

The Rastal Collection of Historic Drinking Vessels

A concise guide to the Rastal Collection, its epochs and its trends in style.

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Rastal has created a communication centre - the Rastal Gallery - in the West German town of Höhr-Grenzhausen. In this gallery, the collection is presented in large-scale display cases. For all forms of events, facilities are available in the adjacent Rastal seminar centre. These rooms are to be found within Rastal's administration building and their design is orientated on its striking hexagonal architecture.

The basis of the Rastal collection, one of the most important and largest of its kind worldwide, encompasses several thousand examples of drinking vessels in ceramics, glass, pewter, silver, wood and other materials. In time, it spans all epochs from the time of the Roman Empire to the present day.

The "Rastal Collection of Historic Drinking Vessels" was founded and expanded by the company's co-owner, Werner Sahm-Rastal [now deceased]. Based on his intensive activities as a collector and his expert theoretical engagement with the subject, he is today an expert who has lively contact to specialists throughout the world.



A selection of some 500 items is on display, put together according to the criteria of originality, techniques, value and characteristics of areas of origin. Above all, the exhibition offers Rastal customers within the drinks industry stimulus for the manufacture of drinking vessel replicas. The much admired pieces are highly regarded as presents at company jubilees, celebrations and on many other occasions. But the collection also serves Rastal designers as a valuable mine of ideas for correct style in new creations.

This article contains several German terms which have significant historical or technical meanings, so they are defined here.

Application - Clay reliefs: either free-formed or from negative moulds attached to the vessel by means of a thin clay slip before baking.

Body - Unglazed ceramic mass after baking.

Clay glazing - Simple glazing of clay or slip in order to make ceramics imperious and to achieve a regular brown colouring.

Cutting - Working of the glass surface with rotating stone discs. The rounded surface is divided into angled sections, producing patterns with increased refraction.

Earthenware - Reduced-temperature-baked ceramic with porous body usually known as peasant pottery, made impervious by lead glazing.

Enamel painting - Painting with glass flux coloured by metal oxides on clay, glass or metal.

Engobe - A glaze coating on ceramic vessels consisting of a clay slip applied either by dipping, sprinkling or by means of a brush. (This term is also used as a verb.)

Engraving - By means of small rotating copper discs of various dimensions down to the size of a pinhead, matt ornamental designs or pictures are engraved into the surface of the glass.

Fience - A porous ceramic baked at temperatures up to around 1,200C degrees, made impervious by opaque white tin glazing.

Forest glass - Made in the areas of widely-forested, medium altitude mountains, has a greenish or brownish tone produced by the iron contained in the sand used.

Humpen - Cylindrical or slightly bellied drinking vessel, the base having almost the same diameter as the rim.

Jug - Vessel designed for pouring liquids, with spout, nozzle or beak.

Knibis Decoration - Zig-zag patterns made with a wide, flat wooden stick in a rocking, see-sawing motion, impressed in the unbaked ceramic body.

Krautstrunk (cabbage stalk) - Medieval drinking vessel, its form and the applied burls having similarity to a cabbage stalk without leaves.

Layered or flashed glass - is made by a glass blower, working at the furnace. One or more layers of different coloured glass are added to an initial piece [gather] before being blown as one.

Opal or milk glass - White, non-transparent glass made by adding bone ash or stannic oxide to the mass.

Oxidizing baking - A baking technique producing stoneware with a brown surface. The feeding of oxygen combined with high temperature causes oxydization of the iron content of the stoneware surface.

Passglas - Stemmed glasses with applied horizontal glass rings. During the 16th and 17th centuries these glasses were specially popular for drinking games. The rings act as markings for the drinker, who according to calls had to drink a specified quantity of liquid determined by a level set between two rings.

Peacock-eye decor - Decoration technique with which the colour is applied with a small sponge. Best known on Bunzlau stoneware, the technique is also used in Faience manufacture.

Pinte - Narrow, conical jug similar to the Schnelle but smaller.

Pulle (dialect: bottle) The Pulle was manufactured during the 16th century, predominantly in Siegburg. It embodies both jug and bottle forms. The vessel has rounded body with a flat base and a short high-lipped narrow neck.

Red (scored)-decoration - This design is made by scoring with pointed wooden sticks often combined with cobalt or manganese coloring.

Reduction baking (firing) - Baking technique producing grey or white stoneware. After salting and at the highest temperature the furnace-oxygen feed is stopped.

Salt glazing - Glassy coating on stoneware. At the highest temperature, salt is shovelled into the furnace, sodium oxide combines with the ceramic silicates in the body.

