

STEIN COLLECTORS INTERNATIONAL

PROSIT



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The Beer Stein Magazine

September 2023

Ostrich Egg Drinking Vessels

By Salvatore Mazzone



A Former Occupational Stein

By George Schamberger

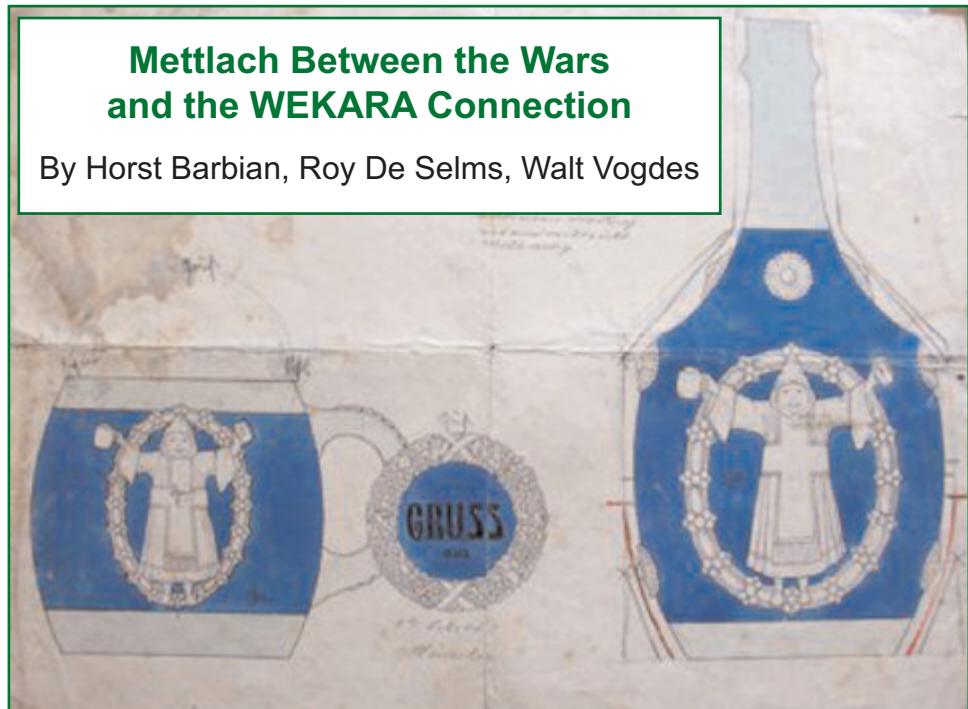
An Annaburg Tüllenkanne

By Mike Adkins



Mettlach Between the Wars and the WEKARA Connection

By Horst Barbian, Roy De Selms, Walt Vogdes



2023 Award Winners!

What's Inside

Checkpoint Charlie, Berlin.....	3
George Schamberger	
Ostrich Egg Drinking Vessels.....	4
Sal Mazzone	
Convention 2023, Dayton, OH.....	6
Walt Vogdes	
Mini-Convention 2023, Gaithersburg, MD.....	9
Gambrinus Stein Club	
Mettlach Between the Wars, WEKARA.....	10
Horst Barbier, Roy De Selms, Walt Vogdes	
A Nice Annaburg Tüllenkanne.....	17
Mike Adkins	
A Russian Gilt Silver Cloisonné Tankard.....	18
Sal Mazzone	
The George Ehret Story.....	20
Steve Steigerwald	
Debunking a Myth.....	30
Norm Paratore	
Mettlach Faience: Beautiful and Historic.....	32
Jeff Arduini	
The Former.....	33
George Schamberger	
A C1840 Carved Ivory Tankard.....	34
Sal Mazzone	



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- Jack Heimann Service Award - John Strassberger

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Checkpoint Charlie, Berlin

By George Schamberger
SCI Master Steinologist

My friend Tom Isham (US Army, Ret.) gave me the souvenir beer mug which he bought in the early '60s in Berlin. At first I didn't think much about it. I took it home, put on a lid with the Berlin Bear finial to turn it into a stein, whereupon it smiled at me. After studying the stein, made soon after WW II, I realized that it represents a lot of turbulent German history especially in Berlin. From 1949 to 1990, Germany was divided into two parts, East Germany (or GDR, German Democratic Republic) and West Germany (or FDR, Federal Republic of Germany), and manufacturers marked their wares accordingly. After 1990 and the fall of the Berlin Wall, wares were simply marked "GERMANY."

After WW II the defeated Germany was divided into four zones, occupied by the Soviet, American, British, and French forces. Berlin was divided into four sections. The Soviets wanted to make East Berlin a permanent Communist satellite,



U.S. - Soviet standoff
at the Berlin Wall, 1961



but everyday some 1,000 professionals and intellectuals headed to the west in search of better opportunities. Until the early 1950s, the lines between German occupation zones could be easily crossed. By 1965 East Germany had lost more than 3.5 million citizens, mostly young and well educated professionals. Fearing a "brain drain," Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev gave orders to seal off all access to West Berlin. 100 miles of barbed wire was laid, later replaced by



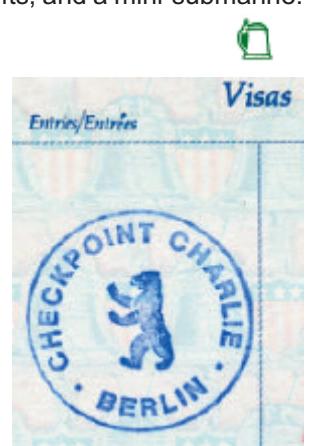
The Checkpoint Charlie guardhouse as it exists today

a series of concrete walls up to 15 feet high, topped with barbed wire and guarded with watchtowers, gun emplacements, and mines.

Checkpoint Charlie (Checkpoint "C") was designated as the single crossing point between East and West for foreigners and members of the allied forces. It also became the focus of many attempted escapes from East to West, some successful, many unsuccessful.



Little remains of the original structures of Checkpoint Charlie. Near the location of the guard house is the *Mauermuseum* (Wall Museum) – *Museum Haus am Checkpoint Charlie*. In addition to photos and documentation of successful escape attempts, the exhibition also showcases escape devices including a hot-air balloon, escape cars, chair lifts, and a mini-submarine.



A VISA used to pass thru Checkpoint Charlie

Ostrich Egg Drinking Vessels

By Salvatore Mazzone
Florida Sun Steiners

Ostriches are the heaviest living birds and lay the largest eggs of any living land animal. Surprisingly versatile, eggs have been used for innumerable purposes since the dawn of humankind; evidence shows that humans had been using and crafting ostrich eggs in Africa as early as 60,000 years ago! In addition to their obvious use as a food source, ostrich eggs have been used as currency and to make storage containers, lamps, cutting tools, medicines, cosmetics, artistic wares, and, of course, drinking vessels.

In this article, we'll take a romp through time and space and examine some of the drinking vessels that have been made from this exotic material over the years.

The oldest surviving example of an ostrich egg drinking vessel (at least that I have been able to dig up) is the cup shown in Picture 1.



1

It was found in Ur, Iraq and has inlays of stone, shell and mother-of pearl set in bitumen. It is dated C2600 BCE, in other words it is over 4600 years old!

The cup resides today in the British Museum in London, England. Moving a thousand years forward in time and a bit westward geographically, Picture



2

2 shows a C1600 BCE ostrich egg vessel with a silver aperture, most likely used more for pouring rather than drinking. It belonged to the Minoan or Mycenaean civilizations and is termed a "Rhyton". It is beautifully decorated with depictions of two giant octopi in red paint. It currently resides in the National Archaeological Museum of Athens, Greece.

Ostrich eggshells have been discovered at a number of Greek archaeological sites and are frequently found amongst high prestige grave goods. They were traded widely, which explains their broad geographical spread during the Greek Bronze Age.

Moving another thousand years forward in time and still further westward in geography, Picture 3 shows a C600 BCE ostrich egg cup with a painted decoration. It was discovered in what is called the "*Isis Tomb*", an elite Etruscan burial site at Vulci, Italy. It currently resides in the British Museum.

The tomb, which contained both Etruscan and Egyptian artifacts, was dis-



3

covered in 1839 on the estate of Napoleon Bonapart's brother, Lucien Bonaparte. It is known as the "*Isis Tomb*" because of a bronze statue found there that was mistakenly thought to be of Isis.

Jumping now to mid-Renaissance central Europe, Pictures 4 and 5 show two stunning C1570 lavishly decorated standing ostrich egg covered cups.

The cup of Picture 4 was made by Wenzel Jamnitzer (1507-1585) of Nuremberg, Germany. The ostrich egg body and cover are mounted in chased bold relief gilded silver. Jamnitzer was the best known German goldsmith of his era and was court goldsmith to a succession of Holy Roman Emperors. The cup resides in the British Museum.

The monumental, gilded silver and coral ostrich egg cup of Picture 5 was made by Clement Kicklinger (1561-1617) of Augsburg, Germany. Another highly regarded artist of this period, Kicklinger was known for his ornate, intricate designs.

In this piece, the ostrich egg is carried on the back of a leashed ostrich that is led by a moor. The ostrich holds a horseshoe in its beak, stemming, most



4



5

likely, from the mistaken belief of the time that these tough birds could digest anything, including iron (in iconography, iron, is often represented by a horseshoe). The cup resides in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, Austria.

Although clearly a pouring vessel rather than a drinking vessel, I felt the impressive C1675 gilded silver ostrich egg ewer of Picture 6, which is said to be of English origin, was nevertheless worth a showing. It resides in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.



7



6

It is identified in Gary Kirsner's "*The Beer Stein Book*" as dating from the late-1700s and originating in Augsburg. However, when sold at auction in 2017, the auction house dated it as 19th century. So, we'll just say it's late-18th century – early-19th century.

Our tour through time and space now brings us to late-19th century Munich, Germany and the workshop of Josef Lichtenberger.

Picture 8 shows a towering 25.5-inch tall Lichtenberger pewter mounted ostrich egg covered cup, in which we again see an ostrich holding a horseshoe in its mouth.

Picture 9 shows a Lichtenberger 1.0-liter pewter mounted ostrich egg stein. A highly skilled craftsman known for his



8



9

attention to detail, Lichtinger specialized in producing ornate pewter pieces. His work is highly sought after by collectors. I'd certainly love to have one of these on my shelf to keep company with the Lichtinger pewter mounted Theresienthal glass stein I own.



10

Picture 10 shows another 1.0-liter late-1800s ostrich egg stein, this one from a Sotheby's auction of a few years ago. It is mounted in gilded silver and was made by Simon Rosenau (1839-1920) of Bad Kissingen, Germany.

Rosenau was active in the Hanau silver trade and was known for his preference for historicizing forms and decors. He also was "Hofantiquar", or supplier of antiques, to the royal Bavarian court.

A more recent creation, the C1970 ostrich egg cup shown in Picture 11 was made by Anthony Redmile of London, England. Redmile burst into the London interior design scene in the 1960s, producing eclectic items for noteworthy and well-heeled clients.

The ostrich egg is mounted in silver plated metal, probably pewter, and topped with a malachite stone finial. Not rare, but also not common, these pop up from time to time in antique shops and auctions.



11

I was unable to find ostrich egg drinking vessels of any more recent creation, although I wouldn't be surprised to learn of their existence since ostrich eggs are readily available and can even be purchased on Amazon for less than thirty dollars.

That concludes our egg-stensive egg-samination of egg-semplary ostrich egg drinking vessels. I hope it met or egg-ceeded your egg-spectations.

Reference

Kirsner, G. *The Beer Stein Book: A 400 Year History, Third Edition*. Glentiques, LTD., P.O. Box 8807, Coral Gables, Florida, 2000.



Convention 2023, Dayton OH

SCI's 2023 Convention, its 56th, was terrific. Collectors gathered in Dayton, Ohio to greet old friends and make new ones, listen to an excellent group of informative speakers, buy, sell or trade beer steins, and enjoy the *Gemütlichkeit* of the gathering.

Attendees began to arrive as early as Friday, July 20, as groups of friends collected in the lobby of the Marriott Hotel at the University of Dayton. "Hey, how are you?" "Long time no see." Over the course of the week, the hotel lived up to Marriott standards, especially the hotel shuttle bus whose friendly drivers were happy to drive convention goers to local restaurants or museums.

