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Cover Page Footnote

Many people have contributed to the "Glass of the British Military" project, and they are acknowledged individually in Jones and Smith (1983). I specifically would like to thank Olive Jones for information and editorial advice and private collectors in Ottawa for permission to record and publish objects in their collection.

Drinking Practices and Glassware of the British Military, ca. 1755-85

by E. Ann Smith

INTRODUCTION

Officers and men of the British military, like most men during the eighteenth century, drank regularly and often heavily. As glass was used primarily for storing, serving, and drinking alcoholic beverages, I shall restrict myself to the drinking practices and glassware associated with alcohol. However, non-alcoholic beverages such as tea, coffee, hot chocolate, and probably water were also drunk by the military.

DRINKING PRACTICES

Army Issue

Officially, the men were entitled to an allowance of small, i.e., weak, beer but there is little evidence of it ever being regularly issued to troops in North America (Bouquet 1951-78:1: 326, 328, 330; Whitfield 1981:43). Rum was the major drink of the enlisted man. During the Seven Years' War (1756-63) it was frequently issued as a reward or incentive for extra or hard duties and to offset the effects of bad weather. An order issued in August 1758 stated: "The General seeing the willingness of the working Parties, is pleased to order for their future encouragement One Gill [1/4 pint] of Rum per Day to be delivered to each Non Commission'd Officer & Soldier that is employ'd" (Orderly Books:2: 22 Aug. 1758). During the Quebec campaign the following year, James Wolfe ordered "some Rum to Capt. Cosman's Company of Grenadiers for the Spirit they shew'd this morning in pushing those Scoundrels of Indians" (Orderly Books:1: 17 July 1759). General Jeffery Amherst recorded on October 31, 1759: "Very hard frost....Ordered a dram of rum to each man; twas very necessary" (Amherst 1931: 185-86).

During the American Revolutionary War (1776-83) each man was allowed a gill and a half or a gill and a third of rum a day regardless of his duties, although extra allowances were issued under special circumstances (Curtis 1972: 91-92). The rum was generally issued in half rations diluted with three parts water. The men were expected to use their canteens for their rum allowance when several days' provisions were issued at once. Officers commanding troops preparing to land on Staten Island in 1776 were instructed to "take Particular Care that the Canteens are properly filld with Rum & water & it is Most Earnestly [commended] to the Men to be as saving as possible of their Grog" (Orderly Books: 37: 20 Aug. 1776). Because of the free rum issues, the army consumed enormous quantities of rum throughout the Seven Years' War and Revolutionary War periods. Lieutenant

Colonel Henry Bouquet estimated that 45 hogsheads of it, carried by 22 wagons, would be needed to provision 2160 men for 30 days during a proposed expedition against Fort Duquesne in 1757 (Bouquet 1951-78:1: 55-56).

Spruce beer, not a beer at all but a decoction made from spruce boughs, molasses, and water, was the other drink commonly issued to the men. It was reputedly first introduced to British troops during the occupation of Louisbourg in the 1740s as it was "thought necessary for the preservation of the healths of our men, as they were confined to salt provisions, and it is an excellent antiscorbutic"(Knox 1914:1:71). Apparently of low alcoholic content, it was considered the "common beverage" during the Seven Years' War (Knox 1914: 2: 375) and the authorities actively encouraged its use until 1783 when issues were stopped (Whitfield 1981: 43).

The military for the most part brewed the spruce beer themselves and expected and ordered the men to drink large quantities. The allowance in Halifax in the summer of 1757 was two quarts per man a day, or three and a half gallons a week (Knox 1914:1: 71-72). During the Seven Years' War the military seem to have issued spruce beer year round and to have charged for it, unlike the rum issue. References to spruce beer during the Revolutionary War are fewer and suggest that it was issued seasonally. While in New York the 1st Battalion of Guards, for example, received three pints per man a day from January 4 until April 17, 1779 (Orderly Books:77). Although the orderly book continues until the end of December, there appears to have been no further spruce beer issues.

Apart from rum, spruce beer, and sometimes small beer, wine was officially issued on occasion. The surgeon serving with General Murray in Quebec in 1760 "represented that wine is actually necessary for the preservation of the health of the troops," so Murray ordered the purchase of 44 casks of 108 gallons each and each man to be given and charged for a half pint a day (Knox 1914: 2: 365). General orders of November 27, 1776, stated that 14 gallons of Madeira were to be issued for the officers of each battalion (Orderly Books:37, 41). A month later Major General Grant "made a present of a pipe of Mederia wine to the officers" of his brigade (Orderly Books:41: 28 Dec. 1776).

Finally, alcohol was sometimes issued to the troops so that they could participate in toasts on special occasions. General Amherst "gave Rum & Beer to each Corps to drink the Kings Health" on George II's birthday in 1759 (Amherst 1931:190).

