

Curator's Choice

Mid 19th-Century Green Glass Bottle

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Historical Investigations Class

During the 1800s many different beverages were popular. In the northern states of America, cider was a popular drink due to the vast number of apple orchards (Holt 2006). However, the stronger drinks of this period included rum and gin, which were shipped to the Americas. In the early 1800s, new beverages were becoming popular, such as carbonated drinks, Guinness, vermouth, and bourbon whiskey (Schulman 2013). Whiskey was made from the rye grown by the farmers in the Midwest. Our green glass bottle, however, most likely contained wine or soda.

The bottle has a pontil mark on the base, a two-part finish, down-tooled lip, V-shaped string rim, and slope down shoulders. It is ten inches tall with a rounded heel and tapered neck. The bottle is an emerald green, which was a common glass color during the 1850s. It is dipped molded, meaning it was made with a simple open top mold that was used to gain uniformity and consistency (and likely increased production) in the shaping of the bottle body and base (Bottle Den 2013).

During the 1800s, bottles were used to store many liquids. This green glass bottle in particular was used to store wine in the kitchen area or in a cellar.



Mended green glass bottle found in a privy at the Federal Reserve Bank Site.

During the 19th century, many Americans were known to have hearty drinking traditions. Americans drank alcohol in two different ways. One way was in small amounts daily, and the other was drinking a lot during times of celebration or neighborhood festivities (Rorabaugh 1981).

References Cited

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- Rorabaugh, W.J. *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition*. Oxford University Press. 1981.
- Schulman, Marc. "Food." History Central. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 Apr. 2013. <<http://www.historycentral.com/NN/America/food.html>>.



McSorley's Bar (1912) by John French Sloan.



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