The Dayton Air Show, held on Saturday and Sunday, was kicked off Friday night when the U.S. Army Golden Knights parachuted into the area right behind the Marriott Hotel. Saturday was the next in what seemed like an endless stream of summer days, sunny and hot. For those who opted to attend, the Air Show, which started around 10AM and ran until 4PM, was replete with flyovers of all sorts of aircraft,



ranging from the Wright II replica to the Red Bull helicopter (which in fact flew upside down!), various propeller driven planes, a C-130 cargo plane, a Russian MIG-17F fighter jet and the capstone performance by the Navy's Blue Angels, known for their close formation, high precision flying.

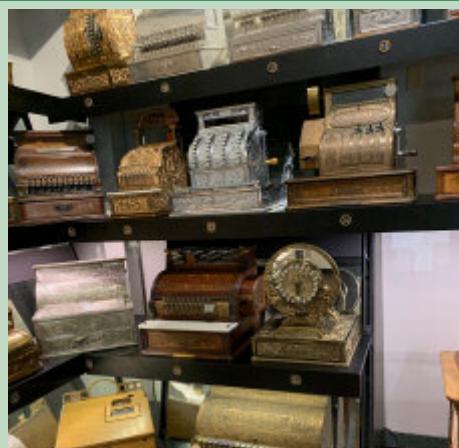


Early-bird options included tours to Carillon Historic Park, a Dayton City Tour, and the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

The museum at Carillon Park was a “don’t miss” event. Beginning in the mid-1800s, Dayton established itself as a center of manufacturing and entrepreneurship. The museum tells the story of companies such as NCR, the Barney & Smith Car Company, McCall’s Publishing, DELCO, the Wright Company, and the Davis Sewing Machine Company, predecessor of the Huffman Manufacturing Co., manufacturer of Dayton and Huffy Bicycles! Of special interest to stein collectors, the Roger Glass Stein Collection, consisting of more than 450 steins, is on permanent display. This collection includes a broad selection of types, from old to new, character to regimental, glass to pewter.



Also in the museum is a large collection of cash registers made by National Cash Register, a firm founded in Dayton in 1884. The Wright Brothers established a printing business in 1889 and the Wright Cycle Exchange in 1892, before turning their attention to aviation.



The National Museum of the United States Air Force is the largest air museum in the world. It spans exhibits from the Wright Brothers era to space capsules, rockets and declassified stealth aircraft of today. It displays aircraft, engines and interactive exhibits that include the training capsules from early space flight. It also contains an impressive collection of war planes and guns from the early 1900's to the present. Dayton is famous for the early flights of the Wright Brothers so this museum shows the early attempts to make aircraft that could be used for transportation as well as war. Large hangers, repurposed for this museum, showcase an array of planes categorized by their era of production.

Wednesday of course was dominated by a stein auction by Fox Auctions. Over 500 items were offered to eager bidders, including a number of rare pieces. Hammer prices were generally strong, although as usual there were a number of surprises: the beautiful, mysterious and always popular Schier-



holz Masquerade Lady was passed at \$1200; Mettlach 20" etched plaque #2750 sold for almost twice the high estimate; the schizophrenic Schierholz Chinese/German soldier was passed at \$2000; the rare Mettlach flower pot #201 sold for almost 50% above the high estimate; while the etched Mettlach butterscotch Imperial eagle stein sold within the estimated range at \$5500, less than 1/3 the price it sold for one year ago; the handsome one-of-a-kind stone stein (ca. 1740) sold for more than twice the estimate.

Elections were held and award winners announced at the General Membership meeting on Thursday, followed by two excellent informative presentations: Albert Nemeth spoke about Franz Zach, an exceptional glass engraver, followed by newly-minted Master Steinologist Eric Salzano discussing silver steins. Attendees were able to shop the Stein Sales Room in the afternoon, or relax in the well-stocked Hospitality Room, before preparing for German Night. A fine meal was accompanied by German dancing and costumes. One of the highlights was the announcement of Miss Beer Stein for 2023, Vicki Guay. Vicki wore the special crown fashioned from a beer can by Clair Hill, with great aplomb and dignity.



Above, Boyd Bissell and Sandy Allred impressed in their German costumes (*Trachtenmode*).



Vicki Guay crowned as Miss Beer Stein for 2023 by our own Münchner Kindl.

Friday morning several Roundtables were held, again all were excellent. Eric Salzano, filling in for David Harr who was unable to attend, titled his Roundtable "Jesus Christ, Superstar!" He showed multiple examples of the unique work of Anton Lang, a potter who portrayed Jesus in the Oberammergau Passion Play for many years.



Bob Hurley made the connection between historical drinking scenes in fine art to beer steins, and Don Franz spoke about American Patriotic steins. The traditional Afternoon Tea was held in the afternoon, while others had the opportunity to view the Roger Glass stein collection in Carillon Park.



Saturday morning Master Steinologist Ron Fox shared his knowledge of the Traits of 18th Century German Faience. Ron's main tent presentation was followed by three more highly informative Roundtable sessions: Bernd Hoffmann spoke in detail about the history of August Saeltzer steins, Master Steinologist Les Paul spoke on the subject of Miniature Steins, and Mike Adkins spoke about Feline Character Steins. Mike provided the most memorable truism of the morning when he referred to a quote by Terry Prachett:

"In ancient times cats were worshipped as gods; they have not forgotten this."

The members' auction was held Saturday afternoon, followed by the final dinner of the convention with music and dancing. This was a good time to seek out friends to say "Goodbye, safe travels, let's do it again next year."

Looking Ahead Madison, WI in 2024

David Bruha has done some initial planning to hold the 2024 SCI Convention in Madison, Wisconsin, over the fourth of July. Madison is the state capital, located on an isthmus between Lake Mendota and Lake Monona. The proposed convention hotel is The Madison Concourse Hotel and Governor's Club, located within one quarter mile of center city and the capital building. Tentative plans include all the usual events and amenities, including an auction by Fox Auctions.



Wisconsin is an outdoor paradise for vacationers, with many opportunities for family activities on the water or just sight-seeing. A zoo, museums, festivals and fairs, the University of Wisconsin, concerts and dining opportunities, breweries, wineries and distilleries — Madison is full of energy. Start making your plans now to join

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July 4-6, 2024**

Announcing a Mini-Convention Conducted by **Gambrinus Stein Club**

Comfort Inn Shady Grove, Gaithersburg, MD
November 4th and 5th

Featuring a Live Auction by Fox Auctions

Early Birds

Thursday..... Open house - Norm Paratore's
Friday..... Tour of Hillwood Museum (Marjorie Meriweather Post Estate)
Open House - Eric Salzano's

Mini-Convention

Saturday..... Fox Auctions - live auction

Sunday..... Stein Sales Tables

Speakers

Norm Paratore - Unusual Genre of Glass Steins

Eric Salzano/Mark Maceira - Reichenbach Art Nouveau Jugendstil Glass

Barry Toussant - Little Yellow Ducky Steins

Allan Fogel - Identifying European Pewter Tankards/Steins

Open House - Eric Salzano's



For more information -

Norm Paratore - (410) 456-0042
Eric Salzano - (240) 848-0306



Production of Steins at Mettlach Between the Wars and the WEKARA Connection

By Horst Barbian, Roy De Selms and Walt Vogdes

Part 1 - Pottery Making in the Saar Land During the 1920 to 1935 Occupation

This two part article deals with activity at VBM after the "Great Fire of 1921" and during the Occupation of the Saarland between WWI and WWII. The first part deals with the history leading up to the time of WWI and the activities at VBM during the Occupation after WWI up to the reinstatement to Germany in 1935. This part contains actual photographs of Mettlach from the time period. The second part deals with the interaction of VBM and the firm commonly known as WEKARA during the same time period.



The so-called "Golden Age of Mettlach Stein Production" from 1885 to 1905 coincided with the economic growth of Germany throughout that period. Germany had become the dominant economy in Europe and second only to the U.S. by 1910. The good economic time brought forth a demand for high quality consumer goods, a necessary ingredient in the "Golden Age" (fig. 1, VBM punch bowl #1888, dated 1890).

Then Germany came to the aid of Austria during WWI (1914 to 1918), the "Golden Age" came to a halt, and the production of great steins and related items turned to more mundane and utilitarian themes.

Much has been written about Mettlach wares during the good times, but not much about the time just following WWI and the "Great Fire of 1921" at Mettlach. Many think that the great fire which destroyed the storehouse for patterns and molds was the sole cause of the almost complete cessation of production of steins and related items at Mettlach, but there were other important factors as well. The tolls of war took many of the skilled laborers from Mettlach, the cost of materials had risen, and the market for luxury items was drastically diminished. Starting in 1920 the Saar Basin, including Mettlach, was placed under the control of the League Nations and administered by the French, before being returned to Germany in 1935.

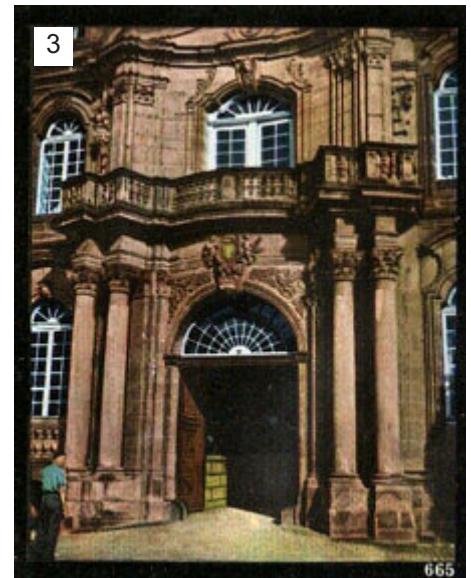
The main part of this article is translated from a brochure which recently surfaced. The photographs it contains are shown here as figures 3-11, eight of which show various aspects of work within the Mettlach factory. This material dates between 1925 and 1935 as determined by information disclosed in the original German text.

In order to establish a pottery factory, J. F. Boch in 1809 bought the magnificent Baroque building of the former Mettlach Abbey, which had been secularized by Napoleon I, for 35,000 Francs. The location of the village on a curve of the Saar River seemed to him to be particularly favorable: all raw and auxiliary materials for the production of pottery wares could be brought to the factory and the finished products sent inexpensively by ship on the waterways of the Saar, Mosel and Rhine. Wood and coal for firing the wares were readily available, and large quantities of the necessary water were at the door.

VBM plaque 1044/5078 (fig. 2), offers a view over the Saar River with the Old Abbey and Mettlach factory buildings in the background. The Mettlach *alter Turm* (old tower) is seen at center right.



Boch soon realized that he had to compete with the English wares on the market. He was the first to use feldspar as an additive to the clay to produce a harder pottery. In 1836 in Wallerfangen by Saarlouis he joined with Villeroy, his contemporary Saarlander, to establish the firm of Villeroy & Boch with headquarters in Mettlach. (Figure 3, the main entrance to the Abbey.)

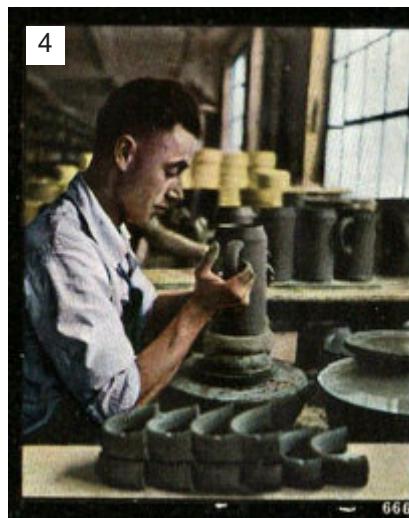


Before we consider the manufacture of pottery, we should be clear about several terms that confuse popular usage. People often talk about *Steingut* (earthenware), *Steinzeug* (stoneware), *Majolika* (majolica), *Fayence* (faience) and *Porzellan* (porcelain) and yet don't really know the differences.

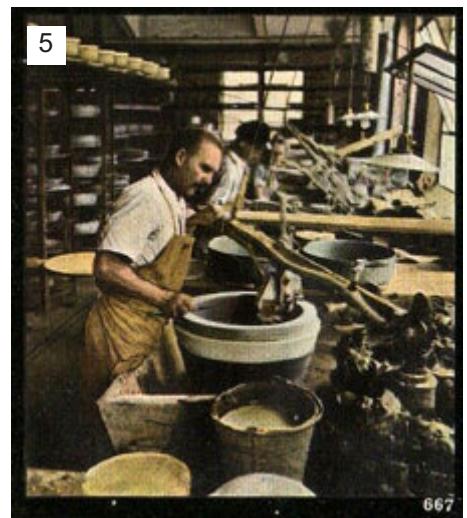
Pottery varies according to the characteristics of the raw material itself, the method of manufacture and the type of glaze. Items differ in appearance when broken, and in their hardness, density and strength. Depending on the inner nature of the fired mass, the pottery may be porous or dense. Dense pottery is so heated during firing that its mass sinters together; it is impervious to water, fractures are shell-shaped and glassy and have a light-colored edge, and it sparks when struck with steel. Common uses are for bricks, tiles, clay pipes, tubs, beer and mineral water jugs, preserving pots, fine terracotta, stoneware and "real" porcelain (hard porcelain, soft porcelain).