Schnelle - High, conical jug. Although characteristic of Siegburg, also manufactured in other Rhenish stoneware centres (except Westerwald) Origin of the name is unknown.

Sintering - Vitrification of ceramic during baking in the furnace. Stoneware sinters at c. 1,250C degrees, the ceramic thus becoming impervious to water.

Smalt - Clay slip with high flux content and cobalt or manganese used as under-glazing colouring matter.

Staining - Substances containing metal oxides, applied to glass surfaces by means of a brush in chiefly yellow and red tones. The stains are stoved at temperature of 600-650C degrees and can afterwards be cut or engraved. Silver compounds produce yellow, copper compounds red tones.

Stoneware - Ceramic products with hard fired body, impervious to water when unglazed, cannot be scored or cut with steel, acid-proof baked at 1200 to 1300C degrees.

WESTERWALD STONEWARE

The pot bakers region (Kannenbäckerland) with the town of Höhr-Grenzhausen at its centre, lies in the southwest of the Westerwald. It is almost certain that the manufacture of ceramic wares was carried out here even in pre and early historic times. Stoneware of high standard craftsmanship was produced toward the end of the 16th century as the local



craft blossomed under the influence of immigrant potters.

Left to right: Beer tankard, early 20th C.; Small jug, early 17th C.; Pilgrim bottle, dated 1665; Teapot, 2nd half 18th C.



Spouted jug, dated 1594
Late Renaissance
(End 16th/Early 17th C.)

This time marks the beginning of a period of excellent stoneware craftsmanship. Characteristics of style are the salt-glazing of the ceramic with cobalt-blue painted decoration and precise vertical patterning on the vessels. Friezes of human figures are the most common decoration.



Narrow-necked jug, dtd. 1680
Baroque
(Mid-17th/Early 18th C.)

Vessels were thrown on the wheel in one operation, resulting in forms appropriate to the material. New forms are round, pot-bellied and pear-shaped jugs. In addition to cobalt blue the new color manganese violet emerges. Decoration consists of smaller applied elements often scattered on the walls of the vessels.



Beer tankard, lid dated 1737
Late Baroque/ Transitional
(mid-18th/ Early 19th C.)

Ornamentation on the vessels is now in the more popular style. Applied decoration becomes rarer, score and "Knibis" patterning come into the forefront. Toward the end of the 18th century the quality of craftsmanship declines.



Beer boot, late 19th C.
Historicism
(Mid-Late 19th C.)

Growing nationalism awakes interest in "national" styles. The tendency is toward historical forms and ornaments, vessels are made as replicas of former examples or are designed in the style of past epochs, for example, the Renaissance. New techniques make exactness of execution and higher quantities possible.



Pot-bellied jug, c. 1900
Art Nouveau
(Early 20th C.)

The Art Nouveau was the artist to overload historicism. Inspired by Japanese ornamentation trend is toward ornamentation on forms of new types of glazes carried out. Some famous design example, Riemerschmidt, Behrens, Wynand.

RHENISH STONEWARE CENTRES

Left to right:

Raeren, beer tankard, 2nd half 16th C.

Siegburg, peasant dance jug, dated 1589

Frechen, bearded-man jug, early 17th C.

Cologne, bearded-man jug, mid 16th C.



"Schnelle" dated 1591

Siegburg

Potter craftsmanship blossomed in the 16th century. Characteristics are the white to yellow ceramic body and the artistic applied decoration. Preferred vessel forms were "Schnellen," bottles and jugs. In the late 16th century, members of the leading family of potters, the Knütgensw, emigrated to the Westerwald.



Bearded-man jug, mid-16th C.

Cologne

Cologne is believed to be the first centre where salt glazing was carried out on a regular basis. In the early 16th century the Cologne pot bakers were trend-setters. Typical forms: "Pinten," "Schnellen" and bellied tankards, with brown engobe and applied decoration. A bearded face applied to the neck of many bellied vessels gave these their name bearded-man jugs. Around the middle of the 16th century the pot bakers were forced to leave the city.



Bearded-man jug, early 17th C.

Frechen

Frechen products are often difficult to distinguish from those of Cologne as many pot bakers who were forced to leave that city settled here. Favoured vessel forms were very large bellied-jugs decorated with bearded masks on the necks and with applied coats of arms.



Pilgrim bottle, early 17th C.

Raeren

Raeren lies close to Frechen but today belongs to Belgium. Stoneware blossomed in the second half of the 16th century, testified by examples from Cologne and Siegburg. Initially produced with a brown surface. In the second half of the 16th century refinement of the baking was perfect through which the glaze remained grey. As a result the Raeren potters' application of pictures created by outstanding artistic potters. At the end of the 16th century many

CENTRAL AND EASTERN GERMAN STONEWARE CENTRES

Left to right:

Waldenburg, beer tankard, dated 1879

Annaberg, screw-top bottle, 2nd half 17th C.

