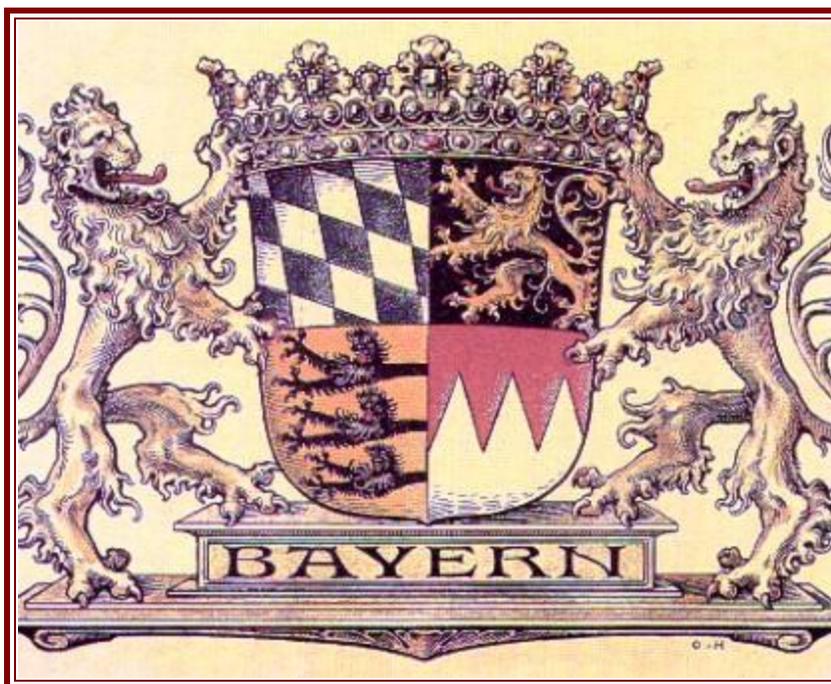


~ The Artistic Contribution of Otto Hupp to the Manufacture of Stoneware in Mettlach ~

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The name Otto Hupp is not to be found in the specialized literature about Mettlach, and until I prepared for my presentation at the SCI Convention in San Diego in 1986, I didn't know that this artist had a relationship with the Mettlach factory and its stoneware production. Hupp is a well-known artist and heraldist in Germany, but no one ever connected him with Mettlach. Who has ever seen his typical signature or sign on a stein or plaque? It can be found on coats-of-arms, on book illustrations and on book-plates. But on steins?

Otto Hupp was not only a heraldist, he was an engraver, a publicity designer, a ceramist; he designed book-bindings, postage stamps, bank notes. This is just a brief view of his great talent and of his artistic scope. What is especially important for beer stein collectors and Mettlach fans is that he designed ceramics and that he worked for different breweries and vineyards. In 1884, when he was only 25 years old, he created a trademark that is still used today by *Spaten-Franziskaner-Bräu* in Munich. [See a companion article in the Library entitled **Otto Hupp and Spatenbräu**.] Almost all stein collectors have seen that sign on coasters and glasses in German pubs. The emblem has existed for over one hundred years now and demonstrates Otto Hupp's talent as an artist.

Hupp was born in Düsseldorf on May 21st, 1859. His father was an engraver and medallmaker. Otto got his interest for painting at home, but he didn't learn from his father. In 1878, Otto left for Munich, where Neo-Renaissance was making great strides. Rudolf Seitz took young Otto Hupp into his workshop to learn painting. He married Franziska Eilhammer during the summer of 1882 and shortly after that they built their own home in Schleißheim, on the outskirts of Munich. He was interested in every technique, in every material. He learned to engrave, to gild, to polish with his father; to paint with Rudolf Seitz; he learned to abrade metals and stones, to carve ivory and boxwood; he re-discovered the embossing of leather. One can hardly find an artist - although he never considered himself as more than a good craftsman - who applied so many artistic techniques with as much talent as Otto Hupp did.



What did he look like? We found a portrait taken when he was age 36, in 1895. He had already been working for Villeroy and Boch in Mettlach for a number of years, as it was in the late 80's that he designed steins and plaques. Later, at the beginning of the 20th century, he made some ceramics himself on the potter's wheel. But his major activity, and his first calling, was heraldry. The very first work he made was a pewter plate in 1877, with the coat-of-arms of the city of Düsseldorf, where he was born. He was also a collector: his interest for heraldry began when he was very young and he had a large collection of family and city coats-of-arms. This enabled his contribution to the five-volume "Coat-of-Arms and Seals of the German Cities and Villages" that grew to a great encyclopedia of the German aristocracy, and to the *Münchener Kalender* published from 1885 to 1936.

In addition to his ornamental talent, Hupp had an excellent feel for lettering and letter types: his alphabets, published in 1900 under the name *Neudeutsch* are of high aesthetic quality. He brought a new aspect to characters.

