

DOULTON MOTTO JUGS

by Dick Henrywood

The famous Doulton firm started potting in Lambeth, South London, in about 1815, initially producing utilitarian brown stonewares such as drainpipes and chimney pots. Some decorative wares were made even in the early days when the trading style was Doulton & Watts, but for many collectors interest in Doulton started when they began to produce art wares around 1870. The factory employed students from the Lambeth School of Art and several of them became noted Doulton artists, including Hannah Barlow, George Tinworth, Arthur Barlow, Eliza Simmance, Frank Butler and Mark Marshall.

Most of these artist stonewares were individual pieces, but some styles proved popular and were placed in production, worked by many of the lesser artists and assistants in the studio. Amongst these are a series of relatively simple wares, mostly jugs or mugs, decorated with mottoes, proverbs or similar inscriptions.

The first two jugs shown here are of a particularly common shape, found with many different quotations. The first (figure 1) reads:

Who buys land buys stones
Who buys flesh buys bones
Who buys eggs buys many shells
Who buys good ale buys nothing else.

This is a later issue of the design; in earlier versions each line starts 'He that buys ...' instead of 'Who buys ...'. The verse on the second jug (figure 2) reads:

Straight is the line of duty
Curved is the line of beauty
Follow the straight line, thou shalt see
The curved line ever follow thee.

These two inscriptions are both common, usually, but not always on this standard shape.

The next two jugs are both of simple tankard shape, one from the early days, probably in the 1880s (figure 3), decorated with two inscriptions:

Fill what you will
And drink what you fill

and:

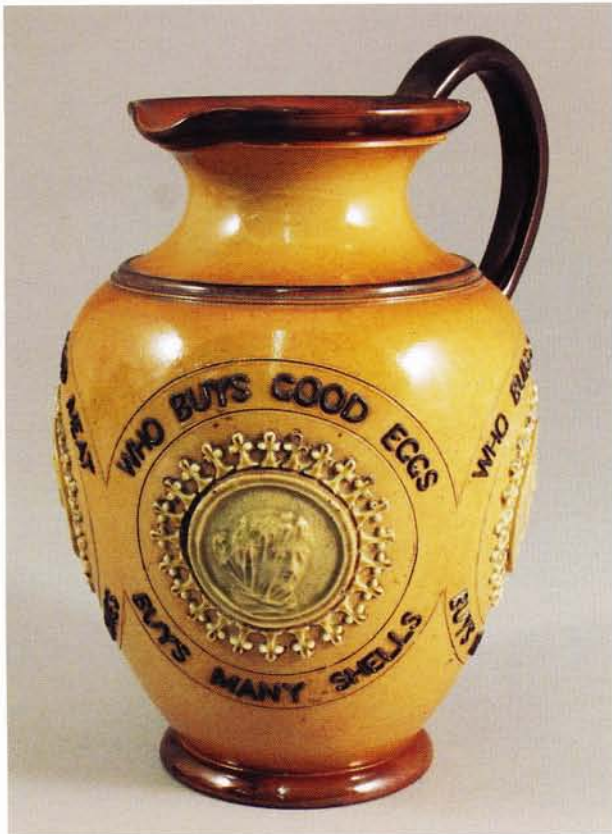


Figure 1. Jug of the most common standard shape, this one with inscription 'Who buys land buys stones', height 6in. (Gorringes, Lewes)

