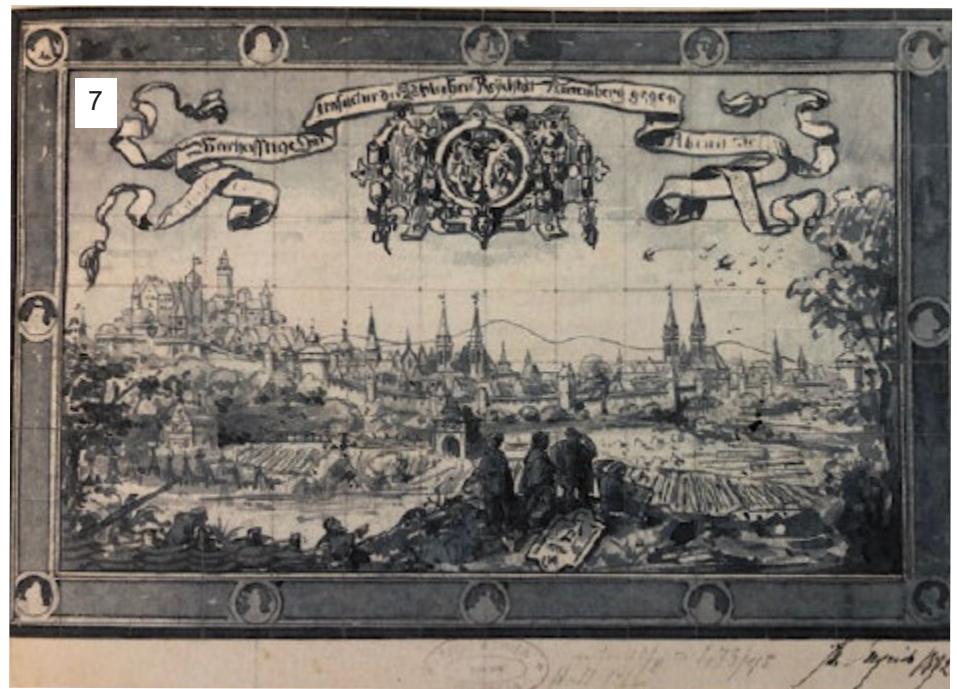
Figures 1-5, left to right: #5002 (4.6 L), #5004 (½ L), #5006-Nürnberg (½ L), #5013-Rothenburg (1 L) and #5019 (1 L)

tectural and Renaissance elements, as well as connections to Nürnberg, consistent with Eyrich's training as an architect, and his lived experience and interests.

The molded earthenware bodies of the Delft and Faience wares were first given a white glaze and high temperature firing. The template outline was added and the scenes were then hand-painted by artists/technicians. Delft items were painted in shades of blue; faience items were painted using historically appropriate colors (blue, yellow, sienna and brown-violet).

The two plaques mentioned earlier are the only known signed examples; none of his steins are signed. One possible reason for this lack of signatures may be the manufacturing process—Eyrich's signature would have to have been added by the decorator, and since Eyrich was not involved in painting the pieces for production his signature is not present.

Another example of Eyrich's work is the signed design for a large tile plaque with a view of Nürnberg (Figure 7).



Design for a large tile scene of the Imperial city of Nürnberg for V&B Mettlach, stamped and signed Th. Eyrich 1892. Credit Horst Barbian.

Before moving on to our next artist, we introduce a large plaque which was acquired from a recent TSACO auction and now is displayed prominently at AMOCA. Executed in the Delft style and measuring 19.4" by 37.5", this plaque offers a historic view of the town

of Mettlach. No signature has been found but it is probable that the plaque was designed by either Theodor Eyrich or Peter Winkel (who will be discussed next), and painted by in house artists, which explains the lack of signature on this exceptional piece.



Mettlach plaque, 19.4" x 37.5" with modern frame, hand-painted, c.1890, Delft coloring, historically important view depicting the town of Mettlach, *Villeroy & Boch Mosaik, Steinzeug u. Sanitärfabrik, Schloss Ziegelberg, Saareck, Church of St. Lutwin, alter Turm*, bridge crossing Saar river in 1886, most likely made for a presentation or an Exhibition, only example known to exist.