Muskau, pear-shaped jug, lid dated 1699

Bunzlau, small milk jug, 2nd half 18th C.

Altenburg, beer tankard, c. 1630/40



Apart from the Rhenish centres, excellent stoneware was produced very early on in locations in Saxony/Thuringia, in Lusatia and Silesia. In particular Waldenburg, whose potters' guild foundation charter dated 1388 still exists, deserves a similarly high placing to that which Siegburg in Western Germany enjoyed. The development of stoneware in central and eastern Germany took place largely independently. The quality of craftsmanship is equal to that of the Rhenish masters.



Pearl jug, dated 1711

Altenburg

This town lies south of Leipzig, production of stoneware began around 1625. Of the diverse stoneware products, the cylindrical jugs are of particular interest, their decoration giving them the name "pearl-tankards." The



Pear-shaped jug, c. 1680

Annaberg

Annaberg, situated south of Karl-Marx-Stadt (Chemnitz) is better known as a mining town. Manufacture of the blackish brown engobed ware began in the early 17th century. As many of these tankards and jugs were colourfully enamelled,



Spouted jug, 2nd half 18th C

Bürgel/Zeitz

Bürgel and Zeitz are two Thuringian pottery centres whose products are difficult to distinguish from each other. Spouted jugs are common. Colouring of the stoneware can be compared to that of the Westerwald products. The blue tone

ornamentation, often with folk art motifs, is made up of small applied pearl-like shapes formed from a clay mixture which burns out white.

they are often mistaken for Creussen stoneware. Typical are applied friezed of C-arches and finials which encircle the neck or base zone, as well as palmette application on the pear-shaped jugs.

was however achieved I cobalt smalt being throw onto the ware during baking, whereby the characteristic running-colour effect arose.



*Egg-shaped jug, c. 1660/70
Freiburg*

As far as is known, stoneware was manufactured only during the 17th century in this Erzgebirge city. In the first half of the century mainly blackish brown engobed pieces were produced, whereas grey stoneware with fine network patterns painted with enamel colours and gilded, became characteristic for Freiberg in the second half.



*Beehive jug (tankard), 17th C.
Waldenburg*

Waldenburg is the oldest stoneware pottery centre in central Germany. A rich variety of forms developed. Characteristic in the 16th/17th centuries was the beehive jug decorated by means of roller dies and with excellently executed applied religious motifs or coats of arms. In the 17th century, the brown colour of the stoneware was produced by oxydizing baking of the salt-glazed ceramic body.



*Melon-shaped jug, lid dated 1705
Bunzlau*

In this lower Silesian town, now a part of Poland, pottery craftsmanship has a centuries-old tradition. As the clay did not frit at high temperatures the result was a brown glazing occasionally tinged green or blue. Typical were melon and pear-shaped jugs, the latter often with white applied decoration. In the 2nd half of the 19th century the "peacock-eye" decor emerged, which is still popular today as a decoration on Bunzlau ceramics.



*Pear-shaped jug, c. 1660/70
Muskau*

In the home town of Pir Pückler in Upper Lusatia the Neisse, pottery workshops were established in very early times. Predominating vessel forms are egg or pear-shaped jugs, spout jugs and screw-top bottles. There was an extremely rich range of decoration. Almost all vessels are characterised by slanting vertical groove patterns on their lower halves.

OTHER STONWARE CENTRES

Creussen

This pottery centre has been renowned since the early 17th century. Its stoneware products always have a brown surface roughed about by baking with pine-wood and are glazed with a black salt. Decoration with applied reliefs was common right from the start. These splendid vessels, painted by former glass stainers in bright enamel colours, were much sought after. The enamel-painted tankards with applied apostle figures or planetary allegories are among the splendours of stoneware.

At right: - Apostle tankard, lid dated 1662



Ringed jug, lid dated 1705
Dreihausen
 Here in Hesse, close to the city of Marburg, stoneware has been produced since the 15th century. Characteristic is the reddish to violet brown half-matt surface finish of the vessels, achieved by means of a ferri-ferrous engobe. A typical form is the high-shouldered pear-shaped jug which is sparsely decorated with

Beer tankard, lid dated 1751
Duingen
 There is proof that stoneware manufacture has taken place in this Lower Saxony location close to Alfeld, since the 15th century. In the main, cylindrical jugs with two areas of grooves were produced, some were engobed entirely brown or had yellow patterning on their upper surfaces. In the middle zone, a