Private Purchase

Despite the liquor issues provided by the military, most of the alcohol drunk by both men and officers alike was purchased

privately. The men preferred rum, beer and ale and made frequent, small purchases for immediate consumption. Their excessive drinking was a source of constant worry to the officers as it hampered performance and discipline and was prejudicial to the men's health. The commanding officers tried to control and limit the men's access to liquor by such means as regulating sutlers, setting up canteens, restricting the men to camp, confining them to quarters after tattoo (8 P.M.), forbidding liquor in the barracks, and punishing drunk and disorderly behaviour, often by stopping the rum issue. The frequency of such orders is proof that it was a hopeless battle.

The officers' drinking, on the other hand, was considered sociable and, while an integral part of dining, also appears to have been an important after-dinner activity conducted at the table after the food was removed. The officers enjoyed a wide variety of alcoholic beverages, headed by port and Madeira (both fortified wines), claret, punch, brandy, and porter. Wolfe, on the eve of his departure for Louisbourg in 1758, hosted a dinner at the Great Pontac, Halifax's main hotel. The 47 in attendance consumed 70 bottles of Madeira, 50 of claret, and 25 of brandy - 145 bottles in all (Raddall 1971: 52). According to the regimental song, the officers of the 10th Regiment drank 81 dozen of wine, 56 gallons of rum, shrub and brandy, and 98 dozen of porter during a nine-week voyage from Ireland to Quebec in 1767 (Winstock 1970: 64-65). In 1787, 20 people attending a dinner hosted by Prince William Henry in Halifax drank 63 bottles of claret. A young subaltern, William Dyott, recorded: "In the course of my experience I never saw such fair drinking" (Dyott 1907:45-46).

Dinner was the large meal of the day, usually held in the mid-afternoon and frequently ended with toasts, especially on special occasions. These more often than not called for the drinking of bumpers, a bumper being a glass filled to the brim. Bumpers were particularly popular during the Revolutionary War and into the nineteenth century. At the dinner Dyott described, the toasting began as soon as dinner was over; the Prince "took very good care to see everybody fill, and he gave twenty-three bumpers without a halt" (Dyott 1907: 45). And the toasts continued: "I think it was the most laughable sight I ever beheld, to see the Governor, our General and the Commodore, all so drunk they could scarce stand on the floor, hoisted up on their chairs with each a bumper in his hand" (Dyott 1907: 46).

Officers' Messes

A brief mention should be made of officers' messes "at which all the Officers, without distinction of Rank, can be properly and genteely accommodated" (Cuthbertson 1779: 23). The formal officers' mess, involving

rules, customs, and group purchase of liquor, food, and tableware, does not seem to have become established in North America until the 1770s. The officers of the New York Volunteers, a Loyalist regiment, drew up "some articles for the decorum & form of Messing" in 1782, undoubtedly based on those of regular British regiments. The fifth article specifies: "The proportion of wine to each member per day, one pint[;] Grog & small beer as may be necessary (should any member have occasion for more than the allowance of Wine, Tickets are to be given to the Mess Man for the Quantity he may call for, and to be charged to such members private account)" (Orderly Books: 102.1: 25 Aug. 1782).

Source of Private Supply

One of the main sources of liquor, especially for the men, were sutlers who travelled with the army and set up provision shops near camps or forts. Sutlers were controlled by licensing or appointments and often were attached to specific regiments. Their rates were apparently set by mutual agreement with the officers (Orderly Books: 46: 15 June 1777). Sutlers' lists drawn up in the Ohio Valley in August 1758 included such items as Madeira and Vidonia wine, West India and American rum, spirits, shrub, shrub punch, fruit punch, sangaree, cordials, and whiskey (Bouquet 1951-78: 2: 352-53). Articles priced at River Bouquet (near Lake Champlain) in June 1777 included Madeira, claret, spirits, West India rum, and porter (Orderly Books: 46: 15 June 1777).

Certainly the sutlers stocked a large and varied supply of liquor, if not of food, but their sales were carefully regulated in response to local circumstances. At Fort Cumberland in July 1759, the commanding officer announced: "Liberty is hereby granted to all Sutlers of this place to Sell any Sort of Spiritious Liquor to the provincial Troops now in Garrison Between the Hour of 10 in the morning and 5 in the afternoon if they please." The sutlers were cautioned not to take clothing "as pay for Such Liquors or any thing Else" the soldiers might purchase (Orderly Books:4:10 July 1759). The sutlers' orders at River Bouquet, 1777, were more strict: "The Sutlers are not on any pretence to sell Rum or any other Spirits to the men without a written Order from a Commissiond Officer and never in less Quantitys than a Quart" (Orderly Books:46:15 June 1777). The minimum sale requirement was perhaps an attempt to price the liquor beyond the reach of many of the men.