Figure 4, captioned "*Bayrische Maaskrüge* were produced at Mettlach", shows handles being attached to 1-liter stein bodies.

The various raw materials used in pottery (mainly clay with added silicates, feldspar, lime, etc.) and the preparation of the raw clay (by screening out impurities, allowing to weather, crushing, rinsing, etc.) cannot be discussed here. As is well known, when it comes to round objects, the item is usually shaped on the potter's wheel, either by



4



5

In the next stage the liquid earthenware is poured into the gypsum molds (fig. 6). The dry and very hygroscopic gypsum quickly absorbs the moisture on its walls and greedily retains it. The mold is then inverted and disassembled, and the cast piece is buffed (i.e., the seam marks are eliminated). Since the slip easily penetrates into the recesses of a plaster mold, coffee pots, teapots and the like can be cast in one piece complete with handles and spouts eliminating the need for later assembly.

hand or with templates. The casting process, however, became more and more popular. A mixture of clay and water (slip), with a small amount of soda added to make it more fluid, is poured into molds through a sieve to remove granular components and air bubbles.

Figure 5 shows the plaster mold of a wash basin being formed by turning on the potter's wheel using a template. In the left background we see finished bowls.

When is a *Bayrischer Masskrug* not Bayrisch?

Regarding Figure 4: These so-called *Bayrische* 1 L. steins were "Bavarian" in shape only - straight-sided, tapered upper rim and C-shaped handle as commonly used in a Bavarian Gasthaus, Wirtshaus, Biergarten or brewery. The 1 L. stein bodies shown having their handles attached were obviously undecorated VBM #1526 stein bodies which first appeared in the 1899 catalog and were made in three colors: beige (tan), pale blue-gray, and milk chocolate brown.

These plain bodies were most often decorated at the factory using numbered transfers, but they could also be purchased and decorated by outside firms. (In the latter case, markings on the stein were limited to the model number without any VBM identification, because VBM had no control over the final product.)

As a result of the Treaty of Versailles, from 1920 to 1935 the Saar Basin was under the control of the League of Nations. Since it was no longer part of Germany, items were marked as "[Made in] Saar Basin".



A stein made in 1929, sold undecorated



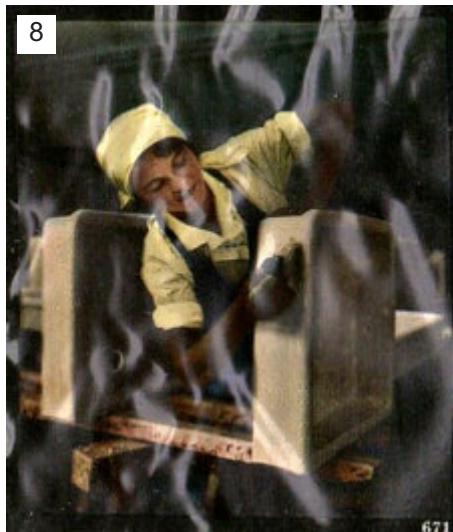
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After allowing the pieces to dry, they undergo their first firing in the ceramic firing oven. The various types of firing ovens, i.e., circular oven, tunnel oven, muffle oven, etc., will not be detailed here. For this purpose the objects in our picture are placed in fire-clay capsules (fireproof vessels), loaded onto a firing cart and then moved into a tunnel oven (fig. 7).

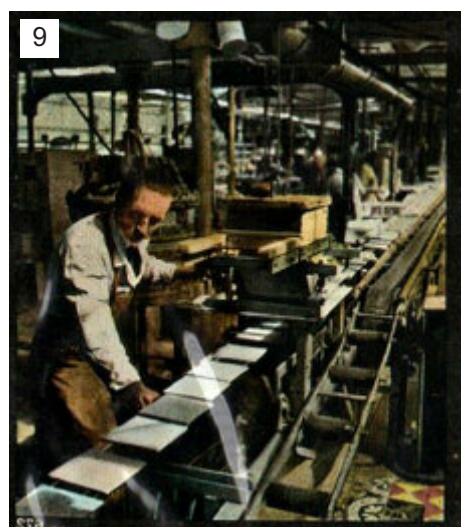
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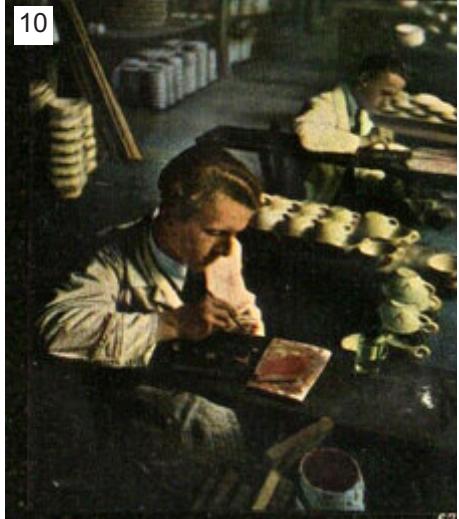


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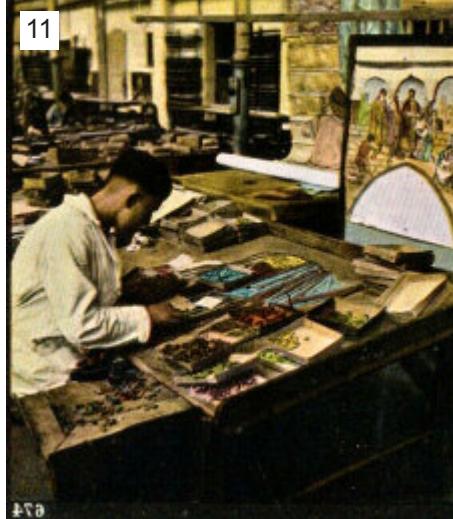
In order to seal the surface of the pottery and make it shiny and durable, the ware is usually glazed. For this purpose, the smaller pieces are dipped in a thick liquid made of siliceous alumina and alkali and sent again into the firing oven. Larger pieces, which are difficult to dip into the glazing solution, are glazed by hand (fig. 8). The surface glaze is imparted by the vaporization of rock salt scattered into the fire.

Wall tiles by the thousands are punched out, fired and glazed according as in figure 9. They are not dipped in glaze since they only receive glaze on one side.

Eating and drinking dishes are usually provided with colorful decorations. All better wares are painted by hand, as in figure 10; for the less expensive mass-produced items, decals, rubber stamps, stencils and the like are used for decoration. Colors may be applied before the glaze firing (i.e., under-glaze



10



11

decoration), or after (over-glaze). Items which are decorated after the glaze firing must be fired a third time. There are also enamel paints (low melting lead paints) for colorful paintings; they are above the glaze and therefore wear out more easily.

Note that only inorganic (mineral) colors can be used for all porcelain and earthenware decoration, since organic colors would be destroyed during firing.

Mosaic "painting", the art of assembling pictures and ornaments from small colored stones, marble or broken glass, is also practiced in Mettlach. In figure 11 we see a worker using a template standing upright in front of him for guidance as he creates a mosaic scene. The small pieces are fashioned by punching; in order to fit them to their parts of the drawing, they are further beaten with a mallet. The art of mosaic is practiced especially in the Orient and in the Italian cities of art, especially in

Rome, Florence and Venice.

At first glance the well over 100 tiles in figure 12 look like authentic mosaic tiles, but a closer look at cross sections reveals a different story. These tiles are first imprinted with the design and then filled in by hand with pigment colors suspended in beeswax and then burned in. Each tile is marked on the back "Villeroy & Boch Mettlach" and a Roman numeral.

With this picture we say goodbye to Mettlach and Villeroy & Boch. Our series gave us some insights into an industry which, in the returned Saarland, ranks first after mining and the iron and steel industry and which, for the past hundred years, has brought world-wide honor to German achievements.

Reference:

The photos in figures 3-11 are by (in the manner of) Hehmke-Winterer, Düsseldorf.



12

Part 2 - Interaction of Villeroy & Boch Mettlach with WEKARA (Wilhelm Krumeich of Ransbach)

Much has been written about Mettlach wares during the good times, but not much about the period between the wars. As explained earlier, the tolls of war took many skilled workers, the cost of materials rose rapidly and the market for luxury items was drastically diminished. In 1920 the Saar Basin, including Mettlach, was placed under the control of the League of Nations and administered by the French, before being returned to Germany in 1935. And in 1921 Mettlach experienced a devastating fire. The "Great Fire of 1921" destroyed molds, clay recipes, color formulas, artist's designs, transfers, zinc printing plates and paper records. The result was the almost complete cessation of production of steins and related items at Mettlach.

According to Dr. Thérèse Thomas, SCI Master Steinologist and Curator of the VBM Museum (ret.), other than the simplest forms, few Stein-related pieces were produced during the 15 year period of occupation. Nonetheless, VBM decided to accept a few large orders, probably to maintain good public relations. The only etched VBM Stein from this period that we are aware of was ordered by the Quilmes Brewery in Argentina who requested a new design of VBM Stein #2900 which was introduced in 1929 (figures 13a and 13b). Note the "Saar-Basin" mark, since the Saarland was not a part of Germany at this time. Earlier versions of this model were issued in 1904 and 1906 (seen in figures 14a and 14b, marked "Made in Germany").

Mettlach was able to continue to produce the simplest Stein forms (e.g., 1526 and 1909) precisely because of their simplicity. New straight-sided models (and molds) could be created with a minimum of artistic skill, or the Steins could even be produced on a wheel using templates. The decoration of these bodies was a different matter, so to a large degree production was limited to the quantities ordered by finishing companies. Steins that were decorated at the factory would have the "VBM Mercury Mark". However, those decorated elsewhere would not have any VBM marks because VBM had no control over the final product appearance. Between 1921 and 1935, if marks were used they indicated "Made in the Saar Basin." After 1935, when the occupation was ended and the Saar was returned to Germany, the marks once again indicated "Made in Germany."

It must be noted that while the almost complete absence of Stein production continued until well after WWII, apparently some molds for larger pieces survived the fire enabling the firm to continue making some other items, and we will illustrate a few Bowle sets later.

The main theme of this part of the article has to do with the relationship between VBM and a manufacturer who has become known by the firm's trademark – WEKARA. Much of this information has been gleaned from writings and communication among a number of early SCI Master Steinologists.



Dr. Thomas has pointed out in "Mettlacher Steinzeug 1885 - 1905" published by Hans Ammelounx Dec. 1975 that "...at a later date (ca. 1925 to 1930) a few steins were produced in (the) Westerwald for Mettlach which bear the impressed name WEKARA." Adding to this, a number of items in *The Mettlach Book* are noted as being marked WEKARA. As it happens, WEKARA is the trademark used by the pottery of Wilhelm Krumeich of Ransbach. (It is widely believed that the trademark is an acronym standing for *Wilhelm E. Krumeich aus Ransbach*.) While the relationship between this firm and VBM has been written about over the years, it is somewhat murky and easily misunderstood.

An article by the late Roland Henschen, SCI Master Steinologist, in the Tri-State Trader 8/26/72 (followed up in *Prosit* March 1983) furthers the link between Mettlach and WEKARA. He quotes from some old V&B material that was made available to him on one of his stays in Germany:

"Villeroy & Boch did have some steins produced for it from 1925 to 1936 in the Westerwald. Many people have interpreted the preceding statement to mean that the steins were made in other factories of the firm Villeroy & Boch, but not in the Mettlach factory. I believe they have misinterpreted this statement because: The company, Villeroy & Boch, states officially that one mark on these steins produced from 1925-1930 was WEKARA. I am able to go a little bit farther than this. There was a firm by the name of Wilhelm Krumeich, located in Ransbach, which was founded in 1845; and which also marked its steins with the name WEKARA. (I discussed this firm in my Column #10 of *The Stein Makers*.) Therefore, it would be logical to believe that this was a firm which produced some steins for Villeroy & Boch in the years 1925-1930. Since these steins, or at least the ones I have examined, look exceptionally like the Villeroy & Boch steins we are familiar with, it is logical to believe that Villeroy & Boch farmed out some of their technology and perhaps some of their craftsmen in conjunction with the production of these orders."

