

# der Gemütlichkeit

## Honest-to-Goodness Character Stein Must Have Facial Expression

Those steins that are popularly referred to as characters are generally objects that have been given human characteristics.

Many steins have character; however, they are not all character steins. Stein

aficianados almost always insist on some form of facial expression. The stein can take the form of anything from a radish to a skull—but eyes, nose and mouth indicate a face, and a face indicates a character stein.

Talking about character steins is like talking about barbecued T-bone steaks. You can't savor the taste—and many characters are made in the best of taste. The steak should be eaten and enjoyed. The character steins should be seen, inspected, enjoyed.

Musterschutz is the name associated most often with characters. Literally, *Musterschutz* means "sample protected" (design copyrighted). Most of the Musterschutz steins seem to have a common denominator in their style and craftsmanship. They are marked with a double cross like a tic tac toe chart. In a survey of SCI members, nobody could name a particular factory that was responsible for them, unless Musterschutz itself was a factory.

Mettlach, the "in" name to most stein collectors, made only three bona-fide characters: No. 2018—the dog; No. 2036—the owl; and No. 2069—the monkey. All three are rare and valuable steins.

Villoroy and Boch (makers of Mettlachs) of course produced other quality steins that seem to have character but are not true character steins. Included in the Mettlachs quasi-character line are a pretzel stein, houses, castles, and the series of book steins.

An SCI member in Lancaster, Pa., William Schwartz, writes, "The Dresden or ones marked Musterschutz, Martin Pauson, Meissen, Royal Bonn, Capo de Monti, Martin Basset, Jos. M. Mayer are by far the best quality." Mr. Schwartz should know as he happens to have the world's most complete collection of steins.



WISE OWL makes a smart character stein. It's typical of colorful Musterschutz animal heads. Characters are becoming scarce and expensive.



FOURTEEN INCHES TALL, this is one of the varieties of the Munich Maid. Though size is not marked, this character has approximately three liters capacity. She is holding turnips and beets in her right hand. It's signed "Jos. M. Mayer München Bayer str 3." It's owned by William Moore of Waukegan, Ill.



POPULAR THUMBREST is seen in this other view of William Moore's stein. The twin clock towers represent Munich's Frauenkirche church and can be found on other steins that came from the area. Lithophane in bottom shows street scene and the Hofbrauhaus, Munich's famous beer hall.

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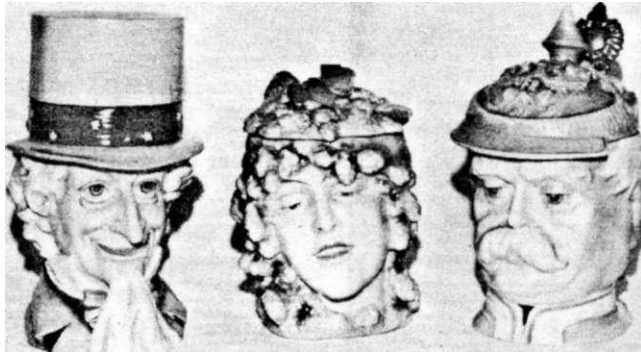
# Character Steins Are Indeed Characters

Continued from preceding page

Authentic old character steins have gone up in value but no more so than other worthwhile steins.

One SCI member reported that he bought his first characters about 25 years ago for \$10-\$15. "Now these same steins run from \$85 to \$100," he claims.

Keith Smith, a collector in Memphis, Tenn., enjoys characters more than a little. The photos on this page show off some character steins from his collection. The photos were taken with standardized settings, keeping height and size proportionate.



THREE FAMOUS FACES are these Musterschutz steins owned by Keith Smith. Proudly posed are (left to right) Uncle Sam, the hops lady and Bismarck. Porcelain lids are headgear on each of these very rare steins. They are marked with a double blue cross, the Musterschutz sign.



