

STEIN COLLECTORS INTERNATIONAL

PROSIT



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The Beer Stein Magazine

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My "Hard Rock" Stein A Bituminous Milestone

By Mark Rossmann



A Story on a Stein William Tell

By Ron Hartmann



An Introduction to Guild Pieces

By Eric Salzano



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By Dr. Roy DeSelms

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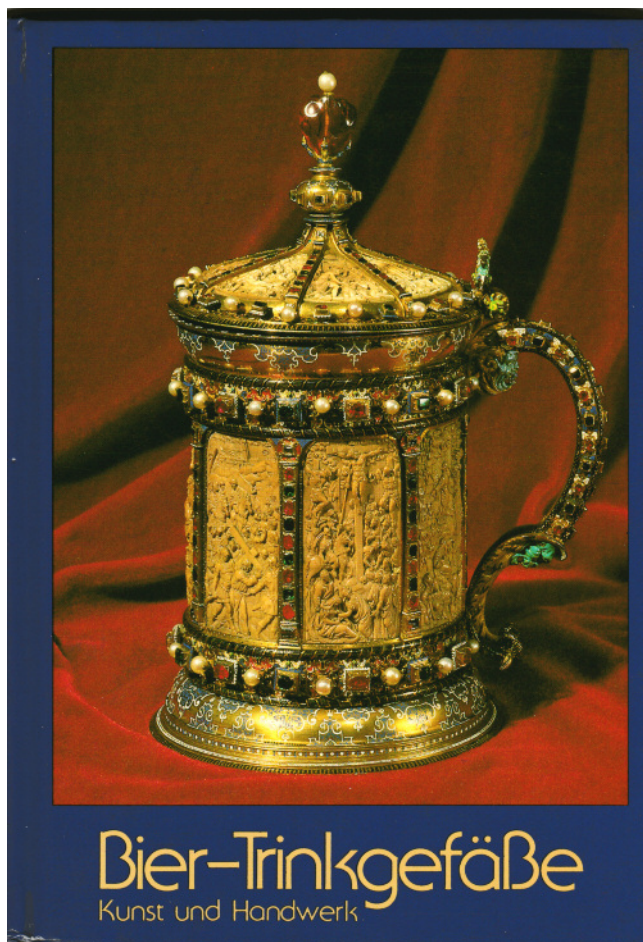
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A small volume with very fine illustrations. The stein on the cover is described (in English) as "Tankard with lid - Duke Albrecht V of Bavaria; Gold, partially melted, ornamented with diamonds, emeralds, pearls and cut whalebone-plates. Motif: Relief representation from the life and Passion of Christ. Master-Workshop Hans Reiner. Munich 1572. Height: 268 mm.

Bier-Trinkgefäße, Limpert-Verlag Bad Hamburg, 1978. German/ English/ French descriptions.

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Mettlach at the AMOCA Museum — Part 1 - A Brief History of 19th C Germany

By Dr. Roy C. De Selms, SCI Master Steinologist

This is the first in a series of articles that will describe 19th Century German history, culture and folklore and VBM artists, styles and techniques using items from the Wilson Mettlach Collection at the American Museum of Ceramic Art (AMOCA) in Pomona, CA.

History of Germania thru the Kaiserzeit (time of the Kaisers)

By the first century BCE, the Roman Legions had reached a land in the far North they later called *Germania*, a land which is roughly equivalent to modern day Germany. Here, according to the Roman historian Tacitus, the Romans encountered wild tribes he referred to as *Bärenhäuter* because they were clothed in bear skins and drinking a potion called *Bier*, the precursor to modern beer (Figure 1). Of course the Romans wanted to try this strange brew and eventually liked it enough to coin the Latin phrase "*Pro sit*" (for your well being or health), still used today as a toast in modern Germany as *Prosit!* or shortened to *Prost!*.

The story continues with the Romans bringing wine to *Germania*, but the old Germans resisted in both battle and drink. The verse on this next stein (Figure 2) tells the story.

*Italiens Wein so süß und fein,
brach doch der Römer morsch Gebein.
Im Bier jedoch und Rettichsaft
steckt ewig deutsche Kraft.*

Italy's wine, so sweet and pure,
broke the Romans' brittle bones.
However, in beer and radish juice
lies the eternal German strength.

