



Old Bovey pottery seated Toby.



Nice example of an advertising whisky water jug approx. £80-£100.



Variety of Royal Doulton character jugs large and small.



Graduated set of T G Green Cornishware milk jugs.



Selection of Burleigh ware jugs.



Two 1940s Ray Finch (impressed seal) Winchcombe pottery jugs. £40-£60 each.



Selection of various Torquay ware including Aller Vale and Watcombe jugs. Larger jugs with iznik style design £60-£80.

Survey and Price Guide to Jugs through the ages

by Judith Clarke

Jug - a vessel with a handle and a spout or lip for pouring liquid - origin unknown. Though the origin of the word may be lost for ever jugs themselves date back to the beginning of civilisation and sophisticated examples from this period and classical times sometimes have faces or masks on them as decoration. Jugs come in all shapes and sizes and have been fashioned out of pottery, porcelain, copper, brass, bronze, glass, enamel and silver (ale and cream jugs for example). On the pottery scene the collector is spoilt for choice. At the top of the pile would be very early salt glaze Staffordshire owl jugs which can be worth tens of thousands of pounds in good condition. The value here lies mainly in the shape but other very early examples of salt glaze jug, say 1760-1800 can command prices over the £1,000 mark, as can early Toby jugs.

The term 'toby jug' is believed to originate from a poem of 1761 which celebrated the life of a jovial character called Toby Fillpot. The original mezzotint print accompanying the ballad shows a very well rounded figure wearing a tri-corn black hat. He's holding a china clay pipe in one hand and a large foaming brown jug of Mild Ale in the other. A jocund grin of satisfaction stretched across his rather red face. The finest quality early Toby jugs are attributed to the maker Ralph Wood but ceramic history is somewhat clouded here as to who made the first jugs and at what particular date. Many are not marked and are classified as 'in the style of', according to the types of glazes used, colour of the pottery body, characteristics of the actual figure, etc. Early Toby Jugs are very desirable and were specifically made to be used as drinking vessels. The most sought after Toby jugs date from the 1770s through to the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign, not only because of their age but because they were finely handcrafted and individually made. Generally speaking a Toby jug shows the whole figure as opposed to the head and shoulder portraits known as character jugs. Charles Noke, Chief Designer at Royal Doulton, came up with the idea of reviving the old tradition of Toby Jugs in the early 1930s and production soon moved on to what we now know as the famous Doulton character jugs. This huge and specialist market reached a price peak around the late 1980s but prices remain very competitive for special limited editions, early and rare jugs.

A prototype character jug, made in 1969 and from Doulton's own reserve collection, known as the Pilgrim Father sold for £10,000 in 2001, even though this sum was deemed 'disappointing' by the auctioneers. Outside of prototypes a Maori character jug made in very small numbers in 1939 sold for £19,000 in 1998. Famous Doulton character jug designers include Harry Fenton, Max Henk and Charles Noke and the characters depicted range from the highly traditional such as John Peel, Robin Hood, Royalty, Gulliver, Cockney characters and Father Xmas to The Beatles and the Arsenal Supporter. Unique colour ways aside, anywhere between £50-£100 is a usual price for the more common character jugs. Doulton also made a huge variety of more conventional jugs in a variety of different finishes and Series and these are equally popular with collectors. Also sought after are a limited edition series of 'caricature' jugs made by the firm of Wilkinson after designs by the political cartoonist Sir Francis Carruthers Gould. They feature First World War figures including Admiral Jellicoe, US President Woodrow Wilson, Lloyd George and Field Marshal Joffre. Prices are generally around £300-£400 for each figure but a model of Admiral David Beatty recently sold for £820. The Barnstaple based Brannam Pottery also used Gould's designs for some of their character jugs.

Moving momentarily away from ceramics glass also features strongly in the manufacture of jugs with Nailsea decorated examples from the early 1800s being prime collectors' pieces. Cranberry glass jugs are very attractive and make fine decorative objects as do W.M.F., silver or other metal mounted glass claret jugs. These are generally between £200-£400 for an original example. Other types of glass jugs to be found include Bagley glass, Vaseline, Cloud Glass from between the two world wars, cut glass, engraved, Mary Gregory style and Stourbridge. Commemorative Ware is a very popular collecting field and the design and function of the jug

is well suited to the purpose of bringing social, historical, religious and political messages into the home. The most popular subject is Royalty but often commanding higher prices are commemorative jugs bearing more obscure and unusual messages. A rare pearlware jug of bold design celebrating an 1807 election in Yorkshire sold recently for just over £2,000.

