Vase

Royal Doulton

Not on display

Title/Description: Vase

Artist/Maker: Royal Doulton (Manufacturer)

Born: 1905 - 1910

Object Type: Vase

Materials: Ceramic, Stoneware

Technique: Glazing, Salt-glazing, Throwing

Measurements: h. 105 x w. 95 x d. 95 mm

Inscription: 'Royal Doulton England' trademark, '6654', 'gs', 'M.B.'

Accession Number: 21081A

Production Place: Britain, England, Lambeth

School/Style: Art Nouveau

Credit Line: Donated by Sir Colin and Lady Anderson, 1978

This is one of a pair of ceramic vases in the Sir Colin Anderson collection of Art Nouveau that was purchased in 1968 from Pilgrims Place Antiques in Hampstead, London. The vessels were manufactured by Royal Doulton Lambeth studio in the period 1905-1910 and decorated by Maud Bowden.

Beaker-shaped, the vase was wheel thrown in stoneware clay and salt-glazed to produce a mottled green-grey effect. The vessel's tapered cylindrical form is ornamented with tube-lined low relief decoration of stylised flowers in blue and brown. Brown glaze has been applied to the inside of the vase.

Tube-lined slip decoration was very popular in the early decades of the 20th century and can be found on ceramic tiles and dining services from the late Art Nouveau and early Art Deco periods. The technique involved squeezing liquid clay (slip) through a nozzle and trailing it across the clay surface. Trailed slip decoration created a subtle relief effect that could be used by artisans to control the movement of glazes; preventing bright glaze colours from mixing and becoming muddied in the firing.

On the underside of the vessel, the standard impressed trademark combining lion, crown and the words 'Royal Doulton England' dates the object to the period 1902-1922. [1] Both vases are inscribed '*MB*' for Maud Bowden, an artist skilled at producing Art Nouveau style works. Bowden was employed by Royal Doulton from around 1903 to 1937. [2]

From the 1860s, salt-glaze firing became closely associated with the aesthetics of Royal Doulton's stonewares and art pottery. This signature glaze effect is achieved when common salt is thrown into the kiln chamber when the kiln is at peak temperature. The sudden addition of salt creates a vapour, which glazes the ceramic wares and creates attractive chemical reactions.

Royal Doulton began as a small pottery in Lambeth in 1815, owned by John Doulton (1793-1873), Martha Jones and John Watts. The pottery took the name Doulton & Co in 1853. [3] Having prospered from the sale of utilitarian stoneware pipes and sanitary fittings, the company decided to develop the artistic quality of its designs and expand its product lines.

In 1866 the company forged a relationship with the Lambeth School of Art and used its students to decorate its stoneware. [4] Under the direction of Henry Doulton (1820-1897), the company established an art studio in Lambeth, which employed hundreds of artists, and opened a Doulton factory in Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent for the production of bone china wares. [5] In 1901 the company received a Royal warrant and changed its name to Royal Doulton. [6] The Lambeth factory continued to be associated with Doulton's celebrated artistic salt-glazed stoneware.

Vanessa Tothill, April 2021

[1] https://antique-marks.com/doulton-marks.html [accessed 12 April 2021]

[2] http://www.doulton4collectors.co.uk/artist-maudbowden.html [accessed 14 April 2021]

[3] Amanda Geitner and Emma Hazell, eds, *The Anderson Collection of Art Nouveau* (Norwich: Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, 2003), p. 140.

[4] Geitner, p. 140.

[5] Geitner, p. 140.

[6] Geitner, p. 140.

Further Reading

Amaya, Mario, Art Nouveau (London: Dutton Vista, 1966)

Geitner, Amanda and Emma Hazell, eds, The Anderson Collection of Art Nouveau (Norwich: Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, 2003)

Greenhalgh, Paul, ed., Art Nouveau, 1890-1914 (London: V&A Publications, 2000)

Greenhalgh, Paul, ed., The Nature of Dreams: England and the Formation of Art Nouveau (Norwich: Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, 2020)