Whatever the reason, it took almost two thousand years for the Germans to finally get free of Roman dominance. The preferred choice of alcoholic drink in each land remains as distinct today

as it ever was—while both beverages are enjoyed world over, at no place around the globe are they so deeply embedded in national culture.

The Roman Centurions who brought the grapevines to the banks of the Rhine River also brought the Roman Catholic Cistercian Monks in white robes with black tunics, and they brought life to the wine with their wine presses. The Cistercians were established at *Kloster Eberbach* (Eberbach Abbey) in 1136 A.D. on the eastern shore of the Rhine in the *Rheingau* (region of the Rhine across the river from Alsace-Lorraine). They are famous for their Johannesburg Riesling wine. In Figure 3 a Cistercian shares a beaker of wine with two Roman Centurions. The verse on this stein reads:



Figure 1 - 0.5L VBM #2100



Figure 2 - VBM #2095





Figure 3 - VBM #2122

bows until by the 16th century they were outfitted with rifles. These shooting clubs, which became known as *Schützenvereine* (marksmen's clubs), evolved from their original quasi-military purpose into sporting and social organizations. Early club competitions were festive one-shot matches fired at elaborately painted wooden targets. The festivals were a time of celebration, civic pride and family entertainment. While the serious competitors likely abstained until after they competed, there was also lots of beer to be consumed.

The inspiration for the *Schützenliesel* shown in Figure 4 was a waitress at German shooting matches (*Schützenfeste*) who rapidly became a symbol of those popular contests. This depiction of the *Schützenliesel* is similar to an 1881 painting by Friedrich von Kaulbach, showing a waitress at Munich's *Sterneckerbräu* brewery in a *Dirndl* (Bavarian dress) with a target-shaped hat and her hands full of overflowing beer steins.

Today Germany has over 15,000 active *Schützenvereine*, most of which are affiliated with the *Deutscher Schützenbund* (German Marksmen's Federation) which was founded in 1861. This aspect of German culture also came to the U.S. with German immigrants; many *Schützen Parks* were established in the 19th C. and some still exist in US cities.

*Kreuzfahrer brachten
an des Rheines Strand
den Rebenstock aus heil'gen Land.
Des Weines in lieblicher Pracht
Kelter hat sie an's Licht gebracht.*

Crusaders brought
to the banks of the Rhine
the grapevines from the holy land,
The wine in lovely splendor
the winepress brought to light.

While it's obvious from the first three steins that the old Germans actually had steins to drink beer with, it's not so obvious that Romans had drinking vessels for their wine called *Römer* named after themselves (Figure ?).

In late medieval times volunteer militias were formed as a means of defending the local citizenry. The nature of these organizations fostered challenges and competitions involving skill and marksmanship, and shooting clubs were born. The weapons used by these clubs changed over time from cross-



Figure 4 - VBM #2235

Just after the French Revolution and Napoleon's march across Germany to Russia, there was a movement in Germany to begin to strengthen the population and get ready for the unification. One element was the formation of the *Turnvereine* (gymnastic clubs) by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (AKA *Turnvater Jahn* or affectionately just *Vater Jahn*). The Turners developed gymnastic equipment that is still used today and Turners came to the USA early on and are still active here and in Germany. The salutation of the Turners is "*Gut Heil!*" meaning "Good Health!" The Turner motto, symbolized by four F's in the form of a cross, is "*Frisch, Fromm, Fröhlich und Frei*" meaning "Fresh, Pious, Happy and Free."

Mettlach stein #1914 (Figure 5) shows a Turner holding a dumbbell with parallel bars and a high bar in the background. The inlaid lid displays the 4F symbol, and the side scenes salute the Turners (*Gut Heil!*) with a verse:



Figure 5 - VBM #1914



*Lasst Kraft uns erwerben
mit Herz und mit Hand
zu leben und zu sterben
für's heilige Vaterland.*

Let's strive for strength
with heart and with hand
to live and to die
for the holy fatherland.