Hupp's body of work is enormous: more than six thousand different heraldic figures; paintings; graphic art pieces; labels for bottles, postage stamps, bank notes and posters; artistic creations - we come to a total of ten thousand different creations, formidable output even for a man who lived to the age of 80.

1888, the year of the German national exhibition of handcrafts in Munich, was an important year for Hupp's relationship with Mettlach. Eugen von Boch (1809-1898) wrote to his friend August von Cohausen (historian, architect and archeologist, 1812-1894) about the participation of the Mettlach factory in this fair. Dated May 29th, 1888, the letter states, "We did a big effort for Munich and for this purpose, we offered the artistic direction to a painter, who you may know, Hupp, from Munich."



Hupp used his initials as his signature, but frequently added this odd symbol of a bird.

Included in this exhibition was a vase designed by Hupp, known among collectors (from 1857): it has the emblems of the four Evangelists. The cross-section of this item is almost square with rounded corners; on each side is a panel with St. Matthew in human form, because he begins his gospel with the humanity of Jesus, as a descendant of David; St. Mark as a lion, because he tells about St. John the Baptist's preachings, comparing him to a roaring lion; St. Luke as a winged ox, because he reports about Zacharia, priest and sacrificer of the Old Law; St. John as an eagle, because he soars high, and begins his gospel with the divinity of the Word. This vase, perhaps Hupp's first piece produced by Mettlach, was on display at the 1888 exhibition, but it is rather difficult to discover it on the old photographs because it is in a rather dark corner.

On March 18th, 1888, Otto Hupp wrote in a letter to an historian of art in Mainz, Dr. Friedrich Schneider: "The work for Villeroy and Boch is going forward, but I should have more eyes, more hands, more time. Ten thousand Marks, as Mr. Boch thinks, is a good amount of money, but it is in no relationship to what it means in work. I don't know how I could ask more than three thousand; I wrote to him and mentioned that price. I hope he will agree... I sent the drawing of the columns to Merzig; at the end of this week I hope to have the tableware ready for Mettlach so that I can start with the mosaic for the floor and the picture for the wall." Hupp's daughter kept some drawings with the artist's inscriptions: "Pattern for a tableware set, produced by Villeroy, Mettlach"; scenes with deer, bears and a rabbit, boars, smaller scrolls for smaller pieces, but a big one with a huntress seated on her horse, two falcons and lots of emblems related to hunting. A couple of scenes with the fox and fishes exist, as well as a large sketch of a harbor scene with boats and fish, and two lobsters, possibly made for a large fish plate and amply showing Hupp's talent.

Let's take a run through the steins which can be attributed to Otto Hupp. There isn't much to say about the sketch of the St. Florian stein that every collector will recognize as form 1786. In Germany, St. Florian is the patron-saint of the firemen: "Help thou, St. Florian, we start the second extinction." The way the letters are made and harmoniously displayed, the proportions shown in the lettering, the rather typical "A" with two "wings" at the upper side: those letters are a sure way to recognize Hupp's work. This well-known Florian stein exists in two sizes. It was made of "etched" and glazed stoneware and has an elaborate handle.



Another sketch shows a series of lids: six lids belonging to the book steins, form 2001 in its various designs. We cannot imagine that he could have been the designer of only the lids, or that he created only six steins out of the whole set. From the shape of the letters, giving the authors and titles of the respective books, we are sure that he created the whole set. This popular series shows a variation on one theme: books.



The twelve book steins (form 2001) with various themes

In a kind of diary, speaking about the year 1900, he wrote: "In March, I designed some beer steins for Villeroy & Boch, with the attributes of different

The Mettlach Occupational Series
(see accompanying article in the Library)

professions: baker, tailor, shoemaker, goldsmith, etc." And so we know that he designed the twelve occupational steins which were first mentioned in the sales catalog of November 1901.

We may compare the scene of the goldsmith with a bookplate where the (iron)smith is also inscribed in a circle: the disposition of the different elements is the same, but the attitude of the man is different, as the goldsmith does very exact work and the (iron)smith needs a lot more energy. The bookplate is signed "O.H." Form 2727, the bookbinder stein, shows Hupp's characteristic way to display the eagle on the body of a stein. This set of 12 occupational steins, as well as the eleven book steins, are now identified. With the vases, we now know of thirty Mettlach items which were certainly designed by Otto Hupp. But there is more.