The Krumeich pottery firm was founded in 1815 by Peter Krumeich in *Frankischen Bayern*. By 1845 the firm had relocated to Ransbach in the Westerwald in the hands of Peter's son, Wilhelm. A full-fledged pottery, the firm is listed in the Westerwald *Addressbuch* of 1922 as a producer of *Steinzeug, Tonwaren and Terrakotten* (stoneware, pottery, terra cotta).

Whatever the difficulties facing Mettlach in the late 1920s, the virtual elimination of stein production apparently forced them to consider cooperative ventures with other pottery firms.

By 1984 the late Robert D. Wilson, SCI Master Steinologist, had accumulated considerable information regarding wares marked WEKARA which he later gave to one of the authors and asked him to please continue the research. In a private communication from the late Jack Lowenstein, SCI Master Steinologist, to Bob Wilson in Feb. 1983, Jack noted: "It would appear that he (Krumeich) was the only Westerwald potter who met V&B's criteria for manufacturing stoneware items after WWI — and, of course, the clays used by Villeroy & Boch at Mettlach came from Höhr in the first place, so the clay used by Krumeich was authentic."

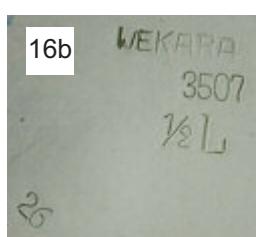
There appears to be another factor which could have made Mettlach turn to Krumeich — Wilhelm Krumeich and Jean Baptiste Stahl, one of Mettlach's designers who was working at this

time, had both attended the Keramischen Fachschule (Ceramic Technical School) in Höhr, and remained friends. Adding to this, several items bearing the WEKARA mark bear Stahl's signature, and style-wise they reflect Stahl's preference for themes from Greek mythology or rural life.

Figure 15 is a watercolor sketch by Stahl for a stein and a flask. (This original design is held by a descendant of J. B. Stahl in his private collection.) The



Figure 16a - No. 3507 graduated in size from 1/40 to 1/2 liter



stein was produced by Krumeich in six graduated sizes from 1/40-liter to ½-liter, marked with the WEKARA trademark.

Figure 16a shows the six steins produced from this Stahl design, all bearing the number 3507. All are marked WEKARA, except for the smaller ones where the stein was too small to accommodate that trademark (figs. 16b-c)!

When Bob Wilson donated his 3,400-piece Mettlach collection to the American Museum of Ceramic Art (AMOCA) in 2011, he had two small 3507 steins marked WEKARA, a punch bowl (no. 3479, fig. 17a-b) and six mugs numbered 3533 (figure 18).

Fig. 17a - #3479



17b

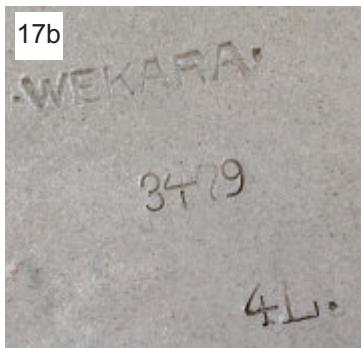
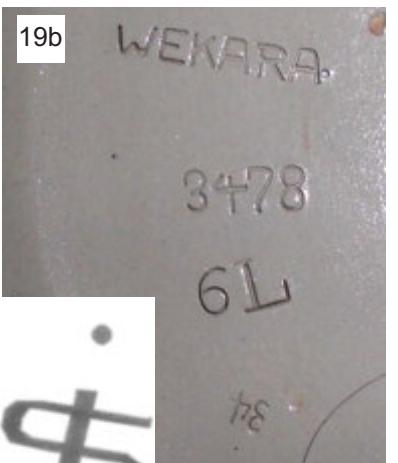


Fig. 18 - #3533



Fig. 19a - #3478



19c



Although not in the Wilson collection, WEKARA-marked punch bowl 3478 (fig. 19a) is very similar to 3479, and significantly it contains the short signature of J. B. Stahl (fig. 19c).

The marks on the WEKARA produced items should be examined carefully, since they appear in a variety of combinations. In figures 20a-b we see mugs 3533 and 3487 together with their base marks, both identifiable as being made by Krumeich for VBM. The presence of the stamped Mercury mark on one is evidence that it was sent from Ransbach to Mettlach for sale. Note that Mercury mark includes the words "Made in Saar Basin", consistent with the (19)30 date of manufacture. On the right, mug 3487 shows the incised WEKARA trademark, and the capacity is marked on the base. Of the

WEKARA mugs (and steins) we have examined, none have the capacity marked at the rim, as we would expect if the item were made by Mettlach. Also notable is the absence of a mark indicating the country of origin, except when an additional stamped mark was added after the piece was returned to VBM. We also note that all of the incised numerals are very like the distinctive marks used by Mettlach, suggesting that the dies used for marking were also provided to Krumeich by VBM.

All of these WEKARA-marked items were made with white relief against either a blue or orange background, and in that regard they are very similar to a number of pieces produced years earlier by VBM (pitchers 6, 171, 2076, 2085, 2210, 2211; steins 6, 171, 1266,

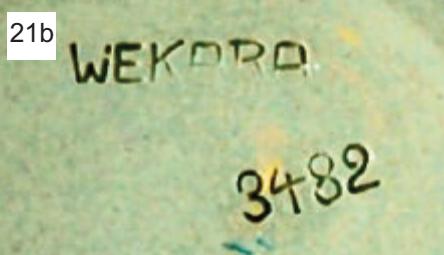
20a



20b



Fig. 21a - #3482



2077, 2086, 2182, 2278; and punch bowl 2087 (shown in figure 23 with 6 cups marked WEKARA and the number 3533).

We also note steins 3482 (figs. 21a-b) and 3487 (fig. 22a-b). (These latter are most often found as mugs accompanying a punch bowl or tureen.)

All of the WEKARA items shown in this article as associated with VBM are numbered in the 34XX's or 35XX's, but it is reasonable to assume that there are more in this numbering range that we are not aware of. It is notable that none of them appeared in any VBM catalog before or after the great fire of 1921. It is possible that the molds used were provided by Mettlach or specially crafted by Mettlach artists.

The Krumeich factory did in fact make other wares marked with their trademark, including some steins for Marzi & Remy. These are distinguished by the WEKARA trademark being enclosed in a rectangle numbered 5100-5600's, and none of them will be confused artistically with those made for Mettlach.

Although the Villeroy & Boch factory at Mettlach is at the heart of this article, most of the items shown were made by

Fig. 22a - #3487



Fig. 22b - #3487



the firm of Wilhelm Krumeich. The reason for that is that Mettlach produced only a handful of steins during the period from 1920 to 1935.

We close this article with the illustration of a stein which Mettlach did produce in 1935 as a special order for L. Ostermayr (figure 24a-b). From the base marks we know that this stein was made in 1935, following the return of the Saarland to Germany. The message carried by the stein itself presages WWII and the Holocaust. Dark days lay ahead.



References:

1. *Mettlach Brewery Stein Variations*, Steve Steigerwald, The Beer Stein Library, *Stein Variations*
2. *Mettlach Motifs, Artists and Styles, Part 5a*, Roy De Selms, *Prosit* March 2022
3. *Mettlacher Steinzeug 1885 – 1905* (the “Blue Bible”), foreword by Dr. Thérèse Thomas, published by Hans Ammelounx, Dec. 1975



24a



4. *The Mettlach Book*, Gary Kirsner
5. *The Real Holocaust Stein*, Roy De Selms, Featured stein on the SCI website for May 2022

A Nice Annaburg Tüllenkanne

By Mike Adkins

Thoroughbred Stein Verein

The tüllenkanne in Picture 1 was produced in the late 1600s. I acquired this pitcher because of two distinguishing characteristics. The first is the sharpness of its colors. This is difficult to convey through photographs. I first saw this piece in the auction catalog, but did not consider making a serious bid until I saw it in person. The colors are so crisp, they almost literally jump out at you.

Pictures 2 and 3 are closeups of the artwork that encircle the pitcher. The palmetto and petal designs are each enclosed by a leafy stem topped by a flower petal. They repeat for a total of six panes around the piece. Above and below are the characteristic Annaburg diagonally striped blue and white, and red and white, ribbons. A stylized floral relief surrounds the neck of the tüllenkanne.

The second feature is the pewter work. It is all original and unrepaired. This includes a pewter spout and foot ring. The lid (Picture 4) is engraved with a



1



2



3

family crest and dated 1694. The crest features a winged crown atop a cross hatched circle. The shield is divided by a broad ribbon with a vertically lined segment in the upper left and a dotted segment in the lower right.

I count myself lucky in having attended the auction and viewing the piece in person. Had I been bidding from my couch; I likely would have missed out on a nice tüllenkanne.



4



PLEASE DO NOT OVERLOOK THIS RESEARCH TOOL !

An often overlooked resource when researching a stein is the Featured Stein Archive (often referred to as the Stein of the Month Series) located on the SCI Website.

It is often said that the best way to learn about steins is to handle as many of them as you can, as often as you can. The corollary to that advice is to read about as many as you can, including a wide variety of types, materials, themes, etc., and the perfect way to do that is to browse the past Stein of the Month articles.

Many of these articles are not only fun to read, they also contain much information.

If you do not routinely review these articles - please do so.

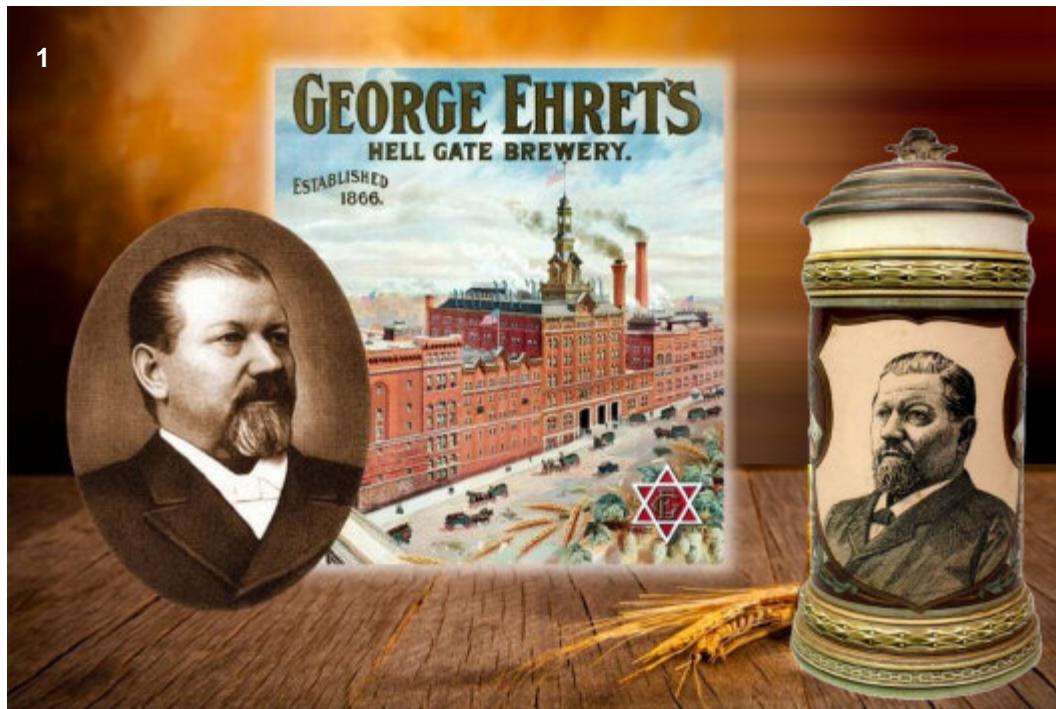
You will not be disappointed.

Due to a regrettable error, this article has been withdrawn and will be re-published in December

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George Ehret - The Man, His Brewery, His Book and His Steins

By Steve Steigerwald, SCI Master Steinologist



I fondly recall seemingly eons ago going to my first local chapter meeting. I was a novice “collector,” having inherited a few steins from my grandfather. I had just joined SCI after finding out about it while researching steins at my local library. I was then contacted by the President of The Thirsty Knights about joining the local chapter. I was invited to a meeting in a restaurant in the Bronx so that I could see what it was like. I recall walking into the bar which had numerous steins displayed and went downstairs to the meeting room. I was overwhelmed by the number and variety of steins on the tables and discovered that they were all for sale. I had never seen that many steins in the same place at the same time. Those were the days when a modestly attended local chapter meeting had 500 steins available for sale, and well-attended meetings had over 1000. It has been a very long time since that occurred.