Figure 6 - VBM #1998

The stein seen in Figure 6 portrays the title character from Josef Viktor von Scheffel's 1853 love story "*Der Trompeter von Säckingen*" (The Trumpeter of Säckingen). This has long been a favorite tale in Germany as evidenced by the large number and variety of beer steins bearing scenes and verses from this poem, including at least three different VBM versions. This was Bob Wilson's first Mettlach stein. The most common version of the story is of a mail carrier named Werner who comes to a castle and blows his horn for entry. This happens often enough for the postman and the daughter of the castle owner named Margaretha to fall in love, but in the end the pair cannot be married due to their class differences.

The wistful refrain of the poem reflects the sentiments of all thwarted lovers:

*Behüt dich Gott,
es wär so schön gewesen.*

May God watch over you,
it could have been so beautiful.

The plaintive story of the Trumpeter is reflective of the 1848 Social Revolution that was squelched by the German Aristocracy. Many Germans left the country at that time to settle in the central U.S. and were called "the 48er's." Some of my German ancestors came to California sailing around Cape Horn at the same time and were called the 49er's on account of the Gold Rush.

The failure of the Central European Uprising of 1848 flamed the still smoldering embers of the sentiment to get away from the Holy Roman Empire, the Habsburgs and especially France. Much art and several monuments were dedicated to the image of *Germania* sometimes accompanied by the patriotic poem *Die Wacht am Rhein* (the Watch on the Rhine).

Die Wacht am Rhein

*Es braust ein Ruf wie Donnerhall,
wie Schwertgeklirr und Wogenprall:
Zum Rhein, zum Rhein, zum
deutschen Rhein,
wer will des Stromes Hüter sein?*

*Durch Hunderttausend zuckt es
schnell,
und aller Augen blitzen hell;
der Deutsche, bieder, fromm und
stark,[N 1]
beschützt die heil'ge Landesmark.*

(chorus)
*Lieb Vaterland, magst ruhig sein,
lieb Vaterland, magst ruhig sein,
Fest steht und treu die Wacht, die
Wacht am Rhein!
Fest steht und treu die Wacht, die
Wacht am Rhein!*

The cry resounds like thunder's peal,
Like crashing waves and clang of steel:
The Rhine, the Rhine, our German Rhine,
Who will defend our stream, divine?

They stand, a hundred thousand strong,
Quick to avenge their country's wrong,
With filial love their bosoms swell
They shall guard the sacred landmark well.

(refrain)

Dear fatherland, no fear be thine,
dear fatherland, no fear be thine,
Firm stands the Watch along, along the Rhine!
Firm stands the Watch along, along the Rhine!

The early version of VBM stein #6 designed by Ludwig Foltz II actually anticipates subsequent events in the history of Germany because it has been dated to 1844 and shows the double-headed eagle of the Holy Roman Empire. Later versions of this stein show the *Reichsadler* (Imperial Eagle) with only one head appearing after the 1871 unification (Figure 7).