"Canteen," as a term commonly used in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, meant a provision shop operated by a sutler in a barrack or garrison (Whitfield 1981:49). There are references to canteens being set up in Boston late in 1774, about the time barrack quarters were taken up for winter: "The Regts. will appoint Discreet

Persons to keep Canteens within their own Quarters, & Prevent the Soldiers going into Dram Shops in the Town"(Orderly Books:10:11 Nov. 1774); and a few days later: "The canteens to be shut up after Tattoo beating & no Soldier to be Permitted to go out of his Quarters afterwards" (Orderly Books:10:14 Nov. 1774). Presumably the difference between the sutlers' outlets and the canteens was one of location.

Although sometimes licensed as sutlers, wives and camp followers more often dealt in illegal liquor sales. "No Soldier or Soldiers Wives are on any account allowed to go into the Barn in the front of the 38th Reg. as they have been found selling Spirituous Liquors there - Contrary to repeated orders" (Orderly Books:10:25 July 1774). It was obviously a common practice although one that was severely punished:"Any woman that is Detected in Selling Spirituous Liquors to the Soldiers, or bringing any to Camp will be Instantly Drum'd out & never suffer'd to Come into Camp again" (Orderly Books:37:2 Oct. 1776). The local inhabitants, however, were even more difficult to control. Following a celebration for the successful siege of Louisbourg in 1758, Amherst wrote:"The Troops remained encamped on the Common of Boston where Thousands of People came to see them and would give them Liquor and make the men Drunk in Spite of all that could be done" (Amherst 1931:86). During the Revolutionary War frequent orders were issued forbidding the sale of liquor to the men: "Any Inhabitant... who presumes to sell Liquor of any kind to a Soldier is Immediately to be turn'd out of his house & his Liquor Stav'd" (Orderly Books:37:19 Dec. 1776).

Public houses abounded in the towns and cities and were well-patronized by the military. The soldiers at Annapolis Royal "repaired to a public-house to drown the cares of the day in the seasons of good fellowship" when they earned extra money working for civilians (Knox 1914:1:95). Amherst complained in May 1760: "Officers & men would much rather spend their time at the Ale House than do anything before the other Provincials arrive" (Amherst 1931:200). As with other supply sources, attempts were made to control the men's access to these establishments. In New York in early 1777, for example, official orders stated: "The Owners of Publick Houses, having Sailors or Soldiers in their Houses after 8 O'Clock will be committed to the Provost, & the Furniture of their Houses forfeited"(Orderly Books:40:2:10 Jan. 1777).

Local merchants, especially those in centres like New York, Boston, Halifax, and Quebec, were an important source of supplies, particularly for the officers and their messes. Provisions were also sent or brought to more isolated places by merchants and ships' captains, both by previous arrangement and on speculation. Thomas Hancock, the prominent Boston merchant, sent a shipment to

Fort Cumberland, New Brunswick, early in 1758 which included six hogsheads of Bristol beer, six quarter casks each of Madeira and claret, three quarter casks each of white port, red port, and white Lisbon, one quarter cask each of burgundy and Fountingath (Frontignan?), 20 barrels of New England rum, two hogsheads of W.E.(?) spirits, three cases of geneva, one barrel of glasses of different sizes, six dozen Mason glasses, three dozen punch bowls of different sizes, 11 chests of lemons, and massive quantities of sugar. The other supplies were chiefly clothing (Hancock 1758).

Food and liquor provisions and other kinds of supplies could also be obtained through estate sales, from family and friends at home, and through merchants and agents in Britain, providing of course that one had the means to pay. Despite all the ways of obtaining drink, fate occasionally intervened, and liquor became a scarce commodity. During the winter of 1758, John Knox wrote:"Our constant drink, for these two months past, has been spruce beer or bad cyder, qualified with as bad rum: wine we have almost forgot the flavour of"(Knox 1914:1:140). Such hardship obviously bore heavily on Knox - in reviewing his stay in Nova Scotia he referred to "the distress we were often exposed to for fresh provisions and liquors"(Knox 1914:1:309).

GLASSWARE IN MILITARY CONTEXTS

Where, then, in the midst of all this drinking, does glassware fit? While non-architectural glass was used at this time for containers for food, medicine, and miscellaneous products, and for tableware such as salts and cruets, it was by far most commonly used to hold and serve alcoholic beverages. Thus most of the glassware in military contexts, both historical and archaeological, can be associated with drinking.