At that time I had a couple of “etched” Mettlach steins and one PUG (print under glaze) stein in my collection, courtesy of my grandfather. I saw a stein on the table of a now deceased chapter member which seemingly had both decorating styles (the stein shown at right in figure 1). I picked it up and started talking to him about it. I was told it was a Mettlach “etched and PUG” stein, meaning that the stein body was etched while the center section contained a transfer applied under the glaze. I was told that this was one of the methods Mettlach used to decorate some of its steins. He told me that the stein was made for the “Ehret Brewery”, a New York City brewery. To me it was a piece of local history and I found it very interesting. It was priced at a level that I could afford at the time and I purchased it.

THE MAN

As with all of my steins and other Mettlach wares, I generally

research whatever I can about the piece as I add it to my collection. In those days it was difficult because I was limited to the local library’s encyclopedias, reference books and card catalogue (remember those?) — Al Gore had not yet invented the internet. There was not a lot of printed material available in the library at that time, but I was able to discover a small amount of information about the brewery including its proper name. With the advent and availability of the internet I subsequently added substantially to my research. I have learned a lot about George Ehret, his life and his brewery, and found him to be an extremely interesting figure in American brewery history. I was surprised to find that there had been nothing previously written about him in *Prosit*, and decided he was due some belated recognition almost 100 years after his death.

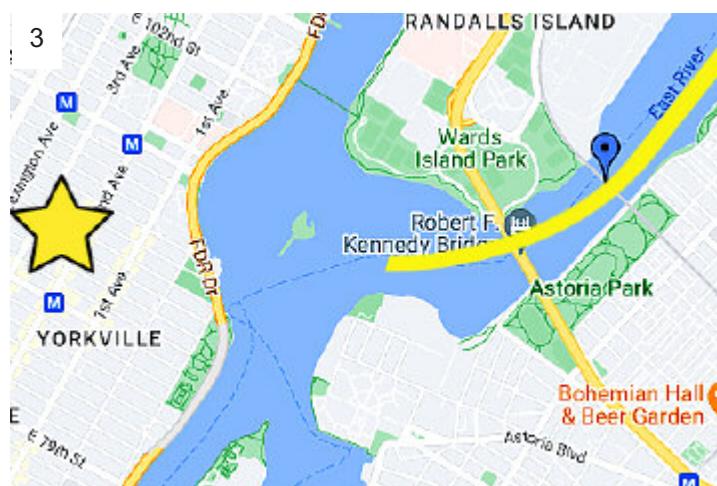
George Ehret (portrait to the left in figure 1) was born on April 6, 1835 in the city of Hofweier, County of Offenburg, Grand Duchy of Baden, Germany. His father, Anselm Ehret (April 21, 1828 to January 24, 1896), was a prosperous brewer in Germany who immigrated to the United States in 1852. George followed him here in 1857 at the age of 22 and later became a naturalized United States citizen. He was a thoroughly practiced brewer in Germany and knew all about brewing and cooperage before he arrived in the United States. When he arrived, he went to work for Anton Hupfel in his brewery. In 1854, Mr. Hupfel had joined together with John Roemmelt and Dr. Assenheimer to found a brewery under the name of John Roemmelt & Company on East 38th Street between Second and Third Avenues in Manhattan. In 1856, Andrew, Charles and John Leicht purchased the interest of Dr. Assenheimer and two years later, Mr. Hupfel bought out all of the partners.

Within 6 years of starting to work at Hupfel's brewery, George Ehret was a master brewer. Three years later he decided to open his own brewery and did so with the gracious financial assistance of Anton Hupfel, his former employer. In 1866, Mr. Ehret opened the Hell Gate Brewery (figure 2) named after the Hell Gate Strait in the East River which it overlooked.



Hell Gate is a narrow tidal strait located in the East River at the center of a confluence of the New York Upper Bay, Long Island Sound, and the Hudson River (via the Harlem River). The strait separates Astoria, Queens, New York from Wards Island, the island that housed the New York City Asylum for the Insane, the re-burial site for hundreds of thousands of bodies removed from the Bryant Park and Madison Square graveyards, and a hospital for sick and destitute immigrants which was the largest hospital in the world in the 1850s. The area chosen by Mr. Ehret for his new brewery was rural with unbroken views of Long Island and is known as Yorkville, a neighborhood in Manhattan.

Figure 3 shows the location of the Hell Gate brewery in Manhattan relative to Hell Gate strait (both highlighted in yellow). Today, two bridges span the strait, the Hell Gate railroad bridge and the Robert F. Kennedy Bridge (originally named the Tri-Borough Bridge).



From the start of the brewery, Mr. Ehret constantly improved his techniques and equipment. He avoided "city water" in favor of pure fresh water from an artesian well drilled through 700 feet of solid bedrock. He had a pumping station built on the East River to provide one million gallons of salt water daily to cool the beer during condensation. Between 1871 and 1890 beer production across the United States increased by 400 percent. During that same time period Ehret's focus on improvements allowed Hell Gate brewery to increase output by 1200 percent.

George Ehret's introduction of lager brewing to Manhattan led to the prosperity of the brewery and consequently also to Mr. Ehret's. Within a decade of opening his brewery, he had amassed a fortune. In 1878, he had a brownstone mansion erected at 1197 Park Avenue, at its intersection with 94th Street, on land that he had purchased four years earlier. The home was three stories tall, had a basement and also had a widow's watch atop it with 360-degree views (figure 4).

4



Ehret had invested heavily in New York real estate as his fortune accumulated, with many of the plots having been purchased for the liquor business. He held 181 parcels of Manhattan real estate including many corner lots.

George Ehret's family also grew during this time. He had married Anna Ehret (nee Hasslocher), and they had nine children—five girls and four boys (one of whom died at birth). The house was the scene of numerous celebrations including his daughters' weddings.

While reporting the celebration of his 70th birthday in 1905, the *New York Tribune* stated that one of George Ehret's "most celebrated virtues is a modesty almost bordering on shyness." On January 30, 1897, the *New York Tribune* reported:

"George Ehret is a typical representative of that large German-American element in the population of New York who, while preserving and revering the traditions of their native land, are yet thoroughly in sympathy with the republican institutions of the land of their adoption. They are loyal to their citizenship, and in their municipal relationships are entirely devoted to the good of the Commonwealth."

Within a few short years, as discussed below, the irony of those words would ring out. However, during World War I, \$2 million of Ehret's wealth would be invested in Liberty Bonds, \$120,000 would be given to the Red Cross and \$21,000 to the Knights of Columbus Fund.

The last of the great celebrations at 1197 Park Avenue occurred on April 6, 1925, George Ehret's 90th Birthday.

George Ehret passed away on January 20, 1927 and he is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery, Bronx, New York in a 56-crypt mausoleum for the Ehret family designed by Schikel & Ditmars in 1900 and fabricated by Robert Caterson in the Romanesque Revival style (figure 5). The mausoleum is located in Pine Plot, numbers 134 and 135. It is described as featuring "...an arched entrance with windows filling the rise of the arch. Two bronze doors are guarded by a granite lion sculpted by J. Massey Rhind. The cornice is decorated with a continuous heavily relieved festoon just below the complex roofline. The tiered domed stone roof is topped by a round finial. Inside, opposite the entrance, a Tiffany-stained glass window depicting an angel holding a scroll is set above a bas-relief marble cross, which is surrounded by a laurel wreath and bronze ivy edge. The June 1907 issue of The American Architect and Building News includes a photo of the Ehret Mausoleum. The landscape at the mausoleum was designed by Woodlawn Cemetery in 1910."



THE BREWERY

The Hell Gate Brewery was established by George Ehret in the year 1866. He had then just turned 31. At that time the annual production of malt liquors in the U.S. was 5,115,140 barrels.

The building in which he began brewing was erected between 92nd and 93rd Streets and Second and Third Avenues. It was completed at the start of 1867. Most of the original brewery, including books and papers, was destroyed in a fire on September 19, 1870, almost four years after the start of the brewery. That building was succeeded by another in 1871 (figure 2,

earlier) and eventually covered most of the entire block.

From the very beginning, George Ehret aimed at the brewing of a beer as high in quality as the best Munich lager. He began brewing immediately after the completion of his first plant. At the beginning of January, 1867, the first brew was stored in the cellars; in March of the same year his horse drawn wagons left his yards for the first time to serve his new customers. Five years after that date he sold 33,512 barrels; seven years later, 74,497 barrels, and in 1874 he produced and sold 101,050 barrels. By 1877, Hell Gate Brewery was the largest in the country.

The continued growth of the brewery in the immediate aftermath of the fire in 1870 was particularly remarkable. However, the fire was not entirely a bad thing for the business. The demand for Hell Gate Brewery produced beer was fast outgrowing the capacity of the original plant. The rebuild allowed the company to address issues of space and machinery which were starting to appear on the company's horizon.

By 1880, production amounted to 220,096 barrels, an increase in six years of over one hundred per cent. In 1890, the production amounted to 412,851 barrels and in 1900, production reached 601,000 barrels. Almost all of the production was for use in the State of New York and none of it for export to other countries.

By this time the grounds extended from Third Avenue to Second Avenue, and from 91st to 94th Streets. All aspects of the business were incorporated within the complex of buildings, including stables, firehouse, factory, storage buildings and, later on, a car barn among other sections on Second Avenue between 91st and 93rd Streets. The main building fronted 93rd Street (figure 6). On the roof of the building sat a clock tower on top of which sat several gilded replicas of beer barrels and a flagpole (figure 7). When the building was torn down in 1966, the demolition crew tried to save the tower for installation in a park planned as part of the refurbished area. Unfortunately, vandals got to the clock tower and destroyed it.



1897 marketing calendar



Most beer in those days was sold on tap, in buckets or in jugs. Mr. Ehret, realizing that the saloons were going to be the main source of his continued expansion, lent saloon keepers start-up money and even owned some saloons outright to assure outlets for his beer and brand loyalty. In 1899, Mr. Ehret owned 42 saloons in New York with



A 1916 calendar featuring Hell Gate Brewery and several serving trays.

Note the characteristic presence of George Ehret's name, trademark and the name of Hell Gate Brewery.

mortgages on many others. At this time he was known as "The King of Beer Corners" among saloon keepers, as the street corners were the prime locations for saloons due to the exposure on two streets.

Mr. Ehret was also a master of advertising, and followed the practice to develop a number of everyday saloon items that could carry his brand name such as calendars and beer trays (figures 6, 8).

Mr. Ehret's health started failing in 1909 and he began an annual sail to Germany to "take the cure" each year in the baths. Accompanied by one of his daughters, he would leave in May and return in November. In May, 1914 he set sail with his daughter Anna Magdalena Ehret Von Zedlitz. His family and his business were doing well. He had no reason to expect that this trip would be any different than any of the others that he had taken in the previous 5 years, but in August, 1914, World War I broke out. Mr. Ehret attempted to evacuate Germany with American Ambassador James W. Gerard but due to Mr. Ehret's poor health, the ambassador refused to accept the responsibility for the voyage. The Berlin government then refused to allow George or his daughter to leave, fearing that they would disclose military movements that they may have seen. The Germans considered Mr. Ehret and his daughter "enemy aliens" and they were forced to

report to the police once a month. In April, 1918 he was allowed to travel to Switzerland due to his age and medical condition. He made the trip despite being in poor health and receiving warnings from his doctors that such a trip or a voyage home to the United States would kill him. Once in Switzerland he booked passage to New York and was brought aboard by stretcher. Arriving back in New York just months before the end of World War I, the 6-month trip had become a 4-year nightmare. When he arrived in New York he said that he had decided to take the risk of dying on the steamship and being buried at sea rather than die in Germany.

But his 4 years in virtual captivity were not the only injustice he suffered during this period. The American government, seeing a German expatriate leaving the United States just prior to the outbreak of war and not returning, seized his entire estate under the Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917. During that time, the brewery was taken over by the Office of Alien Property Custodian even though Mr. Ehret's loyalty had never been questioned and his character had been recently extolled in the press. He told the *New York Tribune*, "First of all, I wish it to be distinctly understood that I have not returned to America to get my estate of \$40,000,000 back from the Government or to start a legal fight over it in any way. I am perfectly satisfied that

Uncle Sam only took over the properties to take care of them, and that they will be returned to me in due course. This is wartime and the Government must not be hurried over affairs of that kind, and I am not going to hurry it."