There are other popular items out of the stoneware program at Mettlach that we are able to identify. Interrupting the stein series for a short while, we look at two eagles created by Otto Hupp. The first one is signed "O.H." and is rather new: it was created in 1924 for the Ernst Jungkenn winery in Oppenheim: it is a label for a wine bottle that has been used for years, with typical letters, a typical eagle and a distinctive disposition on the little piece of paper. The same can be said for the other one, an eagle that was published in 1894 in the first volume of Hupp's work "Coat-of-Arms and Seals of German Cities, Places and Villages". With these two eagles in mind and with a sketch that belong to Maria Hupp, one will recognize immediately the pattern for Mettlach stein 2075 dedicated to the railways. At the same time, one realizes that Hupp also designed form 1856, the postman's stein. And it is likely that he also is the author of forms 1950, 1956 and 2204. Comparing the details of the eagles, such as the claws, we can see the strong likelihood that Hupp's hand was at work. The shields with form numbers 2010 and 2011 have no signature, either. The sketches are not known to exist, but by comparison of those heraldic motifs with those seen just before, those can be ascribed with 95% of certainty to Otto Hupp, Eagles were really a favorite subject for him!

In his notes, he wrote "designed the target stein". This stein, form 2717, was in fact created around 1900, as it was mentioned in the sales catalog of November 1901. Remembering the bookbinder's stein, with an eagle as main motif and a view over houses or over a city, there is for sure a certain similarity with the target stein: the target with the figure of an almost naked young lady, whose heart is touched by the arrow from little Cupid, looking very innocent, is shown overlooking a city in the background. Once again, the letters and their proportions are very typical.

Otto Hupp didn't write all these notes at the time he was working; his diary consists of notes written

entitled "The Mettlach Occupationals - Designed by Otto Hupp")			
Form	Occupation	Form	Occupation
2719	baker	2725	artist
2720	tailor	2726	goldsmith
2721	cabinetmaker	2727	bookbinder
2722	shoemaker	2728	brewer
2723	carpenter	2729	smith
2724	mason	2730	butcher



The baker's stein (form 2719)

when he was already aged: the handwriting is not very steady, and he does not indicate all the orders he got, or the correct year. And one shouldn't forget that he worked so much, that he did so many various things that he couldn't remember everything, the information isn't complete, based on his memory. In a letter dated 1888, he wrote: "Why isn't it possible to buy the time of some old women, who are too tired to live?"

Just from the feeling and without absolute proof, the following ceramics can also be ascribed to Hupp. Stein number 2002, the *Münchner Kindl* with the rooftops of Munich, displays the same Hupp alphabet, his special way of displaying the decoration and one of his favorite subjects: the emblem of the city of Munich that he used almost every year on the cover of the Munich Calendar. Speaking about this attractive motif of the Munich Child, it is the right place to note that he designed the wonderful plaque 2739. In his notes he added, "also a big wall plaque with different views showing buildings of Munich" - a nice, sought-after plaque showing the National Museum, the Marienkirche and the Künstlerhaus, the Michaelskirche and the Peterkirche, the Hoftheater, the Rathaus and written in Gothic letters, the Royal Hofbräuhaus. The emblem of the city is in a curved central medallion.

Plaques 2187 and 2188, Hapsburg and Hohenzollern, are very "Hupp-suspicious". These are two excellent plaques, with realistic and exact anatomy of the horses, and the shields and the heraldic part were created by somebody who had experience. The same can be said for stein 2053, called the Four-F stein (*Frisch, fromm, fröhlich, frei*): because of the disposition of the pattern, the good design of the coat-of-arms, and of the presence of the emblem of Spatenbräu on the barrel. Again a work that has a 97% chance of being designed by Hupp, the big plaque number 2013, one of the most attractive ones for the collectors: who could really have done this like Otto Hupp? It was really a choice morsel for him.

A drawing at Hupp's daughter's home shows a square with decorative border, at the lower side two roosters are fighting on both sides of a heart with an arrows. At the upper part a verse says: "I am Amor (Love), the best archer; Many hearts were touched by me. I have much power here on earth, over poor and rich men, over your and old people." There is a faience type of stein, number 5028, whose pattern corresponds to the sketch of the square, although the verse has been divided over two lines. But it is certain, that Hupp's drawing was the pattern for the 5028 stein. We can ascribe the music stein (2097) to the same artist, considering the letter types and the very good display of the pattern on the body, also the so-called Cornell stein, number 2871.

Maria Hupp has a couple of prototypes of Mettlach



The postman's stein (form 1856)



The target stein (form 2717)

steins that her father created: among others, like the postman's and some of the occupational, as well as the chess stein (2049). A very noble and rare stein, an excellent design that didn't remain in the production program for a long time. Too expensive in the production, because of the gold? The lid has the inscription "Ludus ludorum", the game of games, and on the body we read "Schach dem König", chess to the king. It was offered in the sales catalog of 1894 and was already taken out of the program in 1899.