KEITH SMITH'S CROCODILES are done with much workmanship. The true-to-life colors are green, yellows, whites and blues. The small ½-liter stein is biscuit and has the body going around the stein with the tail going through the inlay lid. The sitting crocodile is Musterschutz.



VARIETY PLUS is found in these four characters from the Keith Smith collection. The devil is done with much detail; the coloring is different shades of reds and blacks with accented green eyes and white teeth and horns. Next are the happy and sad radish steins (Musterschutz). The skull is a heavy, ½-liter porcelain stein. All four have inlay lids.

## Stein Exchange

Collectors wishing to find a trade, sell a stein, or locate a certain type of stein will be able to have their message printed in the bulletin. No charge will be made for messages under 25 words (counting every word as one each) until printing costs get out of hand.

### Answers to Last Exchange

TO MISS LEVINE. The "Handbook of Old Pottery and Porcelain Marks" by C. Jordan Thoru shows the Star of David or six-pointed star as Miskolez (city) established 1882, Max Koos (name of maker). Another possibility is a company presently making steins: Reinhold Merkelbach Steingezeugwerke at Höhr-Grenzhausen, Germany. Suggest write and ask.

IF A. B. CHRISTOFFERSON of Seattle hasn't received the photo of a 2828, 2829 or 2038, I'll be glad to send him a slide or attempt a color print if he prefers.

TO RANDY REINSTEDT. The glass bottoms enabled one to see his sweetheart while drinking and allowed you to watch your drinking pals so they couldn't take something as you drank.

The three replies above were from Jack Heiman, 1653 Pinehurst Ave., St. Paul 16, Minn. Some replies were sent direct to members.

YOUNG COLLECTOR interested in buying reasonably priced old steins. Send description, price and other information to Richard E. Kropp, 1235 W. Lindsay, Apt. 4, Norman, Okla.

WE WILL BUY unusual steins in perfect condition—one or a collection—Edward Firbank, 13861 Harbor Blvd., Garden Grove, Calif.

WANTED TO BUY: Mettlach, Royal Vienna, other fine steins. One or a collection. Describe and price. Macfabel's, 374 Riverdale Ave., Yonkers, N.Y. 10705.

WILL TRADE choice Mettlachs for choice art glass: Tiffany (dark irridescent), etc. Must be signed pieces and must be perfect. Write Howard L. Seavey, 5437 41st Ave. S.W., Seattle, Wash. 98116.

COLLECTION of many fine old steins for sale including occupational and sports. J. Dimsdle, 1212 NW 7th Ave., Mineral Wells, Texas 76067.

LOOKING FOR the following Mettlach Steins and Placques: Steins No. 2082, No. 2083, No. 2133 and large size No. 2102. 17-inch Wall Placques No. 2195, No. 2196 and No. 2361. J. J. O'Neil, 87 Industry St., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15210.

STEINS WANTED! I am in the market for Mettlachs and regimentals whenever reasonably priced. My collection is very small so any attractive and undamaged examples of the above or equal quality steins will be of interest. Norman E. Sherman, 4295 Marina Drive, Santa Barbara, Calif. 93105.

METTLACH STEINS and PLACQUES wanted! Also looking for Meissen, Royal Vienna, and character steins in perfect condition. Send price for prompt reply. Richards, 46 Fitch Ave., New London, Conn.

## der Gemütlichkeit

A bulletin for collectors of antique, or just old, beer steins, published quarterly (March, June, September, December) throughout the year. One year's membership is one dollar (U.S. currency). Back copies: 50 cents per copy. Bulk orders: \$1 per year for four extra copies per edition (to members only). Published by Tom McClelland, 815 South McClelland, Santa Maria, California 93454.