Peter Winkel (b. 1866 Wallerfangen - d. 1932 Keuchingen) is another lesser known VBM artist/designer, but for different reasons (see Horst Barbian:*Mettlacher Turm*, July 2014). At the age of 14, already showing his talent, he came to VBM from nearby Wallerfangen to study under the guidance of Johann Ludwig (Jean) Beck, working in the design department. When Beck retired, Winkel was able to take over his position as "Head Painter and Drawing Teacher." Winkel was not a modeler, but only supplied the decorative templates for transfer printing or for hand painted items such as crockery, wall plates, jugs, bowls or tile pictures. He favored natural animal scenes, but also supplied scenes of playing children, dwarfs, gnomes and anthropomorphic animals. Sometime during this period Winkel is said to have studied at the Munich Art Schools and developed the technique of the "old Munich school." A large faience tile wall plaque (figure 10), signed "P. Winkel," shows his ability to work on a large scale, and he was certainly capable of rendering the scene of Mettlach shown earlier. Similar in scope and scale, this plaque, held in the *Heimatmuseum Schloss Fellenberg* in Merzig, shows a panorama of Beckingen. In this case Winkel apparently made the design and finished the entire plaque since he was able to sign it. Rules are made to be broken so they say. Oh well.

As an employee of VBM, Winkel's works were the property of the company, and unlike outside artists such as Schlitt, Quidenus, Stuck, etc., he had no inherent right to have his signature on his works. His high position did allow him to put his signature on some pieces, but only if it was subtly hidden. This is why Winkel is not mentioned in the introduction to the VBM catalogs 1885 - 1905. It wasn't until Bob Wilson, trained as a Civil Engineer, noted an unexplained mark in the form of an angle appearing within some VBM transfer designs and realized that the German word *Winkel* means "angle" in English that Winkel's cryptic signature was identified. Three examples are shown here: plaque 3225 (French Republic) and steins 1338(1909) and 1339 (1909). These marks are accompanied by the year of the design, and the only interpretation for this mark is that it is Winkel's cipher. The signature is sometimes missing from these items if it was cut off the transfer sheet due to the size of the object receiving it. (Pitchers #1338 and 1339 bear the same designs and signatures as the corresponding steins. Because of the subject matter, these items have sometimes been mistakenly attributed to Heinrich Schlitt, including by this author in the March 2021 issue of *Prosit*.)



Figure 9 - The decorating shop at Mettlach.

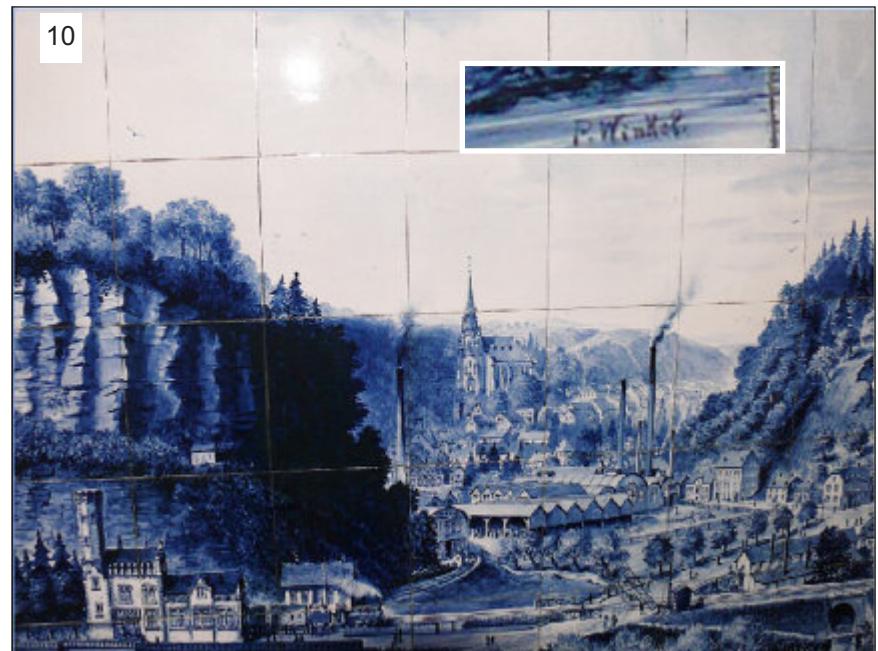


Figure 10 - A large tile panorama of Beckingen, signed "P. Winkel"