Beer tankard, 1902
Mettlach
 In the "faiencery" founded by Jean-Francois Boch in 1809 stoneware has been produced since 1843. The most important development in decor was chromo-lithography, a colour-printing process introduced in 1859. Blackened grooves, optically emphasizing the drawing, separate

Beer tankard, early 20th C.
Saargemünd
 The Lorraine town of Sarreguemines has a rich tradition in ceramics. A specialty are the stoneware vessels from around 1900, whose grey ceramic is stained blue at the edges. Beer tankards often bear scenes in relief on the body as well as handles in animal forms. As well the characteristic blue

Beer jug, 1st C.
Doulton/Er
 Typical of the ceramic work of London since the 18th century is the beige bodied stoneware, surface engobed brown. The vessels are with small reliefs.

patterns made by roller dies and sometimes with rings attached by loops. few have narrow, encircling applied decoration.

evenly coloured areas. tone they are sometimes colour painted or gilded. Scenes with rich contents, landscapes, etc. could be decoratively achieved. This technique contributed greatly to the high popularity of

PORCELAIN AND FAIENCE

Left to right:

Faience tankard, Hannoversch-Münden, early 19th C.

Porcelain tankard, Dresden, late 19th C.

Porcelain tankard, Plau, late 19th C.

Faience wine jug, lower Austria, 18th C.



Porcelain

The European method of manufacturing hard-glazed porcelain was created by Johann Friedrich Böttger and Walter Ehrenfried von Tschirnhaus in Meissen in 1708/9. Porcelain is a ceramic produced from kaolin (china clay) and feldspar with other additives. The mass frits while baking and becomes absolutely impermeable. In the 18th century the whiteness of porcelain was considered a criterion for pureness and excellence. This greatly increased the brilliance of its coloured painted decoration. In the 19th century the white area was predominately used as a background for full decoration or complete colour glazing.



Beer tankard, Meissen, 2nd half 18th C.

Faience

Faience is earthenware with a porous unglazed body coated with an impermeable opaque stannic oxide glaze. The earliest Faience pieces were made in Persia around 500 B.C. The manufacturing technique accompanied the Islamic culture to Moorish Spain. Then after moving via Majorca to Italy and in the 16th century into Northern Europe, it was given the name Faience, after the Italian town of Faenza. In Germany, more than 80 Faience factories were founded in the 17th and 18th centuries, the earliest in Frankfurt and Hanau.

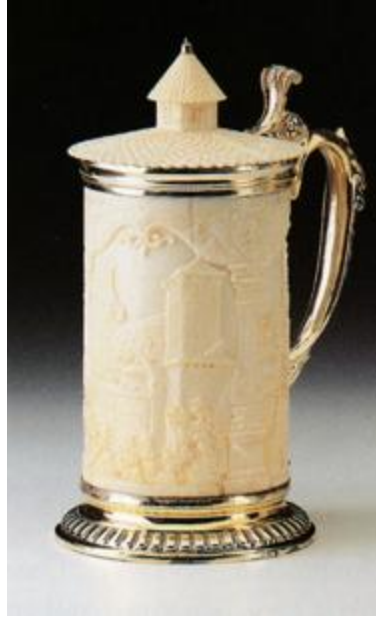


Narrow-necked jug, Bayreuth, mid 18th C.

SILVER, IVORY AND PEWTER



Coin Tankard, Berlin, 1888



Beer tankard, southern German, 19th C.



Guild tankard, Sagan, dated 1697

Silver

Silver has been regarded as a precious metal since time immemorial. It becomes hard enough to be worked when alloyed with a non-precious metal. In cold working the desired form in silver plate is achieved by hammering; in hot working by casting. Decoration techniques are chasing, punching and surface embossing. Silver pieces were often gilded. A form of decoration found principally in Northern Germany was the application of coins to the body of the vessel.

Ivory

The tusk of the elephant is one of man's oldest craft materials. Ivory is relatively easy to work, it has the qualities both of hardness and elasticity. It can be sawn, cut, carved and turned. The surfaces of ivory objects receive their silky sheen by being polished with wood ash and nut oil. Ivory vessels were often decorated with silver fittings.

Pewter

Tin, the main component of pewter, was highly valued as early as pre-historic times. Alloyed with copper, it gave an entire Epoch its name: The Bronze Age. 100% pure tin is not suitable for working, as it is too brittle. According to the contents of the alloy, one speaks of refined pewter (alloyed with brass, copper and bismuth), assayed pewter (tin to lead c. 10:1) and lower grade pewter (tin to lead less than 6:1). Pewter is almost exclusively produced by casting.

OTHER MATERIALS



Coconut goblet, probably southern Germany, c. 1600



Serpentine tankard, Saxony, 17th C.