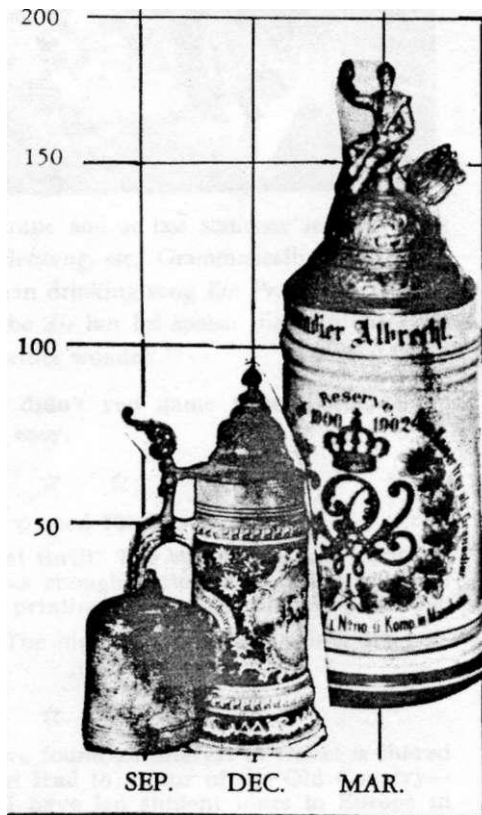
Back copies of *der Gemütlichkeit* can be ordered at 50 cents each while they last. There are only a few copies of No. 2 left.

### STOLEN METTLACH

A ½ liter Mettlach (#2280) was stolen from our store in late March. It's castle-marked, pewter-rimmed lid; green hops pattern over strong rust. It's listed and described in Mohr's book.

Please send any information to **B & B Antiques, 1023 Broad Street, San Luis Obispo, Calif. 93401.**

## UP GROWS MEMBERSHIP



Once again the ranks of SCI swelled to a new high. Membership hit 180 in March—an increase of about 100 per cent since the December edition.

The membership drive continues. All members will receive membership cards and will become automatic one-year subscribers to this bulletin.

An 8 x 10-inch certificate of membership will be available at a nominal price for members who want to brag about being in the unusual Stein Collectors International. A copy of the unique certificate will appear in the June bulletin. Of course it will be suitable for framing.

Although it is likely that dues will double to \$2 in the club's second year, new memberships are still one American dollar. To join SCI send \$1 to Tom McClelland, 815 South McClelland, Santa Maria, Calif. 93454.

How many stein collectors are there? Who knows? There are probably more than most would suspect.

It is a goal of SCI to have all stein collectors as members.

## Collector Tells of Buying Many Steins at Auction

By **Jack G. Lowenstein**  
Princeton, New Jersey

Most of my steins have been obtained at auctions.

The cardinal rule for buying at an auction is to examine the stein carefully before bidding starts. Otherwise you can spend a lot of money on a "lemon." Auctioneers are generally honest; their reputation is always at stake, and they do not knowingly misrepresent items they handle. However, they themselves do not have the time to thoroughly examine every piece of merchandise that passes through their hands, and hence they may miss hairline cracks, chips, etc. Furthermore, they may not recognize differences in quality that the experienced collector and connoisseur watches carefully (but they all know the Mettlach trademarks).

Next, set a limit on what you are willing to pay for a given stein. Otherwise, in the heat of battle, you may get carried away and end up in a bidding duel with another novice with the result that either you or he ends up paying

much too much for the stein.

Other notes: Dealers are willing to pay top prices for fine steins at auctions, since they often have customers in mind and know what they can sell the stein for. Hence they can often out-bid the private collector. On the other hand, if you are willing to accept minor defects, you can usually obtain steins at very low prices: It is rare to pay more than \$20 for some very excellent specimens.

I usually go to what I call "back-yard auctions." Here the entire house and contents are being auctioned off, and I have gotten some really good buys. The professional auctions draw too many rich art collectors and prices are normally too high for me—but I do go to these auctions because: 1) since they are indoors they are held throughout the entire year (back-yard auctions are only held spring through autumn), and 2) you can get some ideas of what the professionals are paying for collectors' items.