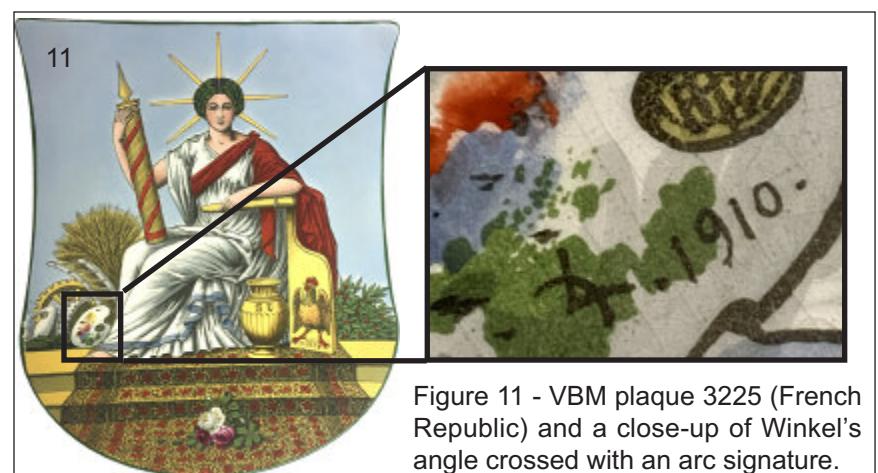


Figure 11 - VBM plaque 3225 (French Republic) and a close-up of Winkel's angle crossed with an arc signature.



Figure 12 - These steins (1338-1909 and 1339-1909) and their corresponding masters, are signed by Winkel.

Franz Ritter von Stuck (b. 1863 Tettenweis/Passau - d. 1928 Munich) was the son of a village miller and was rewarded with knighthood by Prinzregent Luitpold of Bavaria in 1905, presumably for his achievements as an artist/designer and architect. The three steins in figure 13 reflect the classic story entitled "The Trumpeter of Säckingen" written by Joseph Victor von Scheffel in 1853. Each stein has a verse from Scheffel's poem which tells the story of unrequited love between young Werner, a Heidelberg student and trumpeter, and a Baron's daughter, Margaretha (*Der Trumpeter von Säckingen*, a translation by Dagmar Rives, *Prosit* March 1998). A story of love squelched by class differences, it is also a political statement describing the 1848 socialist uprising in Germany which was snuffed out by the Prussian aristocracy.

First in the set, VBM 2007 depicts Hiddigeigi, the Baron's cat and student of human behavior, is a major character in the story. The second in this set, VBM 2008, shows Werner plaintively sounding his trumpet as he departs the scene after being rebuffed in his pursuit of Margaretha by the Baron. Werner's good deeds in exile ultimately earn him a knighthood, and with this new status he is able to reunite with Margaretha. The third Stein, VBM 2009, is titled "The First Kiss."

The only other piece known to be designed by Stuck for VBM is the rather rare 3 L. Pokal showing monkeys doing their own thing, whatever that might be (fig. 14). Unfortunately this Pokal is not in the Wilson collection because Colette did not like monkeys..



Matthias Hein modeled many steins for VBM and had a penchant for the grandiose as seen in this magnificent 5.0 L. stein in figure 15 (VBM #1632). This is one of the rare steins which is signed by two artists, Hein and Warth, apparently working together. The side with the drinker celebrating with his stein held high is signed Warth and the scene is similar to some of his smaller steins. The other side signed Hein with a scene near the end of the party is similar to some others of his.

The next two steins (figure 16) were each made in ½ L, 1.0 L. and 3.8 L. sizes and are very sought after by many Mettlach collectors. On the left in figure 16 is VBM 2828 which depicts the Wartburg castle on both the inlay and the body. This castle, built in the Middle Ages, is the site where Martin Luther went into hiding and translated the New Testament from Koine (ancient Greek) into German in eleven weeks. The castle is situated on a precipice of 410 meters (1,350 ft) to the southwest of and overlooking the town of Eisenach, in the state of Thuringia, Germany.



The text on the body (#2828) reads:

Wart Berg du sollst mir eine Burg werden.

Wait mountain you shall become a fortress for me.

*Wer nicht liebt Wein - Weib - Gesang,
der bleibt ein Narr sein Leben lang.
Whoever doesn't love wine, women, song
remains a fool his whole life long.*

*Heil unsren Burgherrn allerwegen,
Gott spende ihm den reichsten Seden
Health always to our Lord of the Castle,
may God grant him the richest blessings.*

15



5L #1632

The stein on the right in fig. 16 (#2829) is entitled *Rodenstein* and tells the story of the renowned drinker from Heidelberg adapted from a poem by Viktor von Scheffel in the 19th C. entitled *Die Drei Dörfer* (the three villages). As the story goes, Herr von Rodenstein got so drunk on one of his binges that he had to pay for the large quantity of drinks by selling two of the three villages he owned in the Odenwald, Gersprenz and Reichelsheim which are named on the stein. He formally donated the third village, Pfaffenbeerfurth, to Heidelberg University and his "thirst to the students" so he could watch them drink as he once did. The appropriate text reads:

*Pfaffenbeerfurth soll der Hochschul' sein,
mein Durst den Herrn Studenten.*

Pfaffenbeerfurth shall belong to the university,
my thirst to the students.