Historical documents reveal that as far as the army authorities were concerned glass was not a major material for the transportation, storage, or consumption of alcoholic beverages. The army purchased and stored its official supplies of rum, wine, and beer in wooden staved containers. Wood, metal, sometimes ceramic, but never glass cooking and eating utensils were issued as part of barracks furnishings. Therefore most of the glassware in military contexts was personal property. While the enlisted men might have had some glass bottles, perhaps obtained from sutlers or local establishments, it is unlikely that they owned any table glass. Supplied with the necessary utensils for eating and drinking, they would have had little use for and even less ability to buy and carry fragile luxury objects such as drinking glasses and decanters. The officers, on the other hand, owned and used large quantities of glassware, and there is an abundance of documentary evidence for both individual and mess purchase (Jones and Smith 1983).

Some wines, spirits, and other alcoholic beverages were bottled at the place of origin or at the retail level by merchants. Wine and porter, in particular, were often sold in the bottle and in some quantity to officers. The New York merchants Nicoll & Taylor sold port in bottles by the dozen or more to British officers during the late 1770s (Nicoll and Taylor 1777-78: Wines & liquors). An ensign in Detroit purchased six bottles of claret on December 12, 1776, six bottles of porter a week later, and another six of claret on the 29th, in addition to a quantity of rum on the 25th (Saumarez 1776-91: 12-13). Officers' messes, in turn, bought in very large quantities, usually in the cask. Montreal merchants forwarded these liquors to the mess of the King's or 8th Regiment in Detroit in September 1783: two barrels of best Madeira wine, three quarter casks of port wine, a barrel of Jamaica spirit, a hogshead of porter and a case containing seven dozen bottles of porter (Saumarez 1776-91:2:125). The unbottled liquors would have been bottled or decanted before being served. From pictorial and documentary evidence it is apparent that "wine" bottles were used on the table, alone or with decanters or punch bowls, for the serving of drinks. Glass bottles were also reusable, a feature of which officers took advantage by selling them, returning them for credit, or returning them for refill (Jones and Smith 1983).

Officers and officers' messes purchased their own dining and drinking utensils and did not let the fact that they were on active service far from home and with limited baggage allotments affect their style of living. In fact, if anything, the distance from Britain made the maintenance of custom and decorum even more important. Although officers owned glass condiment and dessert vessels, most of their table glass was for drinking and consisted chiefly of wine glasses, tumblers, and decanters. This is reflected by both the archaeological and historical evidence. Brigadier General Henry Bouquet's estate included eight wine glasses, two beer glasses, and two quart decanters (Bouquet 1765:8). Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Carleton's inventory listed footed glasses, eight water glasses, nine wine glasses, two wine decanters with plates, one water decanter (*carafe*) and six large tumblers (Voyer 1787). Although most of the British officers and messes would have purchased their tableware in Britain, replacements would have been needed from time to time for lost or broken items. Personal need and the circumstances of war dictated this, but as well the messes had rules covering replacement and use of property. The New York Volunteers specified: "Whatever mess Utensil may be broke by any member of the mess are to be replaced by him Doubly -- It is to be understood that no mess Utensil whatsoever is to be Carried out of the Mess Hutt"(Orderly Books:102.1:25 Aug. 1782). Replacements and some original purchases would have been obtained locally or at least from North

American merchants. Frederick Rhinelander, a New York merchant, supplied many British officers and their messes with English glass and ceramic tableware during the Revolutionary War. Captain Hervey, for example, purchased a half dozen each of wine glasses and half-pint tumblers on one occasion in 1781 (Rhinelander 1775-81:1015). The mess of the Queen's Rangers made a large purchase of what appears to be a full table setting for 36 people. Included were six quart wine decanters, six pint wine decanters, three dozen wine glasses, and one dozen tumblers (Rhinelander 1775-81:856).

GLASSWARE FORMS

A detailed description of the glassware used by the British military can be found in Jones and Smith (1983), an extensively illustrated report which discusses the archaeological and documentary evidence for glassware in the British military context. The summaries which follow have been drawn from that report and cover the most common forms for the 1755-85 period.

Virtually all of the glassware used for drinking can be divided into two broad groups: those vessels used for storage and serving, such as bottles and decanters, and those used for drinking from, such as tumblers and wine glasses. The table glass has some characteristics in common. Virtually all of it is colorless lead glass of British manufacture. Pontil marks were often finished by grinding and polishing from the 1770s onwards. While there was a general increase in cut and engraved table glass around the middle of the century, it does not usually appear in military contexts until the Revolutionary War period, and even then the military seem to have preferred plain tableware.

Storage and Serving Vessels

English "Wine" Bottles: Dark green bottle glass is the most common kind of glass found on military sites, and most of it is from English "wine" bottles. While "wine" bottles were used for a variety of products, they were used most often for storing and serving alcohol. Although these bottles were made in a range of sizes based on two standards of measurements -- the Queen Anne wine gallon and a larger beer gallon -- most of the bottles recovered on military sites are of the "quart" size, either wine (946 ml) or beer (1155 ml). These measures were conceptual, however, and in reality there was a wide variation and considerable overlap in the quart capacities (Jones 1983).