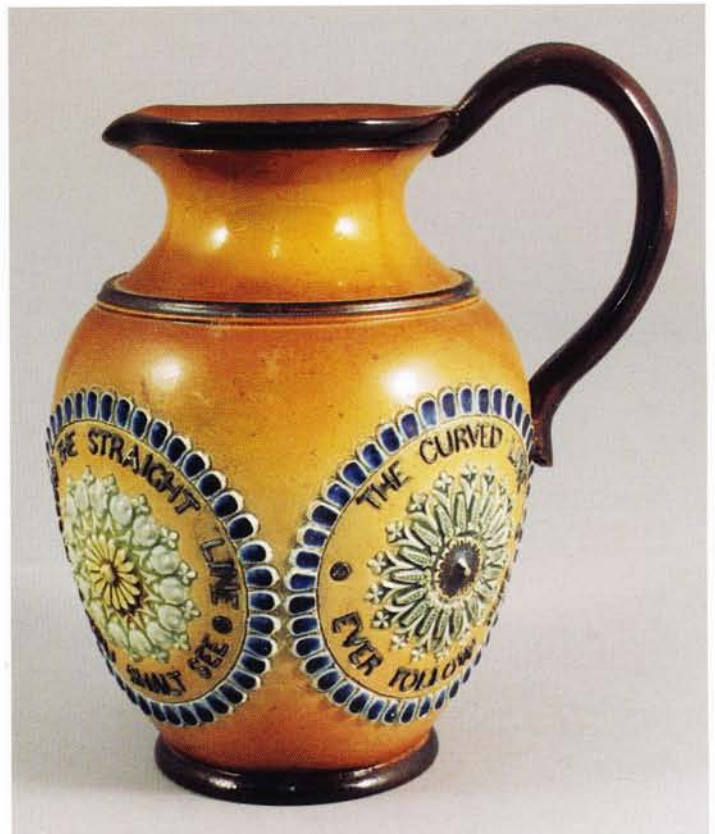


Figure 2. Another jug of the standard shape, this one with 'Straight is the line of duty', height 8in. (Gorringes, Lewes)



Far left. Figure 3. An early tankard shape jug, 'Fill what you will', height 7in. (Gorringes, Lewes)



Left. Figure 4. A later tankard shape jug, 'Straight is the line of duty', height 6 3/4in. (Martin Savage)

The more the merrier
But the fewer the better cheer.

The other jug (figure 4) is later, certainly into the early 20th century, with the verse 'Straight is the line of duty ...' already mentioned above.

Another relatively common form is rather reminiscent of early bellarmines, with a fine bearded mask beneath the spout. This is usually found with one of three short inscriptions, 'Fill what you will ...' again (as shown here in figure 5), 'Good measure, heaven's treasure', or 'More than enough is too much'.

The majority of these Doulton jugs were turned on the

potter's wheel, but some employ more moulded decoration. Examples of the type shown in figure 6 are encountered quite frequently, moulded overall with bacchanalian cherubs and grapevines, and with the motto:

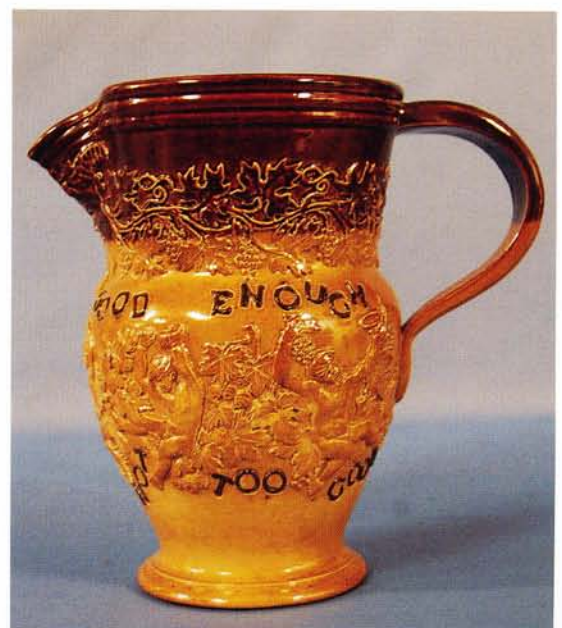
Good is not good enough
The best is not too good.

This is often found with matching beakers, probably issued as lemonade sets, each beaker bearing part of the main inscription, usually just 'The best'.

Another shape often encountered is the traditional English puzzle jug. This normally has one of two specific verses, the first (figure 7) reading:



Left. Figure 5. Jug of bellarmine style, 'Fill what you will', height 6 1/4in. (Locke & England, Leamington Spa)



Right. Figure 6. Jug moulded overall with bacchanalian cherub scenes and grapevines, 'Good is not good enough', height 8 1/4in. (Tom Harris Auctions, Iowa)