Another area of collecting that relies heavily on the jug is breweriana. Glass water jugs advertising such products as whisky can be worth £150-£200 and an example of a Mitchells Old Irish Whisky Sarreguemines character jug recently sold for £300. Wade is strongly associated with this market, they made hundreds of pub jugs promoting various breweries, drinks companies and tobacco brands. Though prices are currently not so keen for Wade, other well known makers in this field include Doulton, Shelley, T.G. Green, Beswick and Lord Nelson Pottery.

Kitchenalia items such as enamel ware jugs and pitchers have been very popular of late, especially those with floral decoration or in more unusual colours such as light greens and light blues. Depending on the amount of denting and rusting prices have varied between £20-£50 for a good example. Staying in the kitchen a homely collection of glass jug

pourers with plastic or other celluloid tops can be put together for very little money.

Many jugs have been modelled on the shape of animals and majolica and Dartmouth Pottery fish shaped jugs are all quite common. Sometimes, particularly with early Brannam pottery, the spout and the handle are adapted to an animal form. The mouth of a fish forming the spout is quite typical. Musical jugs are also very popular and the firm of Wadeheath is especially known for its novelty musical character jugs. Two examples which often pick up winning bids around the £1,000 mark are Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs and The Big Bad Wolf.

Sought after Art Deco examples of jugs obviously include Susie Cooper, Clarice Cliff, Myott and to a lesser extent Shelley and Hancocks. Burleigh Ware jugs from the Art Deco period are lovely vibrant objects and stand out with their decorative handles. Myott, established 1898, produced hundreds of different patterns for jugs combining slightly more Art Nouveau style shapes with strong vibrant Deco designs and colours.

Finally some other makers and types of jug to look out for include Martin Brothers stoneware face jugs. The market for the 'grotesque' products of this London pottery

still knows no bounds. Also consider Parian ware jugs, Bargeware, blue and white, Newlyn Copper jugs, slipware, puzzle jugs, Bellarmine (large jugs for beer dating from the mid seventeenth century), Staffordshire standing character jugs, Sunderland transfer printed views on lustreware (copper, silver, pink and orange are all delightful), majolica, nursery jugs, Mason's Ironstone, pearlware, porcelain jugs by top quality makers such as Worcester, New Hall and Chelsea, rustic Torquay pottery with or without mottoes, Masonic jugs, measuring jugs such as Cornish Ware, graduated sets of jugs and even Roman glass jugs which are comparatively affordable at £150-£200 given their age.

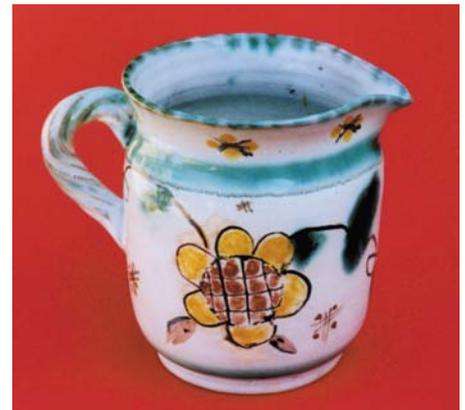
Whether for holding milk, water, cider, wine, claret, beer or cream, the jug is the carrier and container of liquid refreshment as well as a decorative object in the form of character jugs and miniature toby jugs. Jugs have been used since ancient times and their many functional uses and decorative appeal make them a popular collectable item. Extra detail, maker, age, rarity, different colour ways and limited editions will all affect their value but even the simplest little jug picked up for pence can give a great deal of pleasure.



Shelley pottery musical commemorative jug. Detail of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth to reverse. Approx. £150-£180.



Late Victorian Majolica fish jug.



Charles Folkard Honiton pottery 1930s jug with leaping deer to reverse. Approx. 6in high. £60-£80



Majolica ware corn on the cob. Purple glaze interior with pewter lid.



Small old slip ware pottery owl jug with nice detail.



Brannam art pottery fish spout and tail handle motto ware jug. c1898. £120-£150.