The property was eventually returned to him after his return and Mr. Ehret resumed control of the brewery. In November 1918, very shortly after resuming control, the Wartime Prohibition Act was enacted. This was a temporary federal measure which barred the manufacture of beer and wine in the United States after May, 1919, and prohibited the sale of beverages containing more than 2.75 percent alcohol anywhere in the nation after July 1, 1919. This was followed very shortly thereafter by the Volstead Act which was initially vetoed by President Woodrow Wilson but whose veto was overridden on October 28, 1919. The Act became effective on January 16, 1920 and sought to enforce the 18th amendment's requirements. However, it had a defect at its core. It banned the manufacture, sale, and distribution of "intoxicating beverages" for drinking purposes (beverages that contained more than 0.5 percent alcohol) but it did not outlaw consumption, meaning people could still drink alcohol if they had access to it. Therefore, if you stocked up before Prohibition began, you could continue to consume alcoholic beverages.

Production at the Hell Gate Brewery came to an abrupt stop when Prohibition took effect. However, Mr. Ehret refused to shut down the brewery and decided to keep his workers on until Prohibition could be repealed. He believed that people would come to their senses and Prohibition would soon be over. Unfortunately, he did not live to see that day. In 1929, two years after his passing and four years before repeal of the 18th Amendment, the family closed the brewery.

The executors of Ehret's estate debated whether they should sell the mammoth brewery buildings on the upper east side of Manhattan. For years they held off but in April of 1935 Col. Jacob Ruppert, Jr. (he of Knickerbocker Beer, Yankees and Babe Ruth fame), made an offer that the Ehret family just couldn't refuse. Col. Ruppert (honorary title) was the son of Jacob Ruppert, Sr., the person who started the Jacob Ruppert Brewery originally located next door to the Hell Gate Brewery. (Jacob Sr. was a business competitor of George Ehret but also a friend. In 1899 the beautiful vase in figure 9 was an anniversary gift to the Ehrets from Ruppert.) The combined area resulting from the sale completely covered several square blocks. The brewery closed in 1965 and the buildings were subsequently torn down and replaced by the Ruppert Yorkville Towers, a condominium complex.

When the family mansion was built in the late 1800s, if you had any kind of prominence in the city and any source of great wealth, you wanted your own huge single-family home. But things had changed since the late 1800s. By the 1920s, Federal income taxes had made huge mansions financially unsustainable. It also had become harder to find the armies of servants required to maintain these mansions. As a result, if you had a lot of money at that time you probably preferred to live in an apartment building because the building took care of everything for you. As a result, many of the mansions built in the late 1800s were razed in the 1920s to make way for commercial use or modern and convenient multistory apartment buildings. The mansion at 1197 Park Avenue suffered the same



Silver and silver gilt vase by Gorham Manufacturing Co., decorated with hops vines, stalks of barley and a variety of flowers. A gift from "Mr. & Mrs. J. Ruppert" to George Ehret and his wife on the occasion of their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary in 1899.

Indianapolis Museum of Art

plant in Yorkville, also made the move to Brooklyn. Over \$200,000 was spent to thoroughly recondition the plant and by the summer of 1936 the plant was in full production under the name George Ehret, Inc., utilizing the fame of George Ehret years after his passing. However, that was not the only claim of a connection to the Hell Gate Brewery: the owners also claimed that the new brewery had been in business since 1866 (the year that the Hell Gate Brewery had been founded) and that it had been solely Ehret owned since that time. The serving tray in figure 10, promoting the Brooklyn-made beer, demonstrates this claim. Note the name and location of the brewery, and the absence of Ehret's trademark.



Ehret's Extra Beer and Ale were brewed in Brooklyn for the next 12 years, until 1948, when the company transferred its operations to Union City, New Jersey. Whether the brewery moved because of an irresistible offer from its subsequent owner (Schlitz) or because the Union City plant seemed preferable is unknown. In any case, after the move to New Jersey, the brewery remained in operation for only three more years.

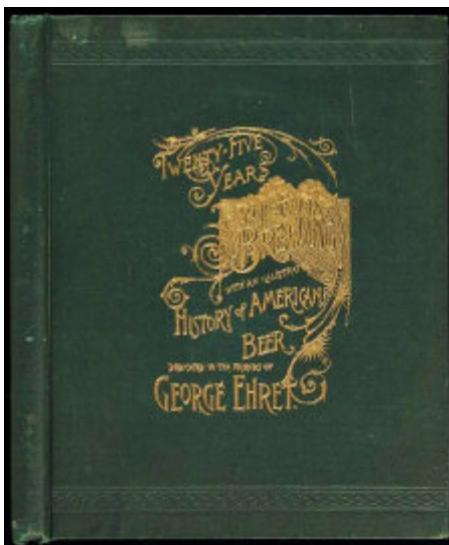
THE BOOK

Mr. Ehret published a book, copyrighted in 1891 entitled *TWENTY-FIVE YEARS of BREWING with an illustrated HISTORY of AMERICAN BEER*. I scoured various auction sites and book dealers and finally found a copy of the original that was well priced and in good shape. The title of the book is embossed in gold on the hard cover. Inside the cover there is a drawing of Mr. Ehret and the title page with the dedication "to the friends of George Ehret." See figure 11. [Note that the

fate as many other mansions in Manhattan. Shortly after George Ehret's passing in 1927, the family mansion was sold. On April 28, 1928, *The New York Times* reported that the "George Ehret mansion, the first fine residence on upper Park Avenue," was sold for \$3 million to be replaced with "what is expected to be the largest housekeeping apartment building in New York." The mansion was soon demolished.

With the sale of the Hell Gate Brewery buildings and the family mansion, the Ehrets had even more wealth to add to what they'd inherited earlier — but they had no brewery. This problem was solved very nicely in 1935 by the cash purchase of the Interboro Beverage Co. facilities in Brooklyn. Louis J. Ehret, George's son, headed the firm, and he was aided by two of George's grandchildren, George Ehret Burghardt and William Ehret Ottmann. Richard Barthel, brewmaster at the old Ehret

11

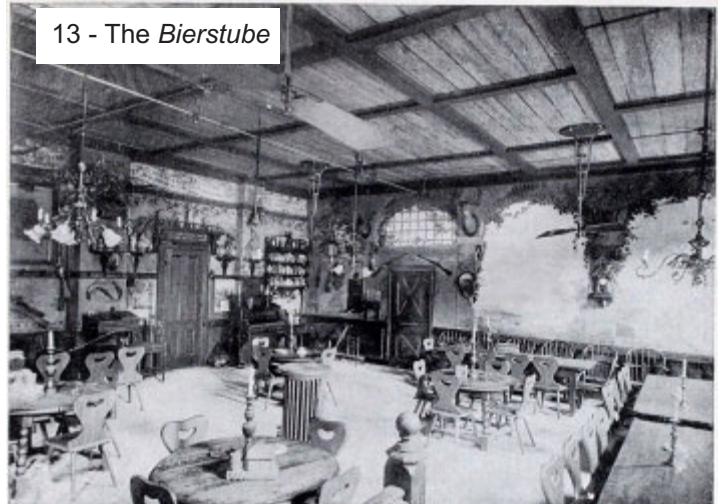


TWENTY-FIVE YEARS of BREWING with an illustrated HISTORY of AMERICAN BEER, by George Ehret, 1891.

12



13 - The Bierstube



book has been recently re-printed and while the text is the same, the quality of the photographs is not nearly as good as the original.]

The first 41 pages of the book are devoted to pre-Ehret and pre-Hell Gate Brewery brewing (1635 to 1866). Interspersed in those first 40 pages are various drawings as well as depictions of the outside of Hell Gate Brewery, its offices, its *Bierstube*, the malt scales and malt mill, the mash tuns and the brew kettle room as they existed at the time the book was published (fig. 12 – 13).

The history of the Hell Gate Brewery through 1891 starts on page 42. The book then covers an area-by-area tour of the brewery plant with accompanying photos of each area. It describes the *Bierstube* as a “very large square room decorated and furnished in gen-

uine old German fashion, filled with quaint cabinets, high backed chairs and solid oaken tables, crudely carved and ornamented with antique drinking vessels, and many rare objects of great interest, for which an antiquarian might envy their possessor.”

During the tour, the book also describes what occurs in each of the various areas during the brewing process. After the factory tour is completed, the book addresses the plant that furnishes water, ice, steam and light before addressing horses and wagons and cooperage. The last section addresses consumption of beer, hops and malt.

Two drawings in the book are of particular interest. First is a drawing of the trademark which is found on calendars, serving trays, bottle labels, and, of course, steins produced for Ehret’s

brewery. Note that this drawing is labeled “MR. EHRET’S TRADEMARK,” not “HELL GATE BREWERY TRADEMARK.” Mr. Ehret was apparently a proud man who wanted his name to have a place of prominence in all his works.

14



The second is a drawing titled “EHRET MUG” which is easily recognized as Mettlach ½-liter form 1997, featuring Ehret’s portrait (figure 15). (I was somewhat surprised that a *photo* of the stein was not included, since the book was published in 1891, a year after the production date of the stein.) This is the stein which I purchased at that first chapter meeting so long ago.



Next we turn to a discussion of this stein, which was actually made in two variations.

THE STEINS

Mettlach form number 1997 depicting George Ehret (figure 16) is a ½-liter stein which regularly appears at antique shows, in auctions of all types and on Stein sale tables, although that is not to say that you see these steins in every Stein auction or on every Stein sale table. When I searched the website of Live Auctioneers for listings of that form number depicting Mr. Ehret, I found 75 instances of sales since 2006, including several lots which included more than one example. This seems to be by far the largest number of sales of any form listed on this single site, giving a sense of its wide availability.

This Stein is commonly referred to as the “George Ehret Brewery” Stein or simply the “Ehret Brewery” Stein, although both terms are somewhat misleading: Mr. Ehret’s brewery was

16



17



18



actually called the Hell Gate Brewery. *The Mettlach Book* more correctly titles this stein as “George Ehret, brewer.”

The etched inlaid lid of the stein uses the Ehret trademark as depicted in the book: the brewer’s star, with the entwined initials “GE” framed by sprigs of hops buds (figure 17). The thumblift is the eagle and shield, common on pieces imported into the United States for the American market (figure 18).

The face of the stein has a framed area, inside which is a PUG (Print Under Glaze) portrait of Mr. Ehret, while the balance of the stein body is “etched”. (The stein may well have been a vanity piece for Mr. Ehret.) This portrait is one of a number of special-order PUG decorations that are shown in a Mettlach catalogue, a copy of which was loaned to me by Ron Fox (figure 19).





The George Ehret Mettlach stein #1977 is found with small but significant variations in the side scenes. On the left above, there is a single banner on each side; on the right, a second banner reflects the 25th anniversary of the Hell Gate Brewery.

Each of the etched side decorations includes vines of hops buds, stalks of barley and a ribbon with the words *Hopfen und Malz* (Hops and malt) on the left side, and *Gott erhalt's* (God preserve) on the right (fig. 20a). Here, however, we encounter a variant: on some of these steins two additional banners appear bearing the dates 1866 and 1891 (figure 20b). These dates obviously signify the 25th anniversary of the brewery.

All examples of both variants of the special-order Ehret Mettlach steins that I have observed are dated as having been made in 1890, suggesting that both were ordered at the same time. Obviously this was in anticipation of the firm's 25th anniversary the following year. Noting that the book was also prepared for the anniversary, and printed in limited quantity and dedicated "to the friends of George Ehret," it's very possible that the book and the stein without the anniversary dates were presented to these personal friends, while the anniversary stein was reserved for employees and family members.

The bodies of these steins bear a striking resemblance to Mettlach form 1861 (figure 21), having the same center framed area for a PUG decoration and the same relief bands and handle. Form 1861 was produced with images of Frederick III, Wilhelm I and Wilhelm II. While the etched side decorations on the Ehret form 1997 display a brewing motif, the sides on form 1861 show sprigs of laurel with a ribbon bearing the German national colors (black-white-red). Each of these motifs is appropriate for their corresponding central images. It seems likely that the form 1997 body was adapted from form 1861. Mettlach is known to have done this with other special-order steins.

(Note – To be complete, two other variants of form 1861 exist – the first features King Gambrinus accompanied by a short verse and the second is apparently a special order depicting Franz Joseph I of Austria.)



Mettlach ½-liter stein #1861 was produced with five different center motifs. Laurel sprigs with an entwined ribbon formed the side decorations on all five. This form was apparently modified to create form 1997.