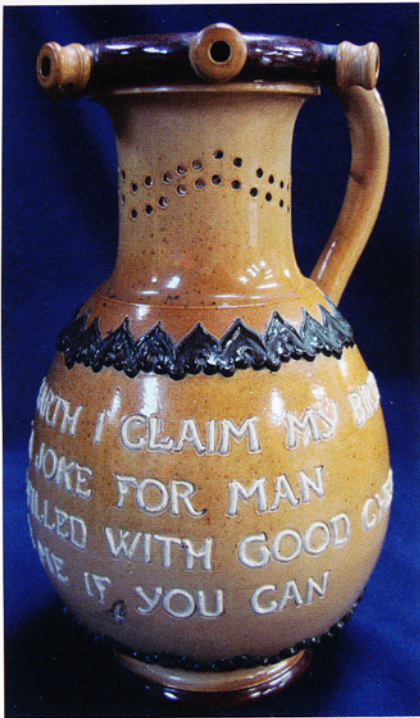


Figure 7. Puzzle jug with verse 'From Mother Earth I claim my birth', height 9in. (Hansons, Mackworth)

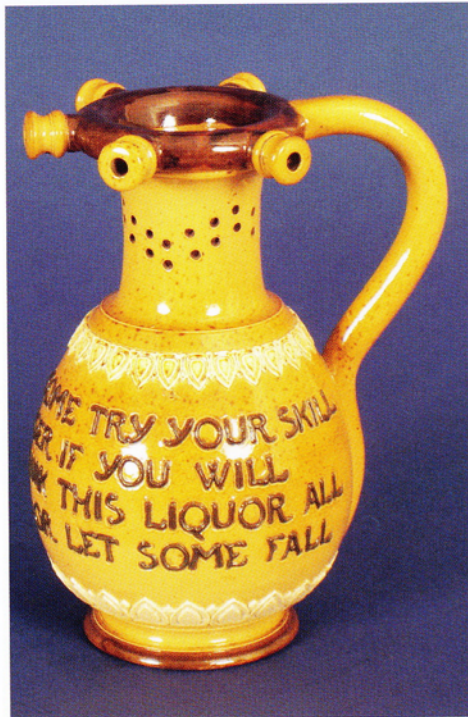


Figure 8. Puzzle jug with verse 'Here gentlemen come try your skill', height 7in. (Brightwells, Leominster)



Figure 9. Unusual flask-like jug with several different mottoes including 'More than enough is too much', height 9in. (Gorringes, Lewes)

From Mother Earth I claim my birth
I'm made a joke for man
But now I'm here filled with good cheer
Come taste me if you can.

The other (figure 8) has:

Here gentlemen come try your skill
I'll hold a wager if you will
That you can't drink this liquor all
Without you spill or let some fall.

Puzzle jugs of this type date back at least as far as the 17th century and can be found in many different earthenware bodies. The second rhyme is particularly traditional.

The next jug illustrated (figure 9) is quite unusual, more like a flask than a jug, with its double neck. It also bears several different mottoes, including: More than enough is too much; The more the merrier but the fewer the better cheer; Merry meet, merry part; and Welcome is the best cheer.

Doulton made several jugs in imitation of a leather jack, using the firm's 'Doulton & Slater's Patent' decorative technique to create the surface texture. The example illustrated here (figure 10) bears an inscription in puzzle order, bottom to top and back to front, which when decoded reads:

Disdain me not, it is most true
I am of clay, and so are you.

This puzzle layout can be found with other mottoes, particularly one titled 'The Landlord's Caution', reading:

The maltster has sent his clerk

And you must pay the score
For if I trust my beer
What shall I do for more.

The final jug illustrated (figure 11) is of large size and a very pleasing simple barrel shape. It also has a particularly romantic verse:

Remember me
When this you see
Though many miles
We distant be.

It can be seen that the range of mottoes used was quite extensive, many of them, perhaps not unexpectedly, being drink related. Two of my favourites are:

Bread at pleasure
Drink by measure
If in doubt abstain!

and:

Of all sad deaths the very worst
Is that which comes of burning thirst.

The former is clearly a temperance saying, although the final admonition is often omitted. The latter always makes me want to head for the pub before it is too late!

Although most commonly used on jugs, the mottoes can also be found on beakers, mugs, tygs, tobacco jars, and even a porridge bowl. Early examples tend to be better made with more detailed decoration including individually carved letters. Later wares use much simpler techniques, often with the inscriptions printed rather than applied by hand.

