

~ The JWR College Series ~

by Ron Gray



The series of four steins shown above were produced by the firm of J. W. Remy of Höhr (now Höhr-Grenzhausen), in the Westerwald region of Germany. Referred to by collectors as "The College Series", they are labeled (from left to right) "FRESH'Y", "SOPH", "JUNIOR" and "SENIOR". The left and right sides scenes from these steins are seen at the left and right sides of this article, and the inlaid lids appear at the end.

Johann Wilhelm Remy started his firm in 1864 and it continued producing steins until it ceased operations in 1966. Johann passed the firm on to his two sons, August and Conrad. As the two sons never married, the firm then passed to the three sons (August, Robert and Karl) of their sister, Katharina Conrad Kessler. Robert Kessler's son Gerd wrote a book in 2000 entitled *Meine Erinnerungen an die Firma J. W. Remy* (My remembrance of the firm of J. W. Remy). Unfortunately for those of us whose language skills are limited, it is written in German, but it does contain a wealth of photos, including pages from some of the catalogs. The books I have on pottery and porcelain marks do not contain any history or marks of this firm. None of the four steins in my collection have the J. W. Remy mark, the initials "J.W.R." alone or in a rectangle.



Above, left side, "FRESH'Y"

While not "common", the College Series steins by J. W. Remy are quite well known and distinctive in their design. They have the usual characteristics found on many J. W. Remy steins: chocolate brown glaze at the top and bottom, matte finish etched body, unglazed base, trim bands and handle in pale lavender or blue.

This series was obviously designed for the U.S. market as the words are in English. The series is consecutively numbered 1393 to 1396, but not in the proper year sequence. For some reason, the JUNIOR stein starts the series and then proceeds with the FRESH'Y, SOPH and SENIOR steins. My theory is that the person assigning the mold numbers was not familiar



Above, right side, "FRESH'Y"



Above, left side, "SOPH"

with the American education system but did know that junior was generally the youngest or first born son in a family and thus assumed JUNIOR must be the first year in college.

The major stein auction catalogs list these steins as circa 1900. However, I believe they were made later than that. We know they date after 1885 since the tuxedo worn by the SENIOR was first introduced in Tuxedo, New York in 1886. The tuxedo became popular during the Great Depression as a sign of elegance. The suits on the FRESH'Y and SOPH are also more reminiscent of the styles in the 1920s or 1930s. Thus, I believe these steins were made circa 1930.



Above, right side, "SOPH"



Above, left side, "JUNIOR"

The two side panels feature buildings, presumably of a college campus. I first thought these might be actual buildings of some college in the U.S., perhaps an Ivy League school. However, the architectural style seems to be more European, particularly the buildings shown on the FRESH'Y and JUNIOR steins. Perhaps one of our keen-eyed readers will recognize these scenes and can tell us what university (or other public buildings) were used as the design theme for these steins.



Above, right side, "JUNIOR"



Above, left side, "SENIOR"

Note the inlaid lids for these steins shown below, each with the beading characteristic of the firm of J. W. Remy.



Above, right side, "SENIOR"



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