Hein is one of the few, perhaps the only designer, who designed VBM steins specifically for the American market. Figure 17 shows a stein (VBM #1997) ordered by George Ehret to give to his many friends and patrons on two 25 year anniversaries 1866 – 1891, and 20 years later 1886 – 1911. The steins are associated with Ehret's "Hell Gate Brewery" established in 1866 in Manhattan, NYC (Prosit 9/21). George was born and raised in Germany and followed his father, Anselm Ehret,



who had immigrated to NYC right after the 1848 social revolution in Germany that brought many Germans to the U.S. The ubiquitous saying on the stein reads: *Hopfen u. Malz, Gott erhalt's* (Hops and malt, may God preserve them.) Note that the hexagram on the lid is often mistaken for the Jewish Star of David, but is actually the "Brewer's Star," also called a *Zeugelstern* (advertising star), when used at the entrance to beer cellars to advertise the availability of beer. Context matters!

Two more American-related steins attributed to Hein are seen in figure 18. The one on the left was produced in 1896 to honor the 80th anniversary of the founding of the 7th Regiment of the NY National Guard. The motto in Latin reads "Pro Patria et Gloria; Excelsior" (for country and glory; higher). On the right is another NY National Guard stein for the 23rd Regiment with motto "Vigilantia; Excelsior" (vigilance; higher).



Figure 19 is 3.3-liter relief master stein #1739. The design takes the general form of a coat of arms, in this case for the brewing industry. The central shield features a goat on its hind legs about to take a sip of beer from a beaker. A *Landsknecht* and a troubadour appear as supporters, and the remainder of the design is filled with sheaves of barley and a hops vine which includes a "tag" with Hein's signature. The verse reads

*Viel besser krähet jeder Hahn,
So er die Kehle füchter an.*

Every rooster crows much better
when he moistens the throat.



Figure 20 shows an etched set signed by Hein with a decoration which has been termed "Wild Rose." Here again we see Hein using stylized elements with soothing colors to create an overall peaceful, romantic effect.

Fig. 20:
VBM Etched
2L #2020 (master)
and ½L #1987
"Wild Rose"