Wooden tankard, Scandinavia, 18th C.

Particularly in the middle ages, wooden drinking vessels in the form of coopered, turned and carved beakers and jugs were highly popular. Up to recent times, artistically attractive wooden drinking vessels were still made in widely forested regions like Scandinavia. Serpentine stone used to be quarried in West Saxony. This material could be turned and carved. It was highly regarded, in particular in the 18th century—probably because of its similarity to marble.

Vessels fashioned from vegetal materials, for example coconut shells, were in great demand as showpieces and ornaments for noble tables, the nut being finely decorated with silver fittings but the shell often being left

RESERVIST ARTICLES

The majority of the so-called reservist tankards date from the turn of the century. On release from the Imperial German Army, almost every soldier ordered a tankard—usually porcelain—as a memento of his service days. These tankards are decorated with colourfully painted manoeuvre scenes, portraits, or writing. The vessels are crowned with richly formed pewter lids, often with a decoration referring to the unit in which the soldier had served. As well as tankards there were also reservist pipes, cups and plates.

Right: Tankard - Reservist Heinze, southern Germany



Left to
right:

Flask,
probably
Syria, 2/3
C. A.D.



"Krautstrunk" Germany, 15th C.

Lidded goblet, Warmbrunn, c. 1750/60.

Opal glass tankard, probably Austria, c. 1800

Roman glass

The Romans learned the art of glass making in the Near East. After the invention of the glassmakers' blowpipe in the 1st century B.C., glassware manufacture flourished during the time of the Roman Empire. Apart from Syria, Roman Cologne was an important glass manufacturing centre.

The cloudiness and iridescent effects in ancient glasses are due to chemical changes which have occurred during the long time the glass has been buried.

Forest glass 16/17th C.

Works producing large quantities of glassware became common again only in the late middle ages. Apart from the various types of sand used as raw material, the forest glass works were primarily dependent on wood for the production of potash and as fuel. When the forest surrounding the site had been used up, the works were removed to another location. One of the most interesting developments in this period was the "Krautstrunk" (cabbage stalk), the forerunner of the so-called "Roman" (hock glass), today's most common wine glass.

Baroque glass

Somewhat simplified, the Baroque period (17/18th C.) can be described as the period of engraved glass. Bohemia produced a pure thick-walled glass with a hardness particularly suitable for engraving. Initially Nuremberg and Bohemia were leaders in this technique, but in the 18th century Silesia in particular set the artistic standards.

Popular glass

Early German glasses—from the first half of the 16th century—bear motifs from the picturesque world of folk art. In bright enamel colours, scenes of family-life, love and erotica are depicted as well as subjects from the animal and plant world. Greetings and wishes accompanied by appropriate symbols are also to be found.

Left to right:

Beaker, northern Bohemia, c. 1840/50

Spirits goblet, north Germany, dated 1782

Bridal cup, Petersdorf, c. 1890

Wine glass, Cologne-Ehrenfeld, early 20th C.



Biedermeier glass

In the first half of the 19th

New glass forms Historicist glass

Toward the end of In the 2nd half of the

Art Nouveau glass

Around 1900, new, fresh

century the craft of glassmaking reached an absolute high point. This was above all due to the dedications of the Bohemian glass works and artists. Biedermeier cut-glasses are still regarded as admirable examples of the artistic art of glass cutting. The cut and form of the glass influence each other. But the standard of engraving and glass painting was also high. Thanks to the experimental enthusiasm of the numerous Bohemian glassworks, a great variety of coloured glasses was also produced. Since then there has never been such a rich and various range of colours in glassworks.

the 18th century the small, mostly weighty and somewhat crudely formed spirits glass came into use. Its form derives from the goblet, having usually a conical cup on a massive stem and heavy base plate. Small goblets continued to be used for spirits and liquors.

19th century, designers - also those of glassware - returned to the styles of past epochs. This was a time of advancing industrialization, oriented principally toward mass production, which hindered development of a specific independent style. Designers fell back on classical examples in an attempt to arrive at a contemporary style. In this way, in addition to pure reproductions, a wealth of glassware of high artistic craftsmanship was created which is the equal of that of earlier epochs.

and unique forms of expression were sought in the applied arts. It was no longer sufficient simply to refer to historic forms. Inspired by the colours and wealth of Asian forms, glass vessels with strikingly rich decoration and a wide variety of colours were produced. Exemplary are the works of Louis Comfort Tiffany and Emile Gallé. But also the more practical, everyday drinking vessels from glassworks of the Bavarian forests or the Rhineland with their pleasing forms and lightness are still attractive today.