There is a bookplate that each stein collectors should recognize immediately: this motif comes up on a Mettlach stein, a very good and interesting one: the David and Goliath stein (2718). This item, with an unusual handle, is one of the rare Mettlach steins with a political theme. Of course, the two men facing each other have been taken out of the Bible, Book of Samuel, verse 17: David, the little shepherd who would become the king of Israel, was used to walking around without weapons, so he had only five stones and a sling shot. In front of him a giant, Goliath, member of the Philistine army completely prepared for the battle. The first stone thrown by David hurt Goliath on his forehead and he died almost immediately. The stein tells more than just this story. Both man figures stand before a deep blue background, David half as tall as Goliath, who is hurt by the stone. The inscription says "*Merk die Lehr*" (notice the lesson). Goliath's shield has three British lions and the slogan "*honi soït qui mal y pense*" (evil be to him who evil thinks), the British motto. Next to him is his helmet and on top of it a crowned roaring British lion.

The stein must have been designed in 1900 to be available in 1901. At that time, there was an important political event that concerned Britain especially. In 1879, the Britons, who owned the Kap and Natal at the coast of South-Africa, annexed the states of the Boers; but in 1891, after a revolution, this country was free from British occupation again. Cecil Rhodes, Prime Minister of the Kap, still dreamed of an Africa that would be British from Kap to Kairo. The War of the Boers lasted three years, from 1889 to 1902. The Boers were not numerous, but they had some success at the beginning of the hostilities. Krüger, President of Transval, couldn't get any help from Europe, though many European countries seemed to show the Boers some sympathy.

It was very difficult for the British to control the situation again, but they could regain the cities; in the country, the Boers started with guerilla warfare. The British practiced a scorched-earth policy and brought the people into camps - this provoked a big protest in Europe. The Boers accepted the peace of Pretoria: they lost their independence, but could keep their language. This stein was designed during the War of the Boers. Goliath is a symbol for the strong British people, and little David who fought without weapons, represents the minority of the Boers, who fought for their right - an



The rooftops of Munich stein (form 2002)



The chess stein (form 2049)

inscription on the lid says "*mein gutes Recht*" (my good right) and it shows a clenched fist. As he designed the stein, Otto Hupp might have thought that, like in the Bible, the feeble would win anyway. The opinion, maybe the hope of the artist, is reflected here. This stein is not only an excellent ceramic item, a very aesthetic one, but it carries also a political message. That is important, because it is exceptional in the Mettlach production.

Moving on from beer steins, there are two sketches by Hupp which show "Mater Felix" and "Venator" (Happy Mother and Hunter). These are the designs for two plaques with centaurs, numbers 2740 and 2741, rather dark in coloring with a combination of green and brown - a rare pair of plaques. (The Keramik Museum in Mettlach has prototypes.)

What is new in our knowledge? It is absolutely certain that Otto Hupp is the designer of the twelve occupational steins (2719-2730); the eleven book steins (2001), the plaques with the centaurs (2740-2741), the St. Florian and target steins (1786, 2717), the railroad and the postman's steins (2075, 1856), the large Munich plaque (2739), the faience number 5028, the chess stein (2049), the David and Goliath stein (2718), and at least three vases depicting the Evangelists, the Virgin Mary and Christ on the cross, with the emblem IHS for Christ.

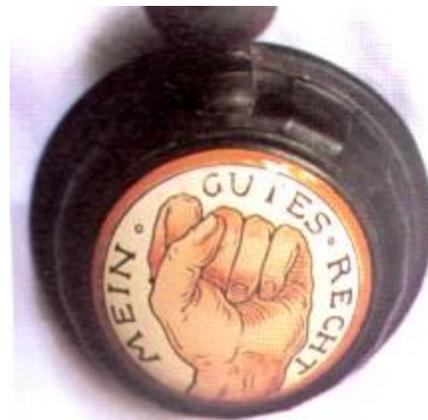
This means thirty-six items, important and very good ones, that we can say for sure Otto Hupp designed, even if they are not signed.

In addition to that, he was responsible for tableware with hunting scenes produced by Villeroy & Boch in Mettlach. With over 95% certainty, he also made the stein with the Münchner Kindl (2002), the 4F stein (2053), the heraldic plaque (2013), the music stein (2097), the Cornel stein (2871), four eagle steins (1732, 1950, 1956, 2204), and the Habsburg and Hohenzollern plaques (2187 and 2188).

I think that this discovery is really exciting, as Otto Hupp's name had never been seen in connection with steins and with Mettlach. He created excellent, sought-after ceramics that belong to the best of the Mettlach program. Hupp died in 1949 in Schleißheim, when he was eighty years old. If a design can still look modern after one hundred years, like the emblem of the Spatenbräu or like the ceramics we have commented on here, then a master was at work. Otto Hupp was a master.



The David and Goliath stein (form 2718)



Inlaid lid of the David and Goliath stein

We want to express our gratitude to Otto Hupp's grandson, who was very cooperative in providing the documents.