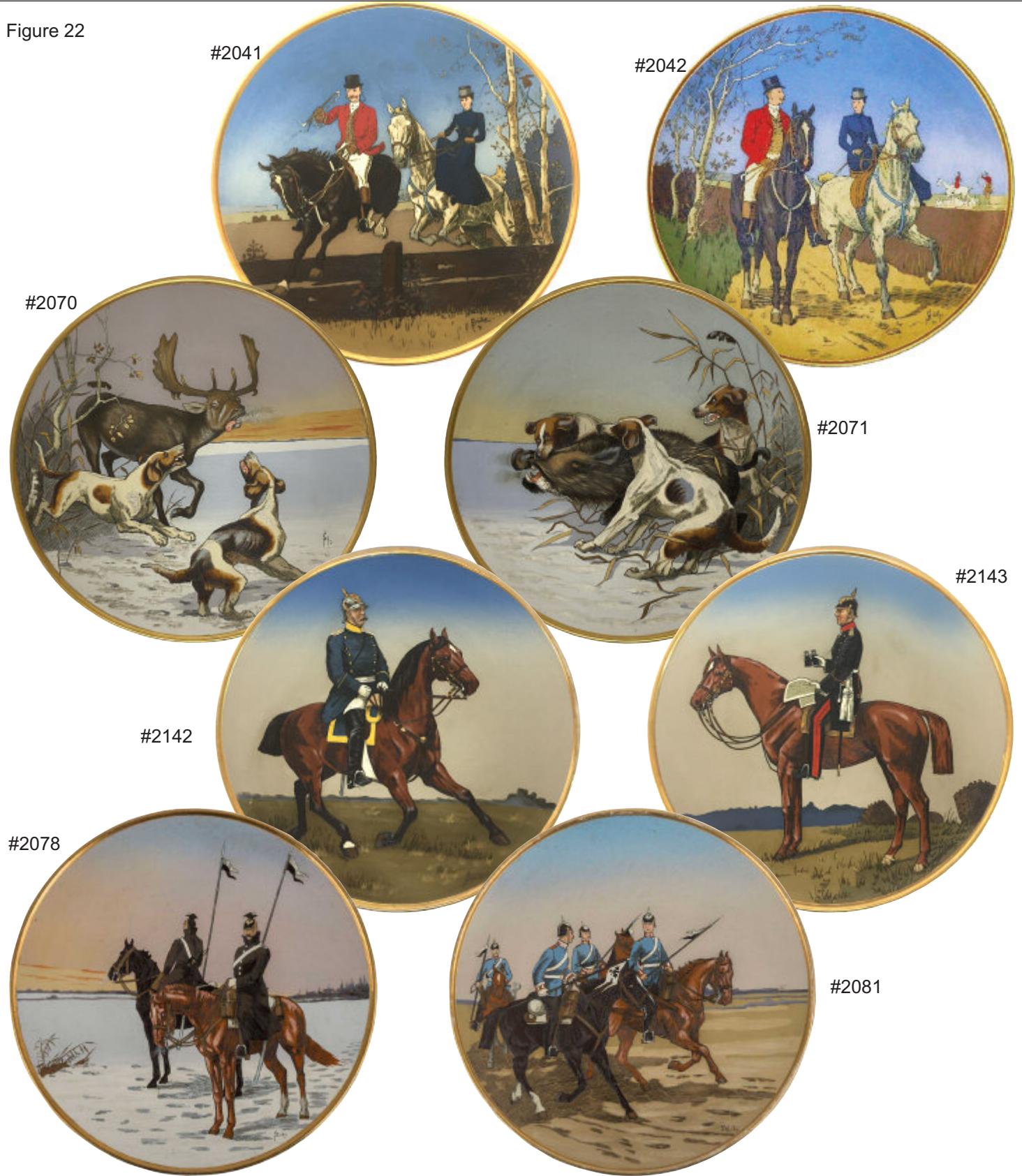
Hein also designed many so-called Mosaic steins and sets. The 2.0 L master stein in figure 21 (#1571) has a typical stylized motif and an interesting shape, both of which foreshadow the Art Nouveau movement of the early 20th century.

Fig. 21: VBM Mosaic
2L #1571 (master)
and ½L #1570

Alfred Stöcke (b. 1860 - d. 1948) was a Berlin artist of note, but nothing of his personal life appears to have been written. He is not credited with having designed any VBM steins, but here we see eight magnificent plaques he designed (Figure 22). VBM plaques 2041 and 2042 depict a man and a woman on horseback in a fox hunt. Continuing the hunting theme,

plaques 2070 and 2071 show dogs harassing a stag and dogs cornering a boar. While plaques 2142 (Bismarck) and 2143 (von Moltke) form an impressive pair, they also fit within a set of eight military themed plaques. Plaque #2078 shows two Ulans on horseback, #2081 shows four mounted Hussars. All of these plaques are 15" in diameter.

Figure 22



Carl Görig - While we know that Carl Görig designed a handful of steins for VBM, biographical information is very slim, and somewhat entangled with other members of his family, so we will not venture into that area at this point. The examples shown here testify to both his artistry and his versatility. Etched #1520 employs symbols and text to evoke a sense of patriotism. Etched #1566 is a contemporary theme, as is the tapestry style #1650. Perhaps his crowning achievement for Mettlach is 6.2 liter #1818, which imparts a festive sense of *Gemütlichkeit*.

23



#1520

24



#1566

25



#1650

27



#2898

26

6.2L
#1818

Hermann Grädl (b. 1869 Dillingen - d. 1934 Landsberg am Lech) - Grädl is best known as the artist responsible for an extravagant Art Nouveau fish service produced by Nymphenburg Porzellan which was awarded the Grand Prix as one of the most successful examples of Art Nouveau at the Paris World Exhibition of 1900. Mettlach fans are thankful for his etched Four Seasons plaques.

The fourth and final part of this review of artists/designers who provided designs to Villeroy & Boch Mettlach moves further into the modern era, dealing with Art Nouveau, Art Deco and Poster Art styles.

I extend thanks to Anna Sanchez, of AMOCA for photographs, to Horst Barbier for his writings in *Mettlacher Turm* and subsequent correspondence, to Steve Steigerwald who came through in a pinch, and to Walt Vogdes for his careful and thoughtful editing.