These Doulton wares are invariably marked. Three main makers' marks are found, the earliest, introduced in about 1880, being a rosette-shaped mark made up of four interlinked letter Ds surrounded by 'DOULTON' and 'LAMBETH' within a circular frame rather reminiscent of a cogwheel. This was supplemented by the word 'ENGLAND', probably soon after the United States passed their McKinley Tariff Act of 1891 (figure 12a). The next maker's mark, consisting of the words 'DOULTON / LAMBETH / ENGLAND' in small letters in three lines (figure 12b), was probably introduced in 1891. The latest of the three marks is a version of the earlier rosette mark but without the cogwheel framing and with the addition of a crown and lion above and the wording changed to read 'ROYAL DOULTON / ENGLAND' (figure 12c). This would date from the adoption of the Royal prefix in 1902. It must be emphasised that there is overlap in the use of these three marks, and they are only a very general indication for dating.

One other maker's mark found reads 'DOULTON / & SLATER'S / PATENT' in three lines, usually accompanied with a related registration number 'Rd. 137999' or 'Rd. No. 137999'. This relates to a patent taken out for a decorative technique used to emboss surfaces with various finishes, employed on these motto wares to simulate leather (figure 10).

Other common marks are of two types: a wide range of monograms and symbols used by the artists or assistants who decorated the wares (which can be researched in reference books on either marks or Doulton wares); and an impressed number, usually of

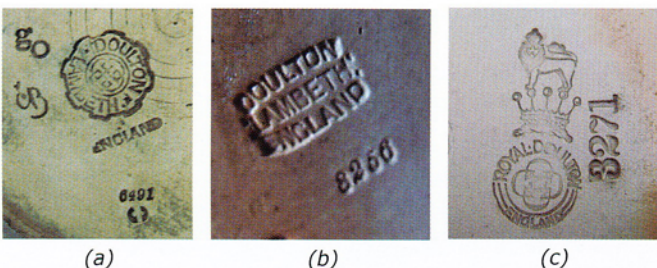


Figure 12. Three typical maker's marks in date order. (a) Doulton Lambeth rosette mark (from c.1880), in this case with addition of 'ENGLAND' (from 1891); (b) Doulton Lambeth England three-line mark (from c.1891); and (c) Royal Doulton England crown and lion mark (from 1902).



Figure 10. Jug simulating a leather jack with puzzle motto 'Disdain me not, it is most true', height 8½in. (Mealys, Castlecomer)

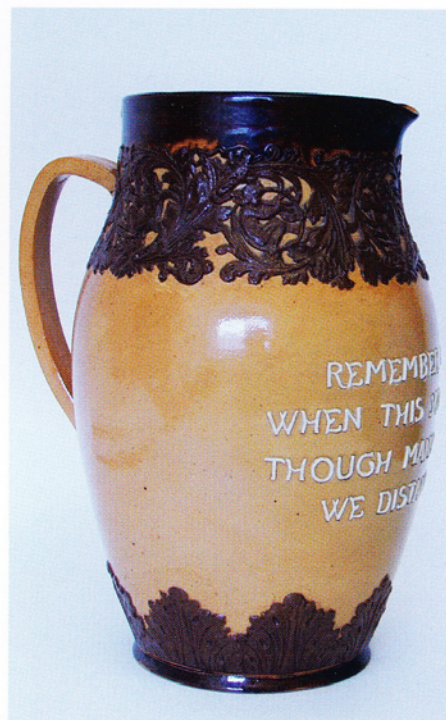


Figure 11. Jug of barrel shape with inscription 'Remember me', height 9½in. (Private collection)

four figures but sometimes only three and very occasionally extending to five. On very early examples, before 1888, the impressed four figures would be the date of manufacture, but thereafter they appear to be some sort of order number, in an ascending sequence. Similar pieces do not necessarily bear identical numbers.

In researching these wares I have unearthed some 40 different inscriptions to date, with new ones still emerging quite regularly (see table opposite). I am not aware that anyone has previously attempted to catalogue them. Although I have identified the original sources for several of the quotes, the origins of many remain obscure, and this could be a fruitful subject of study for a determined collector with a literary bent.