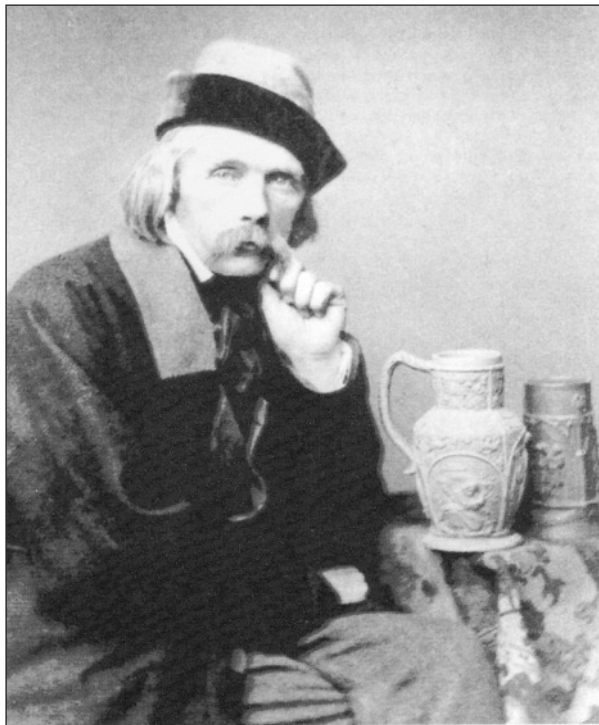


Fig. 7 - Photo of Ludwig Foltz II, Premiere Designer of VBM Steins, in Munich ca. 1850 with his designed stein #6 and Cologne Cathedral Beaker both made by VBM. The early version of this stein, dated to 1844, appears at left. Note the double-headed eagle signifying the Holy Roman Empire on the shield. The later more colorful version is shown to the right. Following the unification of Germany in 1871 the shield now shows the single-headed *Reichsadler*.

The “Deutscher Krieg” (German War), also called the “Austro-Prussian War” of 1866, was between the Kingdom of Prussia in the north of Germany along with allies including Italy, and Austria including remnants of the Holy Roman Empire. The combatants in this war are represented in the plaques seen in Figure 8. The Prussian side is represented by the House of Hohenzollern; the Austrian side by the House of Habsburg. The successful Prussians took control of most of what is now Germany. Austria was split off and together with Hungary and some others became the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Field Marshall Helmuth von Moltke was the military leader of both the 1866 Austro-Prussian War and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871 which united Germany and defeated France. Otto von Bismarck, as Minister President of Prussia, was also instrumental in both of these wars and in 1871 became *Reichskanzler* (Chancellor of the German Empire) under Kaiser Wilhelm I, but later fell out of favor with Kaiser Wilhelm II.

At the time of German unification in 1871 King Wilhelm I, King of Prussia from the House of Hohenzollern, was given the title of Kaiser. *Kaiser* is the cognate of the Roman “Cæsar” and Russian “Czar” and means “Emperor” which is different from *König* meaning “King”. Following the death of Kaiser Wilhelm I in 1888 his son Friedrich III became Kaiser, but died a scant 90 days later, most likely due to cancer of the larynx. His son, Wilhelm II, became the third Kaiser, and he ruled the German Empire until 1918 when he was forced to abdicate at the end of WW I. The period from 1871 to 1918 has come to be known as the *Deutsches Kaiserzeit* (time of the German Emperors, or Kaisers) and 1888 as *DreiKaiserjahr* (Year of the three Kaisers).

The three Kaisers, Wilhelm I, Friedrich III and Wilhelm II, appear on three different VBM #1861 steins and all three appear together on a fourth stein, #1890.



Figure 8 - VBM plaques
Left, #2188 - House of Hapsburg
Right, #2187 - House of Hohenzollern



Figure 9 - VBM plaques
Left, #2142 - Bismarck
Right, #2143 - von Moltke



Figure 10 - The three Kaisers - VBM #1861
Wilhelm I, Friedrich III, Wilhelm II

The political and administrative unification of 1871 consolidated four Kingdoms, six Grand Duchies, five Duchies, seven Principalities and three Free and Hanseatic Cities under Wilhelm I, the first Kaiser and King of Prussia. VBM plaque #2013 provides a representation of the newly formed empire through the use of the various civic arms. The arms of fourteen cities appear around the rim, while twenty coats of arms are laid atop the arms of the new German Reich, with the arms of Prussia in prominent position at the center.

As the executive of the German Empire, the Kaiser appointed the federal chancellor. The chancellor was accountable solely to, and served entirely at the discretion of, the Emperor. Officially, the chancellor functioned as a one-man cabinet and was responsible for the conduct of all state affairs. Otto von Bismarck (1815-98), was known as the “Iron Chancellor” and is generally acknowledged as the prime mover in unifying the German states under a single ruler (Wilhelm I) and in the rise of Germany as a great European power.

Bismarck (Figure 12) passed in 1898 and Wilhelm II brought Germany into the 20th Century. Wilhelm II (Fig. 13) committed Germany to aid Austria through WW I and was forced to abdicate after defeat in 1918.



Figure 12 - VBM #1794
Otto von Bismarck

Figure 11
VBM #2013



Figure 13 - VBM #1909/1350 and #1909/1351
Kaiser Wilhelm II and Kaiserin Augusta Victoria