To sum up, in general I like auctions, and hit the entire auction circuit whenever I get the chance.



**BIDDING AT AUCTIONS** brought most of Jack Lowenstein's 86 steins to his home in Princeton, New Jersey. A few of his collection are shown here. He photographs and catalogs every stein.



*Der Gemütlichkeit* is out for the third time and at last someone informs us it should be *die* instead of *der*. *Mein himmel! Achtung*, etc. Grammatically, that's right. However, we lifted it verbatim from the German drinking song *Ein Prosit Der Gemütlichkeit*. Yes, *Gemütlichkeit* by itself should be *die* but I'd sooner die than change it now. Let's leave it unmolested. Let the authorities wonder.

**Another reader's thoughts: "Why didn't you name it something I could pronounce?" That would be too easy.**

SCI membership is up again. The clan passed 180 this month.

Opening the mail continues to be biggest thrill. The enthusiasm and curiosity of SCI members is tough to top. There was enough material available to make this month's edition an eight-pager, but the printing costs would obviously double.

Many photographs have been sent in. The high quality glossy prints are perfect for good printing reproduction.

From conversations with members I have found an interest in travel is shared by a number of SCI'ers. This interest could lead to a tour of the Old Country—the real **steinland**. Twice in recent years I have led student tours to Europe in the summer months. It occurred to me that a special tour for SCI members might be a delightful experience for those who could manage to take the trip.

Thinking ahead to the summer of 1967, I am wide open for ideas and comments. The itinerary should be planned by those interested in taking the trip. I'm thinking about a 30-day sojourn through Denmark, Holland, England, Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. This tour would feature unusual sidetrips such as porcelain factories, breweries, wine cellars, and antique shops on the continent.

**Price would be based on airfare from New York. It would be possible for members to extend and to add days to their vacation abroad. Any comments?**

Among SCI members are doctors and lawyers but not a solitary Indian chief. Our first foreign membership belongs to the Jägers of Heidelberg, Germany. Maybe we really are Stein Collectors **INTERNATIONAL**.

James N. Stines has the most appropriate monicker for a member.

Remember . . . stein clubbing is more fun than a **bierfest** in Munich. Well, almost as much **fun**. The stein is empty for now.

## Stein Article Draws Comments

The December edition of *der Gemütlichkeit* featured the historic regimental steins of pre-World War I Germany. Based primarily on information given from two SCI members, the article was an attempt at a comprehensive coverage of the regimentals. By the way, the two contributors were not mentioned in the article. R. H. Mohr's name popped up a couple of times in the article. He sent a couple of pages of notes on regimentals. The material was worked into the article. The other contributor was Eddie Firbanks, a dealer and collector in Garden Grove, Calif., only eight miles from Disneyland. Mr. Firbanks was interviewed in his Red Barn last November. He features a rare variety of regimentals in his shop along with about fifty other steins. The regimentals have no price tags; that is, they are not for sale.

In a letter to SCI, after the interview and the article, Firbanks wrote about regimentals: "They have always been my very favorite steins . . . The military stein is the most complete history of the, German soldier and I am sure it won't be too long before this stein will be the most sought after stein of all.

Notman Sherman of Santa Barbara wrote, "Your feature article was certainly timely to me, in view of my previous question on the subject. A fine article proved beyond any doubt what I had already suspected: that one of my regimentals was not what it should have been. Pretty economical education at that!"

Two members wrote about an error. The "WR" that appeared on two regimentals (page 6) could not refer to the Weimar Republic since the forming of the German Republic at Weimar didn't occur until 1919, just after World War I.

Robert Pischel of Tulsa, Oklahoma, claims that the "WR" stood for "Wilhelm Rex." Mr. Pischel wrote, "Actually the regiments represented by the steins were units of Kaiser Wilhelm the First (K.W.I, on the bottom line and the "I" under the monogrammed W.R.)"

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