22



23



24



25



For most of my collecting life, I thought that these were the only two George Ehret related steins made by Mettlach. Then a 3-liter hand painted Mettlach form number 1526 bearing the Ehret trademark appeared (figure 22). The brewer's star in the design has the intertwined G and E in its center. Stems of hops and stalks of barley surround the brewer's star and the words TRADE and MARK appear on either side of the main design. There is no banner beneath this design to indicate that it is Mr. Ehret's trademark. The stein has a pewter lid with an engraved Ehret trademark (figure 23). The thumblift is the typical ball thumblift seen on the 3-liter form 1526 Mettlach steins (figure 24). The stein is the perfect accompaniment for the form 1997 ½-liter etched and PUG steins as shown in figure 25.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Ehret was a "self-made man" in every sense of the phrase. He came to this country as an immigrant and worked hard, starting at the bottom of the brewing business, advancing to the point of running the brewery, and ultimately to opening his own brewery. In addition to the brewery, he invested heavily in Manhattan real estate in the days before Manhattan started growing by leaps and bounds. He was extremely successful and by the time of his passing in 1927 his estate was worth \$40,000,000 (\$680,000,000 in 2022 dollars). In the interim, he had his holdings stripped from him during World War I before having them returned after the war. Unfortunately, the Volstead Act and Prohibition, which started about seven years before Mr. Ehret's passing, eventually resulted in the failure of

the Hell Gate Brewery in August of 1929, less than 3 months before the start of the Great Depression.

He was apparently a very proud man, creating the trade mark for the brewery with his initials front and center in the design, writing a book which recounted 25 years of beer brewing in America, and having a stein designed and made bearing his image but with nary a mention of the Hell Gate Brewery.

He was also a very compassionate and loyal man, given to charitable causes and caring for his tenants and the brewery workers in an era where that was not high on the list of many landlords and company heads. He also had a deep devotion to his family, both in the United States and Germany, holding grand weddings for each of his daughters and taking trips back to Germany for curing baths, especially in his later years.

However, perhaps the best description of the man is contained in his obituary in Time magazine which read:

Last week George Ehret, 92, died in Manhattan of pneumonia. He left \$40,000,000.

George Ehret had kindly little eyes and a wedge-shaped bald head, spreading out at the neck. His stiff collars, always too big for him, were immense, low and broad; he tucked the ends of his black bow tie up under the flaps of his collar. His figure was square, his legs a little bowed.

...

He had eight children. Every evening, coming home hungry, he tucked his napkin in his neck, and filled his stomach with good food. His stein was always refilled several times.

When he became fabulously rich a reporter asked him what was the secret of his success. George Ehret smiled vaguely and, with a big hand on the table, seemed to lose himself in memories. "Ja... ja..."

The reporter quoted him as saying "Good beer, good health." But George Ehret did not say that. Life was more than food and drink. In the evenings, perhaps, a game of dominoes. No better game... About half-past nine a band was sure to come round.

All the German street bands in the Bronx called at George Ehret's house. He would send the butler down with a glass of beer and a dollar bill for every man.

The butler grumbled because he knew the tricks of these foxes of bands-men. "The Blue Danube" at nine o'clock. A glass of beer and a dollar bill. Then around the block. At half past nine, "Die Waecht am Rhein." Another bill, another glass.

Upstairs, with his feet on a rocking chair, Herr Ehret paid no heed to his butler's complaints. Sometimes, if no band came, he played to himself on the flageolet, a sad and wandering air. Then to bed.

He had bought real estate with his money — Manhattan real estate was good, and at one time he owned more than anyone except John Jacob Astor — but he never raised a rent or put a tenant out for not paying the rent.

...
When Prohibition came, he could not quite believe it. That it should happen, such a craziness... He refused to shut his brewery. He would not let any man leave him until the man had a new job.

The old brewers, who like him, would rather have lost money than mix their

materials with dirty city water, who were proud of their lager, and who had grown fat and raised families, these men George Ehret set to work making "near beer."

He was a man whose varied life experiences and business savvy allowed him to succeed and prosper. I found him to be a very interesting man and one that I wish I had the opportunity to spend an evening with.

Postscript

Throughout my article on George Ehret I tried to maintain focus on Mr. Ehret, the Hell Gate Brewery and the Mettlach steins which refer to him directly. When I referred to the stein bearing his portrait, I tried to be careful to use the words "depicting George Ehret", because there is a variant of form #1997 which does not relate to him at all! If you come across this stein, do yourself a favor and try to purchase it – in all my years of collecting Mettlach wares I have only seen one example. Like all examples I have seen of the Ehret version of this form, this stein was also made in 1890.

Instead of George Ehret's image, this form 1997 uses a PUG image depicting the Mettlach *Alter Turm* (Old Tower) in the shield-shaped area, above the words "Mettlach-Saar." The etched side decorations are the same as the single-banner Ehret version (hops vines and stalks of barley), as is the inlaid lid except that the central initials have been changed to the entwined letters V and B, standing for Villeroy & Boch. The thumblift for this variation is the Imperial German eagle.

26



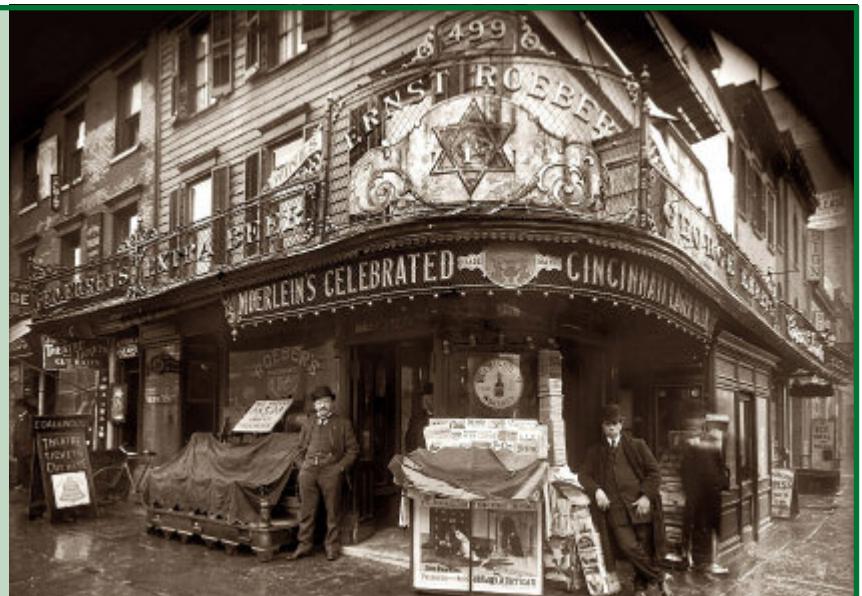
27



A New York City Beer Corner

The corner saloon located at 499 Sixth Avenue in Manhattan proudly announced the availability of beer from Ehret's Hellgate Brewery. Note the prominent "marketing" wrapped around the second floor of the establishment: "GEO. EHRET'S EXTRA BEER" on one side, "GEORGE EHRET'S" on the other, with Ehret's trademark directly on the corner of the building. The name of the proprietor, Ernst Roeber, appears above the Ehret trademark.

(Roeber, a champion wrestler and vaudeville impresario, stands at left in this photo, ca. 1908, next to a covered shoeshine stand.)



Debunking a Myth

By Norm Paratore, Gambrinus Stein Club

During a Gambrinus meeting a while back, a respected SCI member spoke about how glass flows or “slumps” and how you can tell an older piece of glass by the thickness of the base. I didn’t want to start an argument there, or embarrass this person, thus this article. What he said is a myth that has been going around for a long time and like the tide, ebbs and flows with time. You absolutely cannot tell old glass because the base is thicker for one simple reason – it doesn’t slump.

If the bottom is thicker, it is because the glass blower made it that way, perhaps for balance. How many steins do you think would survive if the base were as thin as the walls of the stein? Air bubbles or “pegging” was popular 150 years ago and that required a regular base, which was then “pegged” by using a soaking-wet wooden paddle with pegs pushed into the soft glass. A second base was then added to seal the air bubbles. Just one example of why you would have a thick base.

When I was doing research on this subject years ago, I found many articles asserting that glass does not slump, but those articles were simply someone else’s opinion. I finally found this article, which I consider the most scientifically accurate and authoritative, written by someone who has the credentials to be considered an expert on the subject. In addition, he worked for Corning Glass for 28 years, including as Director of the Corning Glass Museum.

All About Glass - Does Glass Flow?

by Dr. Robert Brill

Early one spring morning in 1946, Clarence Hoke was holding forth in his chemistry class at West Side High School in Newark, New Jersey. “Glass is actually a liquid.” the North Carolina native told us in his soft Southern tones. “You can tell that from the stained glass windows in old cathedrals in Europe. The glass is thicker on the bottom than it is on the top.” Now, more than half a century later, that is the only thing I can actually remember being taught in high school chemistry. I didn’t really believe it then, and I don’t believe it now. In the years that followed, I came across the same story every now and then. Most often it popped up in college textbooks on general chemistry. And now, thanks to the Internet, our Museum has received dozens of inquiries about whether or not this is true. Most people seem to want to believe it.

Glass Is a Liquid, and Naturally Flows, Right?

It is easy to understand why the myth persists. It does have a certain appeal. Glass and the glassy state are often described

by noting their similarities with liquids. So good teachers, such as Mr. Hoke, like to quote the story about the windows. As is the case with liquids, the atoms making up a glass are not arranged in any regular order—and that is where the analogy arises. Liquids flow because there are no strong forces holding their molecules together. Their molecules can move freely past one another, so that liquids can be poured, splashed around, and spilled. But, unlike the molecules in conventional liquids, the atoms in glasses are all held together tightly by strong chemical bonds. It is as if the glass were one giant molecule. This makes glasses rigid so they cannot flow at room temperatures. Thus, the analogy fails in the case of fluidity and flow.

Why the Myth Doesn’t Make Sense

There are at least four or five reasons why the myth doesn’t make sense.

Some years ago, I heard a remark attributed to Egon Orowan of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Orowan had quipped that there might, indeed, be some truth to the story about glass flowing. Half of the pieces in a window are thicker at the bottom, he said, but, he added quickly, the other half is thicker at the top. My own experience has been that for earlier windows especially, there is sometimes a pronounced variation in thickness over a distance of an inch or two on individual fragments. That squares with the experience of conservators and curators who have handled hundreds of panels. Although the individual pieces of glass in a window may be uneven in thickness, and noticeably wavy, these effects result simply from the way the glasses were made. Presumably, that would have been by some precursor or variant of the crown or cylinder methods.

One also wonders why this alleged thickening is confined to the glass in cathedral windows. Why don’t we find that Egyptian cored vessels or Hellenistic and Roman bowls have sagged and become misshapen after lying for centuries in tombs or in the ground? Those glasses are 1,000–2,500 years older than the cathedral windows.

Speaking of time, just how long should it take—theoretically—for windows to thicken to any observable extent? Many years ago, Dr. Chuck Kurkjian told me that an acquaintance of his had estimated how fast—actually, how slowly—glasses would flow. The calculation showed that if a plate of glass a meter tall and a centimeter thick was placed in an upright position at room temperature, the time required for the glass to flow down so as to thicken 10 angstrom

units at the bottom (a change the size of only a few atoms) would theoretically be about the same as the age of the universe: close to ten billion years. Similar calculations, made more recently, lead to similar conclusions. But such compu-



Swiss armorial glass of the Arms of Unterwalden, 1564

tations are perhaps only fanciful. It is questionable that the equations used to calculate rates of flow are really applicable to the situation at hand.

Viscosity

This brings us to the subject of viscosity. The viscosity of a liquid is a measure of its resistance to flow—the opposite of fluidity. Viscosities are expressed in units called poises. At room temperature, the viscosity of water, which flows readily, is about 0.01 poise. Molasses has a viscosity of about 500 poises and flows like ... molasses. A piece of once proud Brie, left out on the table after all the guests have departed, may be found to have flowed out of its rind into a rounded mass. In this sad state, its viscosity, as a guess, would be about 500,000 poises.

In the world of viscosity, things can get rather sticky. At elevated temperatures, the viscosities of glasses can be measured, and much practical use is made of such measurements. Upon removal from a furnace, ordinary glasses have a consistency that changes gradually from that of a thick house paint to that of putty, and then to that of saltwater taffy being pulled on one of those machines you see on a boardwalk. To have a taffy-like viscosity, the glass would still have to be very hot and would probably glow with a dull red color.

At somewhat cooler temperatures, pieces of glass will still sag slowly under their own weight, and if they have sharp edges, those will become rounded. So, too, will bubbles trapped in the glass slowly turn to spheres because of surface tension. All this happens when the viscosity is on the order of 50,000,000 poises, and the glasses are near what we call their softening points.

