

**Vermeulen, T.**

**Aan:** rishida@wxs.nl

**Onderwerp:** Ceramic bottles

Dear Mrs Rieko Ishida,

I received requests from you and from Inter SK, Sonoko Tsugawa, in Erkrath Germany.

Your questions are very interesting, however they would take many days of investigation in the archives. But I'll try to answer them now.

#### manufacturer

These ceramic bottles/stone jars/'kruiken' were and are produced in the Westerwald-area in Germany. Up to the middle of the 19th century they were imported in Holland with mineral water in it. After drinking the water, these kruiken were used to store every possible liquid till they broke.

After 1850 AD the Erven Lucas Bols imported them from Germany for the sole purpose of storing her jenever/genever in it. Nowadays we still use them for jenever and Corenwijn, even for the special Millennium Corenwijn. (some photocopies about the kruiken-production have been enclosed)

First the jars were handmade. At the bottom you find concentric lines and on the sides of the jar the craftsman has left his fingerprints.

From circa 1879 onwards the jars were produced with the help of a cylindrical mould. Nevertheless, no jar is identical to another due to different heating and handling.

Your kruiken have an 'ear', which means that they have been produced before 1915: during World War I (1914-1918) all women in Germany were needed for the war-industry and none were left to put the ears to the jars. The ears never returned.

The red cap is probably made of lead.

#### spirits

Jenever or genever is a very old product and can already be found in the Netherlands during the 17th century when the Dutch V.O.C. had a factory on the island of Deshima in Nagasaki-harbour.

Bols sold various liquors to the highest officials of the VOC and some will be taken to Asia as well. On the ships jenever was given every day to the crew because it was thought healthy: the juniper berries gave their healthy juices to the jenever during the distillation process.

Bols is still an important producer of jenever.

#### coins on the etiquet

Most distillers from the town of Schiedam, Rotterdam and Amsterdam used the 'etiket' to show the expert quality of the product. Therefore all the price-medals won during (world)exhibitions were printed on it.

#### Bols?

Bols was one of the largest exporters at the end of the 19th century. But we cannot be sure these jars came from Bols.