From ca. 1740 on, the English "wine" bottle had a cylindrical, dip-molded body, but the overall proportions and finish styles continued to change and can be used for dating. During the 1740s to 1760s the English "wine" bottle had a short, wide



Figure 1. English "wine" bottles with proportions and finish styles characteristic from ca. 1740 into the 1760s. Heights, left to right: 206 mm, 212 mm; base diameters: 119 mm, 118 mm; estimated capacities: 848 ml, 894 ml. Parks Canada, Ottawa. (Photo by R. Chan.)

cylindrical body, a cracked-off, fire-polished lip, and a downtooled, V-shaped, or flattened string rim (Figure 1). This form occurs commonly on sites dating to the Seven Years' War. From ca. 1760 onward, the body began to get slimmer and taller and the neck longer, resulting in taller bottles represented by transitional (Figure 2c) and the final wine-style proportions (Figure 2d). Both of these forms began to appear during the Seven Years' War and occurred through the Revolutionary

War. At the same time as the bottle proportions changed, the finish styles also changed. The lip could be unthickened and flat-topped (as before) or V-shaped, and the string rim also as before or uptooled to a flattened side; or the lip could be slightly thickened and sloped-down, flat-topped or V-shaped, and the string rim either flattened, V-shaped, or uptooled to a flattened side (Figure 2). The beer-style bottles followed a similar development in body and finish styles. However, the body was consistently shorter and wider than that of contemporary wine-style bottles. Although occasional examples of the large, true beer quart are found (Figure 2b), most of the beer-style bottles are of comparable capacity with the wine-style bottles and are recognizable only by the stubbier form (Figure 2a)(Olive Jones, personal communication 1983). It is not clear how closely the contents of the bottles were associated with the two styles.

French Wine Bottles: Also made of dark green glass but with a distinctive tapered body and cruder finish, French wine bottles occur frequently on British military sites of the Seven Years' War period. These were probably obtained locally or, in many instances, may relate to the preceding French military occupation.

Case Bottles: Square-bodied, dark green glass case bottles are consistently found on British military sites. These bottles, designed for shipment and storage in wooden cases, are

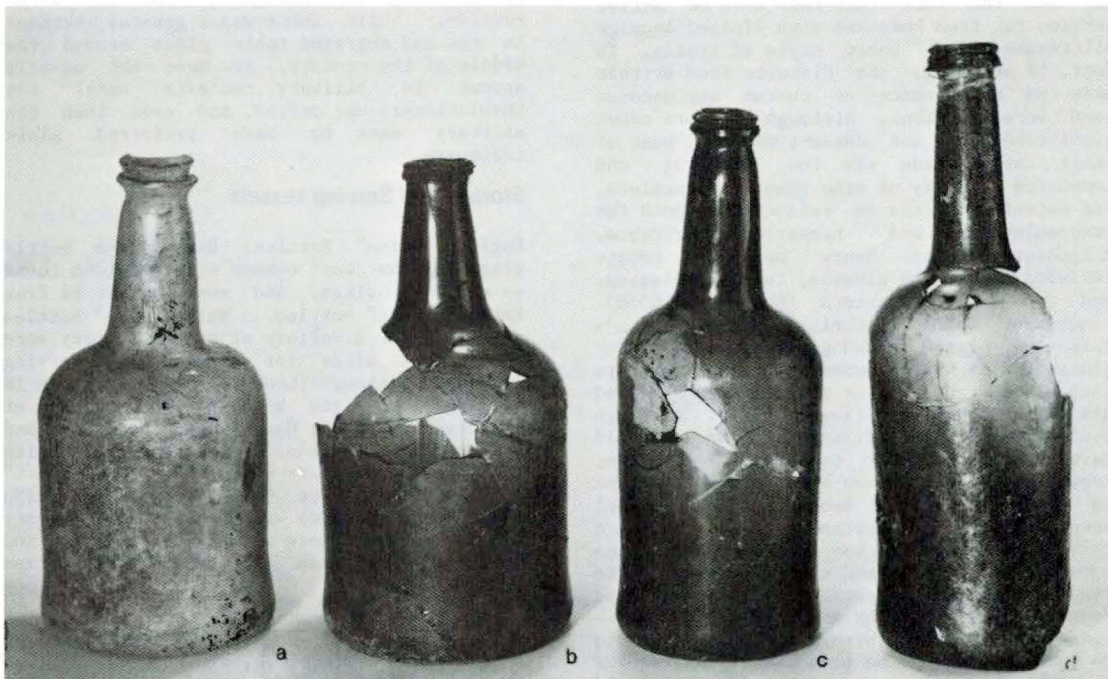


Figure 2. From ca. 1760 on, the English "wine" bottle began to get narrower and taller, and two distinct bottle styles emerged: the beer (a, b) and the wine (c, d). These bottles date from the 1760s to the 1790s. Heights: (a) 232 mm, (b) 227 mm, (c) 253 mm, (d) 282

mm; base diameters: (a) 107 mm, (b) 118 mm, (c) 96 mm, (d) 93 mm; estimated capacities: (a) 788 ml, (b) 1109 ml, (c) 763 ml, (d) 860 ml. Parks Canada, Ottawa. (Photo by R. Chan.)

traditionally associated with gin. However, the quantity found on sites and the scarcity of references to gin in the documents suggest that case bottles served probably as multipurpose storage containers.