#2899



#2997



The Epic Saga of Siegfried

By Salvatore Mazzzone

Florida Sun Steiners

The valiant hero Siegfried slays the fearsome dragon Fafnir with his trusty sword and recovers *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (The Ring of the Nibelung) from the dragon's cave.



If you remember any of the deeds of our valiant hero you probably remember this one. After all, it's widely touted in prose and picture, perhaps none more graphically than in the famous painting by William Ernst Ferdinand Franz Hauschild (try saying all that in one breath!); it's the one hanging in Bavarian King Ludwig II's fairy tale castle of Neuschwanstein (Picture 1).

This article will explore the Siegfried legend and several of the beer steins that were created to commemorate it.

Let's start with the Gerz #1429 stein, which is shown in Picture 2. It is a 0.5-liter etched pottery stein with inlaid lid that carries the title "Dragon Slayer" in the Beer Stein Library (BSL). Its decoration depicts a man with a sword perched over a fearsome dragon. Although not specifically cited as being Siegfried, it is almost certainly he, front and center, slaying the dragon.

Picture 2 - Gerz #1429



Fafnir with his trusty sword. Gerz made a number of Siegfried-themed steins, as we'll see a bit later.

It turns out that there's not just one version of the Siegfried saga. Epic tales such as this one that go back centuries and have passed from one culture to another have a way of evolving over time. In one of those versions, our hero actually clubbed the dragon to death. Yup. No sword was involved. This is depicted in the Mettlach #2394 stein, titled "Three Scenes from Siegfried's Youth" in both the BSL and Gary Kirsner's *Mettlach Book* (GKMB). It is a 0.5-liter etched pottery stein with inlaid lid (Picture 3).

From left to right, the scenes are: "Jung Siegfried Kommt zum Schmiede" (Young Siegfried comes to the blacksmith), "Jung Siegfried schmiedet sein Schwert" (Young Siegfried forges his sword), and "Jung Siegfried erschlägt den Lindwurm" (Young Siegfried slays the dragon). As you can see, young Siegfried is beating old Fafnir to death with a club, not stabbing him with a sword.

Picture 3 -
Mettlach #2394



"Why," you might ask, "after forging his sword, would Siegfried then bludgeon the dragon with a club?" He didn't; the scenes are meant to be read in the order (1) left, (2) right, (3) center [1]. Thus he kills the dragon before returning to the smithy and forging his sword.

But why has Siegfried come to the blacksmith in the first place? And why is *he* forging the sword and not the blacksmith?

Making a long story short, Siegfried was a prince whose father believed, "All work is noble and even princes should know how to earn a livelihood by the labor of their hands." So he apprenticed him to a blacksmith. And Siegfried became so skillful that only he, and not the blacksmith, was able to forge the sword with edge so keen and temper so strong that it was able to cleave the blacksmith's anvil in two without incurring even a scratch. It was a most fearsome weapon.

In the 1980s Villeroy & Boch made a series of steins commemorating four of Richard Wagner's operas: Parsifal, Tannhäuser, Lohengrin, and, of course, Siegfried. Each Stein

features three scenes from each opera, and a bisque porcelain inlaid lid with a portrait of Richard Wagner. The scenes on the Siegfried Stein are, from right to left in Picture 4, "Siegfried Forges the Sword", "Siegfried and the Dragon", and "Siegfried and Brünhilde". This is the correct Wagnerian sequence of things, in which Siegfried first forges his sword, uses it to slay the dragon, and then later embarks on a quest to find Brünhilde, the mysterious maiden of the mountain.

In the scene on the right, Siegfried has passed through a raging wall of fire to discover Brünhilde sleeping. She's a Valkyrie, one of a group of maidens in service to the chief god Wotan (also known as Odin), sent by him to the battlefields to choose among the slain for those whose valor made them worthy of a place in Valhalla. But this particular Valkyrie was exceedingly beautiful and had great physical strength and fighting skills. Unfortunately, she had crossed Wotan who condemned her to lie in sleep, surrounded by a wall of fire that only a fearless hero could penetrate to awaken her, which Siegfried does. In this Wagnerian version of the saga, the two fall into a tragic love that cannot be.

Picture 4 - Mettlach
Limited Edition series,
Richard Wagner operas
(1985) - Siegfried



Picture 5 is Gerz #1419, a nicely executed 0.5-liter etched pottery stein titled "Wagner's Siegfried" in the BSL. The three scenes, from left to right, are self-titled: "Siegfried und Brünnhilde" (Siegfried and Brünnhilde), "Brünnhilden's Erweckung" (Brünnhilde's Awakening), and "Siegfried der Schmied" (Siegfried the Blacksmith). Story-wise, there is nothing new to be said that has not been mentioned previously.

