Pedestal Goblets (a summary by Roman Glassmakers) (All drawings are at scale 1:2)

Pedestal goblets are formed from a single gather of glass, with the base of the elongated bubble sucked upwards into the bubble to form the stem and foot, with its characteristic ring of trapped air. The feet of pedestal beakers may be formed in the same way.



The bowl tends to be trumpet- or bucket-shaped, and the stem may be plain or knopped. A pontil scar is visible either in the centre of the base, or further down the inner wall of the stem, nearer the foot.

They originated in Venice during the early 16th century, as plain goblets made from cristallo, the high quality soda-lime glass of the region. Soon they were being made from cheaper, green-tinted glass in the Low Countries and France, and finally in England. Manufacture of these goblets appears to cease by the early 17th century.

Plain pedestal goblets are found in England during most of the 16th century, with most of the early examples being imports of Venetian cristallo. Examples from later in the century occur in the typical blue green or greenish glass of the period.

Evidence for English manufacture comes from, for example, the 16th century glasshouse at Hutton, Yorkshire (Crossley and Aberg 1972), with both illustrated finds (from the later 16th century) showing the probability of bucketshaped bowls - an English preference.

Pedestal goblets with folded knops occur during the latter half of the 16th century. "This form of pedestal goblet is usually smaller than other forms and appears to have a more vertical bowl....They are almost certainly English products." (Willmott 2002, p.69)



Other variations exist, such as the stem and foot from Quilters Vault, Southampton (Platt 1975, cat. no. 1581) in a greenish-tinged glass, although this vessel may not have been made in England.



All of the pedestal goblets illustrated on this page have been found, but not made, in England. They are included here as the profiles correspond to those of goblets that have been made in England.



Pedestal Goblets with Enamelled Decoration were

made in colourless glass, in Venice, Central Europe and in France. They date to the early 16th century.





Pedestal Goblets with vertical ribs are found throughout the 16th century. A dip mould (or optic mould) is used to create the ribs before the gather of glass is inflated.

They are first made as colourless vessels in Venice in the early part of the century. By the second half of the century, they are also being made in the Low Countries, in green glass.

Pedestal Goblets with horizontal trails date to the first half of the 16th century, and were made in the Low Countries and possibly France, in green-tinted glass. They are usually decorated with fine, melted in, horizontal trails below the rim in opaque white or, sometimes, dark red.

Other forms of pedestal goblets exist, notably those with mould-blown decoration on their bowls, usually in the form of raised diamond-shaped bosses or numerous small, shallow, circular depressions. A few examples have been found in England, but they were most probably made in the Low Countries or France.





Haslam 672 (Norwich)

Base and part of bowl of drinking glass (plain pedestal goblet).Pale yellowish-grey glass.

Some of the glass from the brick-lined cesspit at Gutter Lane

47. Complete base and one rim fragment from a pedestal goblet with optic-blown vertical ribs. Colourless/grey tinted glass. Venetian. 16th century. Rare. Parallel: Southampton (Willmott 2002, p.69). MOLABC <365>.

48. Semi-opaque base of a goblet, probably of the pedestal type. Colourless glass. Venetian or from other façon de Venise workshops. 16th century. MOLABC < 360 > .

50. Complete lower half of a plain pedestal goblet. Green-tinted potash glass. Probably from England or possibly the Netherlands or Venice. 16th century. Parallel: Poole (Willmott 2002, p.68). MOL ABC <362>.

51. Semi-opaque fragment of the knop and stem of a goblet. Possible gilding below the knop. Slightly lopsided green-tinted glass. English. Mid to late 16th century. Possible parallels: London (Gracechurch Street) and Acton Court (Willmott 2002, p.69). MOL ABC <364>.

Selected References:

Crossley, D. W. and Aberg, F. A. (1972) 'Sixteenth-Century Glass-Making in Yorkshire: Excavations at Furnaces at Hutton and Rosedale, North Riding, 1968-1971' Journal of Post Medieval Archaeology 6 pp.136-141 (fig. 61), 146 (figs. 64 - 65)

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Haslam, J. (1993) 'Glass Vessels' in Margeson, S. (ed) (1993) 'Norwich Households - Medieval and Post-Medieval Finds from Norwich Survey Excavations 1971-78' East Anglian Archaeology Monograph No. 58 (Norwich Survey) pp.97-117 (pp.104-105 (fig. 70, nos. 653-658))

Platt, C. (1975) 'Excavations in Medieval Southampton. Volume 2: The Finds'

Willmott, Hugh (2002) 'Early post-medieval vessel glass in England c. 1500-1670' Council for British Archaeology: CBA Research Report 132 pp. 67-72. Types 13.1 - 13.7