In contexts dating to the 1750s and 1760s the earlier case bottle style, having a nearly straight body and a two-part "wine" bottle style finish, is found. At the same time the later style, having a tapered body and one-part finish consisting of an applied, tapered-down lip, begins to appear (Figure 3). This style continued through the Revolutionary War and into the 19th century.

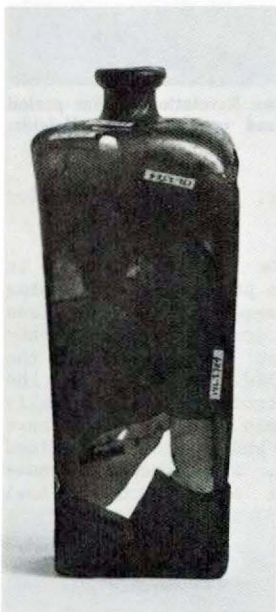


Figure 3. Case bottle with an applied, tapered-down lip. Height: 260 mm; base dimensions: 88 mm by 88 mm. Fortress of Louisbourg.

Flasks: Flat-sided flasks, decorated by pattern molding and made of green, blue-green, or colorless glass, occasionally occur in military contexts for the 1755-85 period. The decoration is usually molded ribs and/or diamonds which may extend onto the tubular neck/finish. Holding about a half pint, these flasks may have been used for carrying brandy or the like during travel or even for scented waters.

Decanters: Decanters were used at the table to hold beverages, often in conjunction with "wine" bottles and punch bowls. Both the archaeological and historical evidence indicate that after wine glasses and tumblers, decanters were the most common form of table glass owned by officers. Available in a number of sizes, the quart and pint being the most popular, decanters were purchased and used in pairs, officers generally having one or two pairs. The military seem to have preferred plain decanters, although decorated examples were readily available.

Decanters and stoppers of the 1755-85 period exhibit changes in style, decoration,

and manufacture. During the Seven Years' War decanters were generally shaft-and-globe (bulbous) or shouldered in shape. A few examples of a cruciform variant, having a square body with flat chamfered corners and deep creases separating the planes, have been found. Stopper finials were ball-shaped and decorated by air bubbles, or spire-shaped and decorated by cutting or left plain.

During the American Revolutionary War period the tapered or sugar-loaf shape was the most popular style of decanter. Stoppers with lozenge-shaped finials were appropriate for this style. Although usually plain, the tapered decanter could be decorated by cutting or engraving. By the end of the war two new decanter shapes had appeared: the barrel and the more common oval or Prussian, characterized by its expanding body shape, neckrings, and flanged lip. Each of these styles could be decorated by cutting. Stoppers had either lozenge-, target-, or mushroom-shaped finials. Square decanters, sometimes cut, are also occasionally found from the Revolutionary War period.

Drinking Glasses

Tumblers and wine glasses were the major forms of drinking glasses. Both could be used on the table at the same time, but it is not clear if there was a distinction made in usage between the two. During the Seven Years' War wine glasses outnumber tumblers in both newspaper advertisements and archaeological contexts. Evidence for the Revolutionary War period is contradictory. The Rhinelander accounts indicate that military officers and messes purchased wine glasses and tumblers in equal quantities or slightly more wine glasses. The archaeological evidence, however, suggests that tumblers were the more common form.

Tumblers: Tumblers were made in a range of sizes, the most common being the half-pint followed by the pint. They exhibited virtually no changes in shape or decoration during the 1755-85 period. The usual shape was conical, as indeed it was throughout the eighteenth century. Nearly all of the tumblers found in British military contexts are plain, although pattern-molded tumblers decorated with diamonds do occur in small quantities (Figure 4).

Wine Glasses: Specific terms used in the documents suggest that there were recognized forms, styles, and sizes for different beverages. It is now almost impossible to determine which form was intended for which beverage. Therefore the term "wine glass" is used here to denote the various types of stemware, excluding firing glasses, associated with drinking.