The next three steins we examine are Gerz #1487 (Picture 6), #1489 (Picture 7) and #1486 (Picture 8). All are etched pottery steins with inlaid lids, and all show a single scene. The #1487 and #1486 have a 0.5-liter capacity while the #1489 has a 1.0-liter capacity. I believe these steins, like the #1419, are also based on Wagner's version of the legend of Siegfried, as told in his *Der Ring des Nibelungen* operas (*Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung*), and I present them in the order which makes most sense from that point of view.

The BSL titles #1487 as "Siegfried's Departure" and interprets the scene as "Siegfried bidding farewell to his wife Kriemhilde as he departs for a hunting trip on which he will be murdered by Kriemhilde's half-brother Hagen." In preparing this article I found a photo of an engraving by Theodor Pixis (1831-1907) which appears to be the basis for the scene (Picture 6a), although the image on the stein is reversed from the engraving. Pixis actually depicts Brünnhilde bidding farewell to Siegfried after he has decided he has tarried too long in Brünnhilde's land of Isenland [2].

The BSL titles the next stein, Gerz #1489, as "Siegfried and Greyfell" and describes the scene as "the mythical hero Siegfried and his horse Greyfell as they cross a river to reach the mountain lair of Fafnir, the dragon guarding the powerful ring of the Nibelungs." But I discovered that the stein is actually based on a painting by Ferdinand Leeke (1859-1923) titled "Siegfried's Rhine Journey" (Picture 7a), painted in homage to the interlude between the Prologue and Act I of Wagner's opera *Götterdämmerung* [3]. (We'll see another stein having this

Picture 5 - Gerz #1419

Picture 6
Gerz #1487Picture 7
Gerz #1489Picture 8
Gerz #1486

The artistic inspirations for the scenes on the steins in Pictures 6 - 8

scene actually titled "Wagner's Götterdämmerung" in a little bit). Thus, Siegfried has actually killed the dragon long ago; back in Act 2 of Wagner's preceding opera *Siegfried*, to be precise.

What is actually happening in this scene is that having made his depar-

ture from Brünnhilde, Siegfried is on the final leg of a journey across the Rhine and is signaling his presence as he is about to arrive at the court of King Gunther of Burgundy. And, by the way, the horse would be Grane, who Brünnhilde has gifted to Siegfried as a parting gift, not Siegfried's own trusty horse Greyfell.

Which segues into the Gerz #1486 stein (Picture 8), which is based on another engraving by Theodor Pixis (Picture 8a) which shows Siegfried in the court of King Gunther of Burgundy. The BSL says that it depicts “*Siegfried giving the bridal cup to his wife-to-be Kriemhilde, who is the sister of King Gunther*”. However, my research indicates that it actually portrays Kriemhilde giving Siegfried a cup with a magic potion that will cause him to forget Brünhilde and fall in love with and marry her^[4].

In both the old Norse/German and Wagnerian versions of the Siegfried saga, King Gunther is intent on winning and wedding Brünhilde. But to do so, he must best her in personal combat, something that Siegfried knows Gunther will not be able to do, so Siegfried offers to help. Using his *Tarnkappe*, which gives him both invisibility and the strength of twelve giants, Siegfried wins the unwinnable contests while tricking Brünhilde into thinking it was Gunther performing the deeds. She thus agrees to marry King Gunther.

In the old Norse/German versions of the tale there was no need to erase Siegfried's prior memory of Brünhilde because their prior relationship was only one of gratitude and close friendship and not a romantic one. This was a twist added by Wagner in his adaptation of the legend.

Let's now take a look at 0.5-liter Mettlach stein #2402 (Picture 9). It is titled “The Courting of Siegfried” in both the BSL and GKMB. The BSL notes: “*The theme of this stein is drawn from ancient German and Norse legends*,” but then goes on to refer to the Wagner opera *Götterdämmerung* where, “*Siegfried is given a magic potion which causes amnesia and makes him fall in love with the first person he sees*.”

However, there is nothing actually in this stein's scene, no cup of magic potion as there was in the Gerz #1486, to indicate it reflects the Wagnerian version of the tale; certainly the previously discussed Mettlach #2394 was not based on the Wagnerian version. Without knowing Mettlach's intent, I would

Picture 9 - Mettlach #2402



alter the description to simply read, “The theme of this stein is drawn from ancient German and Norse legends. Siegfried has arrived at the court of King Gunther of Burgundy where he will woo and wed the king's sister Kriemhilde.” Perhaps a reader with more research resources at their disposal than I have can sort out Mettlach's intent.

