

Undecorated Cased Blanks

By Mark Buffa – A Carder Steuben Collector

Some of the most intriguing pieces that I have come across are those of cased blanks that were never decorated after leaving the Steuben Factory floor. My first introduction to one of these pieces was at one of the early Carder Steuben Club Symposium's when there was a trip to the residence of Max and Kitty Erlacher and a visit to Max's Studio. For those who do not know Max and Kitty, Max was one of the engravers for Modern Steuben and is currently retired. Upon climbing the stairs to his studio workshop, there on display was this incredible Green Jade over Yellow Jade vase in a design that I had not seen before. I did not recognize the pattern because it was a Max Erlacher design that he was decorating on a Carder Steuben cased blank that had never been decorated. The vase was a work in progress and Max demonstrated his engraving techniques much to the delight of the symposium attendees.



Photographer-James Barlow

My second exposure to one of these cased blanks was with a piece in the collection of Dick Bright and Kyle Goodman. They have a Green Jade over Yellow Jade in Shape Number 6272. The bottom is ground flat with a ground pontil that exposes the Yellow Jade beneath the Jade Green casing.



Collection of Dick Bright and Kyle Goodman
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Below is a side by side comparison of this color combination that was acid etched in the Mockingbird pattern.



Photographer-James Barlow
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Collection of Dick Bright and Kyle Goodman
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Another example that I am aware of is in shape 6703. At first glance I did not recognize the color of the piece pictured, but when it was explained by the collector that it was Jade Green over Yellow Jade the observed coloration made sense. The vase shape number 6703 is listed as coming in Green over Yellow in the Wycombe pattern in documents found in the Rakow Library in Corning. The bottom is ground flat with a ground pontil that exposes the Yellow Jade beneath the Green Jade casing.



Collection of Robert Bjork
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I am also personally aware of other cased blanks that remained undecorated in Gold Aurene over Green Jade. One of these blanks is in our collection and is shape number 2144 in a drilled lamp base. Adding to the intriguing nature of this piece is that it is blown from the top and lacks a pontil. The view from the ground top edge clearly shows the green jade inner lining under the Gold Aurene exterior. Further below is a side by side comparison against an acid etched lamp in the same shape in the Moderne pattern owned by Alan and Susan Shovers. These cased factory blanks that were not acid etched show up from time to time and will reward the collector who finds one with an example of Carders work in an unfinished state, but still unmistakably, Carder Steuben.



Collection of Mark Buffa and Jim Barlow
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Collection of Mark Buffa and James Barlow
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Collection of Alan and Susan Shovers
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If anyone has a vase in shape number 6703 in their collection in an acid etched decoration, I would welcome a picture to update this article. I can be contacted via email at brokenshards@brokenshards.com. Thanks in advance.