Below those temperatures, glasses have pretty well set up, and by the time they have cooled to room temperature, they have, of course, become rigid. Estimates of the viscosity of glasses at room temperature run as high as 10 to the 20th power (10^{20}), that is to say, something like 100,000,000,000,000,000 poises. Scientists and engineers may argue about the exact value of that number, but it is doubtful that there is any real physical significance to a viscosity as great as that anyway. As for cathedral windows, it is hard to believe that anything that viscous is going to flow at all.



St. Arnulf of Metz
Patron saint of brewers

The Legend of the Beer Mug

It was July 642 and very hot when the parishioners of Metz went to Remiremont to recover the remains of their former bishop. They had little to drink and the terrain was inhospitable. At the point when the exhausted procession was about to leave Champigneulles, one of the parishioners, Duc Notto, prayed "By his powerful intercession the Blessed Arnold will bring us what we lack." Immediately the small remnant of beer at the bottom of a pot multiplied in such amounts that the pilgrims' thirst was quenched and they had enough to enjoy the next evening when they arrived in Metz. For this reason he is known as the patron saint of Brewers.

It is worth noting, too, that at room temperature the viscosity of metallic lead has been estimated to be about 10 to the 11th power, (10^{11}) poises, that is, perhaps a billion times less viscous—or a billion times more fluid, if you prefer—than glass. Presumably, then, the lead caning that holds stained glass pieces in place should have flowed a billion times more readily than the glass. While lead caning often bends and buckles under the enormous architectural stresses imposed on it, one never hears that the lead has flowed like a liquid.

Glass Doesn't Flow

When all is said and done, the story about stained glass windows flowing—just because glasses have certain liquid-like characteristics—is an appealing notion, but in reality it just isn't so.

Thinking back, I do recall another memorable remark by Mr. Hoke. One day, our self appointed class clown sat senselessly pounding a book on his desk at the back of the room. "Great day in the mawnin', son!" shouted Hoke "Stop slammin' your book on the desk. Use your head!" That was good advice—no matter how you read it.

About the author, Dr. Robert Brill

After receiving his bachelor's degree at Uppsala College, Dr. Robert Brill taught chemistry at the college. He also earned a PhD in physical chemistry from Rutgers University. Dr. Brill joined the staff of The Corning Museum of Glass in 1960, and served as director of the Museum from 1972–1975. Starting in 1962 he served on the International Commission on Glass (ICG), the world's leading organization of glass scientists and technologists. He has collaborated with scientists, curators, conservators and archeologists the world over, conducting chemical analyses and other investigations of historical glass objects. The goal has been to determine when and where particular glass objects were made, how glass was made, what it was used for, and how it was traded. Dr. Brill has published more

than 190 works in various journals and symposia. Dr. Brill died at his home in Corning, NY, in 2021.



Mettlach Faience: Beautiful Steins with a Rich History

By Jeff Arduini

Mettlach faience steins, or more accurately, steins made of earthenware in the style of faience, were produced in a limited number. They were made by Villeroy & Boch and are highly desirable to many collectors.

The word faience comes from the Italian version of these wares made in Faenza, Italy. Faience is the general French and English language term for the fine tin glazed pottery made with quartz and sand. The invention of a white pottery glaze suitable for painted decoration, by the addition of an oxide of tin to the slip of a lead glaze, was a major advancement in the history of pottery. The invention seems to have been originally made in Iran or the Middle East before the ninth century. A kiln capable of producing temperatures exceeding 1,000 °C (1,830 °F) was required to achieve this result, the result of a millennia of refined pottery-making traditions. The term is now used for a wide variety of pottery from several parts of the world, including many types of European painted wares, often produced as cheaper versions of porcelain styles. The Dutch Version is called 'Delftware' or just "Delft" and they usually have blue foreground devices or main design elements with a white background. For more information please see **Prosit**, September, 2021 (pages 16,17).

The identifying numbers used for these Mettlach faience steins are a combination of mold numbers and decoration numbers. The decorations themselves are a hand-painted transfer outline under the glaze.

On this particular stein, the number 5442 is the decoration number. The form or mold number is 5019. The production control number (or possibly principle decorator number) is 20 and, as always, can be found on the bottom left of the base of the stein. The year of manufacture is 08 for 1908 and that is

found to the right on the bottom of the base. This is a 1 liter stein with an old time faience style pewter lid. The thumblift is affixed directly onto the lid and not above the hinge and shank, as most more modern thumb lifts are. There is a pewter foot ring around the base of the stein. The particular designer is unknown.

The verse in German says:

"Mit tabakrauch zur Sommerzeit vertreibst du leicht die Mücken, und mußt du oft zur Winterzeit verdrußt und Aerger schlucken dann rauche nur und mit dem Rauch vertriebst du dir die Mücken."

In English it translates to:

"With tobacco smoke in Summertime, you easily chase the flies away. And if you often have to swallow trouble and strife, in Wintertime, go ahead and smoke and with the smoke you will chase away your blues."

The central image of the stein depicts a Landsknecht. Landsknecht were Germanic mercenaries used in pike (swords and halberds) and shot (muskets) formations during the early modern period of combat. The formations were various combinations of pikeman and supporting foot soldiers. The Germanic origin of *Landsknecht* combines the German words "Land" and "Knecht" to mean *servant of the land* in English. The word Landsknecht was also used during the 15th century for bailiffs and court ushers.

On this stein our Landsknecht is smoking to keep the pesky flies away, and drinking beer with a cat, while sitting on a barrel of beer with his sword and his beer stein in hand. He is dressed quite colorfully in blue, yellow, and white against a very beautiful atypical teal colored background.

This is one of my very favorite steins.

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A Rare Occupational Stein

The Former

By George Schamberger

SCI Master Steinologist

Phill Masenheimer's book, "Long Live the Occupational Stein Collector", is the only book on the subject of occupationals, and it gave a great boost to this field of collecting. I recently saw this rare occupational stein on German eBay.

A *Former* is skilled tradesman who makes forms or molds for metal casting.

Metal casting is a 7,000-year-old process used in manufacturing, fine art and jewelry. During metal casting, molten metal is transferred from a crucible into a mold to create a positive metal cast object. The metal and mold are cooled, and the metal object is removed and finished. Traditional metal casting techniques include lost-wax casting, plaster mold casting, die casting, and sand casting, to name a few. These metal casting processes may be performed in a foundry or a jewelry studio.

The *Former* creates the form or mold from compressed sand or clay. When the form is ready, molten iron, steel, pewter, gold or other metals are poured into the form to make an item.



This occupational stein of a *Former* is named to Karl Thomas, with the usual sentiment:
Eher soll die Welt verderben, als vor Durst ein Former sterben.
 The world should sooner perish than a *Former* die of thirst.

Today formers creating forms for iron or bronze get their vocational training in a foundry. In Germany the use of the term *Former* for these skilled workers has been given up in favor of the term "foundry mechanic." An occupational stein of a *Former* is rare, in part because the name was only in use between 1935 and 1997.

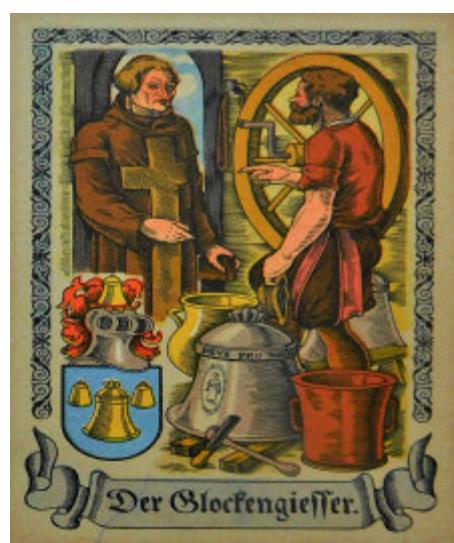
I express my thanks to Walt Vogdes for preparing this article for *Prosit*.



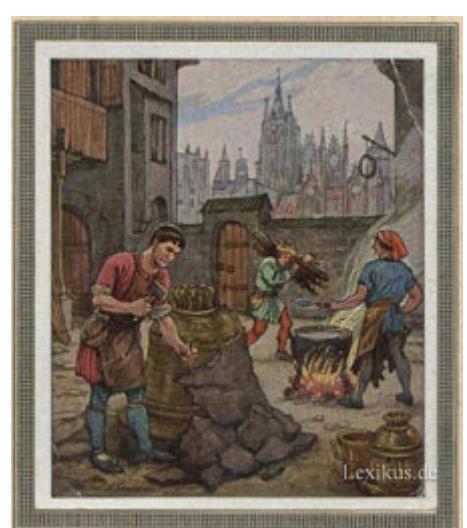
Apprentice Formers work under the close eyes of the Masters



Der Eisengießer - The iron caster



Der Glockengießer - The bell caster



Removing the form from a cast bell

A C1840 Carved Ivory Tankard

By Salvatore Mazzzone

Florida Sun Steiners

Featured here is a gorgeous stein that I know almost nothing about, other than that it is truly delicious eye candy.

I found it in a 2016 on-line listing from an auction house in Belgium which read: “*A rare ivory humpen, alto relieveo, sculptured with Bacchus on a chariot preceded by a drunken procession of welcome. Ca1840. H 39.5 cm, W 22 cm (collector’s item)*” (Picture 1). It did not cite a maker or place of origin.

Clarifying some of the terminology: “*humpen*” is simply a German term for “*tankard*;” “*alto relieveo*” is merely a fancy term for “*high relief*;” converting the metric dimensions to their English equivalents yields *H 15.55 inches, W 8.66 inches*; and I’m sure you really didn’t need them to tell you that it was a “*collector’s item*.”

In ancient Greek and Roman mythology, the god known as Bacchus to the Romans and Dionysus to the Greeks was associated with wine, festivity, intoxication, ecstasy and revelry. He was often depicted as a youthful and androgynous figure, crowned with

grapevines or ivy and holding a thyrsus—a staff topped with a pine cone or bunch of grapes – which he can be seen holding in this scene. He is also closely linked to the vineyards and the cultivation of grapes, and is considered the god of wine and winemaking.

Although I can’t tell you anything about the stein’s maker or place of origin, I can elaborate on the scene and point out several places where, I believe, the auction house got it wrong.

First of all, it’s not a chariot as it has no draft pole or yoke and its wheels are proportionally too small a diameter. Rather, it appears to be a simple farm cart being pulled by the harnessed triad of an imbibing man, a bent and apparently struggling woman, and a long-toothed ferocious-looking beast. I believe the beast to be a panther, a creature often depicted as accompanying Bacchus/Dionysus and representing the unbridled passion, ferocity, and instinctual nature of the god and his followers.

Secondly, the young and statuesque Bacchus/Dionysus is not on the cart

but walking behind it while having his drinking vessel refilled by one of the two nude women riding on the cart.

Third, the cart is also carrying a load of grapes, and I suspect these drunken merry-makers are not engaged in a welcome procession but rather a rauous celebration of the grape harvest, to which Bacchus/Dionysus is happily lending his presence and participation.

Finally, it should be pointed out that there is a bevy of other drinking and carousing revelers in various states of nudity gallivanting about the guzzling god and cart, as well as a naked and happy flute player atop the stein’s lid; the scene is indeed truly illustrative of the term “bacchanalia.”

In any event, the carving is extraordinary and it’s a wonderful stein, albeit an “R” rated one.

By the way, it sold for €14,720 (euros) or \$15,510 including the buyer’s premium.



AMOCA / American Museum of Ceramic Art



Images (left to right): Girl Holding Safety Bicycle. Stein, etched, inlay. 1900; Gnome Drinking, Stein, etched, inlay; Woman Skiing. Stein, print-under-glaze. 1911. Collection of the American Museum of Ceramic Art; gift of Bob and Colette Wilson.

A Traveler's Guide to Mettlach showcases scenes of everyday life in the 1800s Mettlach, Germany. This exhibition shows scenes of love and relationships as well as larger themes of fantasy, offering an all-encompassing snapshot of the myriad facets of human life within Mettlach. *A Traveler's Guide to Mettlach*, on view in the Robert and Colette Wilson Gallery through June 2025, presents concepts of life, laughter, relationships, and the day-to-day existence of the German people.

AMOCA champions the art, history, creation and technology of ceramics through exhibitions, collections, outreach and studio programming. The Beer Stein Library (beerstein.net) was acquired in 2019 and complements the Robert D. and Colette D. Wilson collection of Mettlach Ceramics acquired in 2011 by AMOCA.

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**Highlights from our November
Mini Convention Auction**



We are the World's Authority on Beer Steins