Unlike tumblers, wine glasses changed significantly in style during the period under

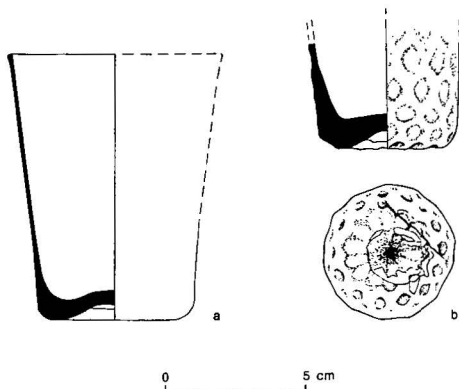


Figure 4. While plain tumblers (a) are most common on British military sites, tumblers decorated with pattern-molded diamonds (b) also occur. Fortress of Louisbourg; Parks Canada, Ottawa. (Drawing by D. Kappler.)

discussion. On military sites of the Seven Years' War period, plain drawn stemware (with and without air bubbles in the stem) occurs in large numbers, followed by air-twist and then opaque-twist stems (Figure 5). A few examples of incised-twist stems have been found but virtually no facet-cut stems. Stems are usually straight and long, resulting in tall glasses. The bowls appear to be of comparable capacity although the shapes vary -- trumpet, waisted, bell, and ogee being the most common. If decorated, the bowls are pattern molded with vertical ribs or, occasionally, engraved with floral motifs. The large, conical feet

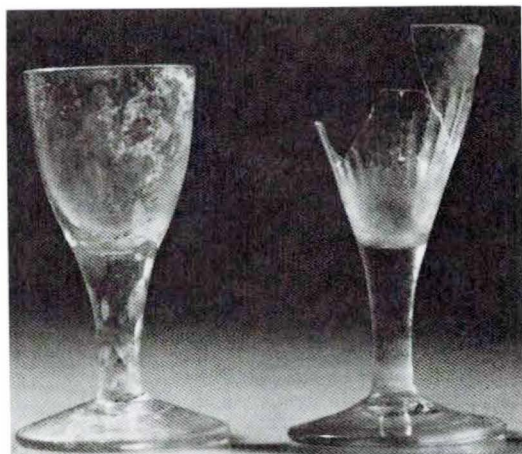


Figure 6. Wine glasses of the Revolutionary War period with lemon-shaped (left) and conical bowls. Heights: 109 mm, 116 mm.

have either plain or, less often, folded rims.

During the 1770s the major change in stemware style was the pronounced shortening of the stem and consequently of the glass (Figure 6). The plain drawn stem, with either lemon- or globe-shaped bowl, dominated the Revolutionary War period. In the 1780s the conical bowl was introduced and gradually predominated. The plain stemware seldom have finished pontil marks and often have folded foot rims. Decoration, if present, includes pattern-molded ribs or engraving on the bowl

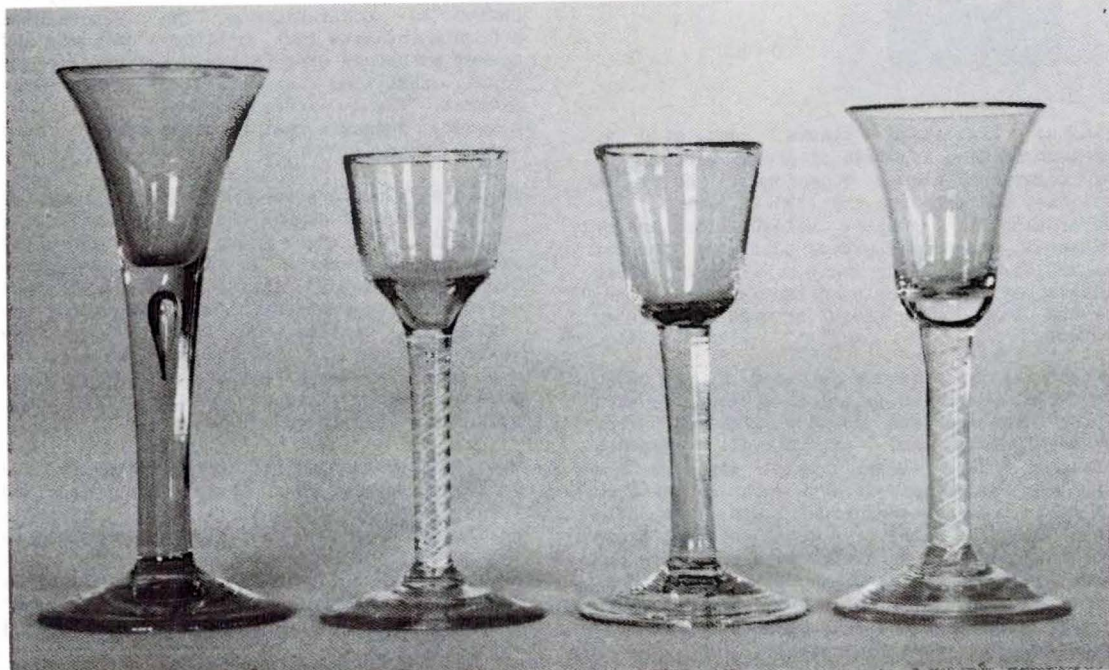


Figure 5. Wine glasses of the styles typically found in British military contexts of the 1750s and 1760s. Heights, left to right: 176 mm, 147 mm, 150 mm, 159 mm. Private collection, Ottawa.

and cut diamonds or vertical flutes on the stem, extending on to the bowl.