Moving on, Picture 10 is Gerz #1422, a 0.5-liter etched pottery stein with inlaid lid. It is titled “*Wagner's Götterdämmerung*” in the BSL, and it features three scenes: “*Siegfried's Ankunft*” (Siegfried's Arrival), “*Flosshilde mit dem Ring*” (Flosshilde with the Ring), and “*Die drei Nornen*” (The Three Norns).

Götterdämmerung (The Twilight of the Gods) is the final opera in Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* series.

In order as they appear in the opera, these scenes depict (a) the three Norns (Fates) relating tales of Wotan's past adventures and of the pending consumption of Valhalla and the gods by fire, (b) Siegfried announcing his presence as he is about to arrive at the court of King Gunther (same scene as on the Gerz #1489 described earlier), and (c) Flosshilde, one of the Rhinemaidens, jubilant at their recapture of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* at the end of the opera.

Picture 10 - Gerz #1422



The Beer Stein Library lists 34 steins with "Siegfried" themes by nine makers. I have covered all of the eight etched examples that are listed plus the Villeroy & Boch Siegfried Wagner opera series porcelain Stein. Let me finish my tour of Siegfried Steins with a relief Stein, which is the largest capacity Siegfried Stein on the BSL list, the A. J. Thewalt #251 (Picture 11),

It is a 4.0-liter Stein, made in both pottery and stoneware, having a pewter lid. The text on the front of the Stein reads "Siegfried's Abschied von Kriemhilde" (Siegfried's Departure from Kriemhilde). It is fitting we conclude with this Stein since it depicts Siegfried about to depart on the fateful hunting trip which will end his life since he will be murdered by King Gunther's and Kriemhilde's half-brother Hagen in an attempt to capture Siegfried's ring of power.

Picture 11 - A. J. Thewalt #251



Siegfried had been an invincible warrior. Indeed, his skin had been made impervious to penetration by any weapon by having been bathed in the blood of the dragon Fafnir, which Siegfried had slain as a youth. But there was a spot on his back, which had been masked by a leaf, that the dragon's blood did not reach. In the old Norse/German version of the legend, Hagen tricked Kriemhilde into disclosing it. In Wagner's opera *Götterdämmerung*, Brünhilde discloses it out of a desire for vengeance after Siegfried wed Kriemhilde, an act she ultimately regrets.

Before we go, let's take a look at two Mettlach etched plaques, the #3163 and #3164 (Picture 15). These both reflect the Wagnerian version of the legend and are scenes from the opera *Gotterdamerung*.

The GKMB cites the title of #3163 (left side) as "Siegfried and Gertrude", but I believe it should actually read "Siegfried and Gutrune," Gutrune being an alias for Kriemhilde used by Wagner. More specifically, it appears to be the scene where Gutrune/Kriemhilde is presenting Siegfried with the spiked drink that will erase his memory of Brünhilde.

The GKMB cites the title of #3164 (right side) as "Gotterdamerung". More specifically, it appears to be the scene in that opera where the Rhinemaidens are pleading with Siegfried to return the ring, but he ignores their begging and they predict his imminent death.

I find it intriguing that this stunning artwork was not also deployed to create a pair of Mettlach etched steins.

In the end, all of the principal characters of the saga die rather horribly by other than natural causes, Valhalla and the Gods perish, and the ring finds its way back to the Rhinemaidens at the bottom of the Rhine. Fortunately for us, the saga lives on, enshrined in prose, poetry, art and the many steins that grace our collections.

References:

^[1] Lowenstein, J, *Jack Lowenstein's Reply and Answer to the Puzzle*, Prosit, June 1986

^[2] Library and Archives of the Museo Teatrale alla Scala (<https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/richard-wagner-galerie-august-ludwig-theodor-pixis-1-july-1831-%E2%80%93-19-july-1907/PgHYSzbF2zAENA>)

^[3] Dorotheum Art Auction, April 29, 2019, Specialist: Dr. Christl Wolf (<https://www.dorotheum.com/en/l/6148470/>)

^[4] Library and Archives of the Museo Teatrale alla Scala (<https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/richard-wagner-galerie-august-ludwig-theodor-pixis-1-july-1831-%E2%80%93-19-july-1907/PgHYSzbF2zAENA>)

Picture 12 - Mettlach plaques
#3163 #3164



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