Fortunately, although they are both attractive and interesting, the wares are not vastly expensive, and jugs can still be found from about £40 upwards. Relatively few would merit much more than £100, although there are inevitably some which would be worth more. In these difficult times I suspect an investment in Doulton motto wares might actually be safer than houses!

Dick Henrywood is a consultant specialising in collectors' items and collectable British pottery. He would be delighted to hear about any unrecorded mottoes.

Doulton Mottoes or Proverbs

<p>Bitter must be the cup That a smile will not sweeten</p> <hr/> <p>Bread at pleasure Drink by measure If in doubt, abstain <i>(the last line is often omitted)</i></p> <hr/> <p>Come Landlord fill the flowing ... Until the ... run over For tonight we ... upon this ... Tomorrow ... for Dover <i>(this inscription is as printed here – it includes the dots)</i></p> <hr/> <p>Disdain me not It is most true I am of clay And so are you</p> <hr/> <p>Do the work that's nearest Tho' it's dull at whiles Helping when you meet them Lame dogs over stiles</p> <hr/> <p>Drink faire Don't swaire 1760</p> <hr/> <p>Fill what you will And drink what you fill</p> <hr/> <p>For every ill beneath the sun There is a remedy or none If there is one then try to find it If there is not then never mind it</p> <hr/> <p>From Mother Earth I claim my birth I'm made a joke for man But now I'm here filled with good cheer Come taste me if you can <i>(noted only on puzzle jugs)</i></p> <hr/> <p>Gentil Hert Schawis Gentil Deed</p> <hr/> <p>Good is not good enough The best is not too good</p> <hr/> <p>Good luck</p> <hr/> <p>Good measure, Heaven's treasure</p> <hr/> <p>Have communion with all Be familiar with one Deal justly with all Speak evil of none</p>	<p>He that buys land buys stones He that buys flesh buys bones He that buys eggs buys many shells He that buys good ale buys nothing else <i>(a simpler version is also known, each line starting 'Who buys')</i></p> <hr/> <p>Here Gentlemen come try your skill I'll hold a wager if you will That you can't drink this liquor all Without you spill or let some fall</p> <hr/> <p>Here's luck</p> <hr/> <p>Here's to thee My honest friend Wishing these hard Times to mend</p> <hr/> <p>If you can't be aisy Be as aisy as you can</p> <hr/> <p>Lend more than thou owest</p> <hr/> <p>Let good digestion wait on appetite And health on both</p> <hr/> <p>Merry meet, merry part</p> <hr/> <p>More than enough is too much</p> <hr/> <p>Nothing is troublesome That we do willingly</p> <hr/> <p>Of all sad deaths The very worst Is that which comes Of burning thirst</p> <hr/> <p>Remember me When this you see Though many miles We distant be</p> <hr/> <p>Straight is the line of duty Curved is the line of beauty Follow the straight line thou shalt see The curved line ever follow thee</p> <hr/> <p>Take fortune as you find her And if she frown, don't you A smile will oft recall her And make her kind and true <i>(sometimes an ampersand in the final line)</i></p>	<p>The best <i>(on beakers – a part of 'Good is not good enough')</i></p> <hr/> <p>The halesome parritch Chief o' Scotia's food <i>(on a porridge bowl)</i></p> <hr/> <p>The maltster has sent his clerk And you must pay the score For if I trust my beer What shall I do for more</p> <hr/> <p>The more the merrier But the fewer the better cheer</p> <hr/> <p>The wisest of people you'll find in the nation Are those who when drinking drink in moderation For while a glass brightens their wit and their sense They still have an eye to pounds shillings and pence</p> <hr/> <p>There's many a slip Twixt the cup and the lip</p> <hr/> <p>This is a good world to live in To lend or to spend or to give in But to beg or to borrow or get a man's own It is such a world as never was known</p> <hr/> <p>This is the tree that never grew This is the bird that never flew This is the bell that never rang This is the fish that never swam <i>(usually with Glasgow's coat-of-arms)</i></p> <hr/> <p>Those who have money Are troubled about it Those who have none Are troubled without it</p> <hr/> <p>'Tis Not The Food But The Content That Makes The Table's Merriment</p> <hr/> <p>Use me well and keep me clean</p> <hr/> <p>Vessels large may venture more But little boats should keep near shore</p> <hr/> <p>Welcome is the best cheer</p>
---	--	--