Rummers, also called half-pint glasses, had very large bowls, short stems and thick, rounded or cut square feet (Figure 7). They were usually decorated by pattern molding, cutting, or sometimes engraving. Although the form appeared in the 1770s and was readily available to the military, it does not appear on military sites in any quantity until late in the century.

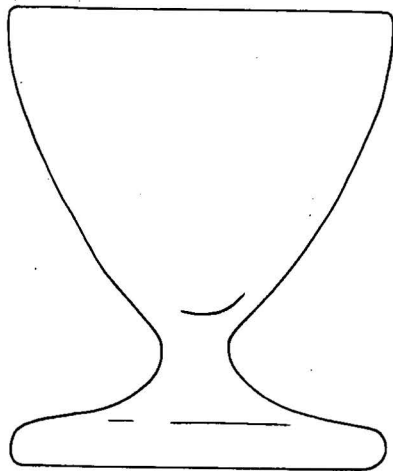


Figure 7. This drawing, based on sketches of claret glasses in the Rhinelander papers (Rhinelander 1774-83), illustrates the large bowl and new proportions characteristic of rummers. (Drawing by D. Kappler.)

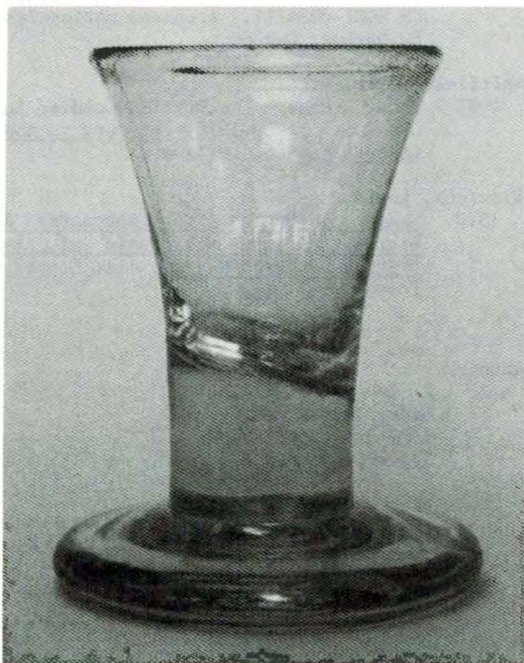


Figure 8. A typical firing glass with plain drawn stem and trumpet-shaped bowl. Height: 92.5 mm. Fortress of Louisbourg.

Firing Glasses: Firing glasses have a characteristic thick, flat foot, a short, thick, drawn stem, and usually a plain trumpet-shaped bowl (Figure 8). They occur in some quantity on military sites of the 1755-85 period but seem to be most common during the Seven Years' War period. Like the tall, plain, drawn stemware, firing glasses can be decorated by an air bubble in the stem. Later examples tend to have longer and slimmer stems and are rare.

No contemporary references have been found to the term "firing glass" or to the custom of rapping glasses on the table during toasts, supposedly the origin of the term. There is some evidence that these glasses were termed Mason or Freemason glasses, as firing glasses decorated with Freemasonry symbols are common. However, although Freemasonry was actively practised by some officers, no marked firing glasses have been found on military sites.

CONCLUSION

In closing, there are some general conclusions that can be drawn about the drinking practices and glassware of the British military during this period. While special events were often celebrated by excessive drinking, there is no question that alcoholic beverages formed a regular part of the daily diet for both officers and men alike. Rum, spruce beer, and occasionally other liquors were officially issued, both as the rule and when commanding officers felt circumstances warranted. Most of the drinking, however, was unofficial and the liquor obtained by private means. The enlisted men preferred rum and malt liquors. The authorities tried various means of controlling their access to liquor but with no apparent success. The officers enjoyed a wider variety of drink headed by wines, particularly Madeira, port, and claret. Most of the bottled liquors were the property of officers and officers' messes. Dark green English "wine" bottles were the most common kind of glass container and would have been used for both storing and serving alcoholic drinks. Table glass was probably exclusively the private property of officers and their messes. Tumblers, wine glasses, and decanters were the most common forms. The military favored plain table glass over decorated and for the most part, in the popular styles of the day.

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