



417. Beehive Water Pot

China, late Kangxi Period (1662-1722), c.1720

H: 7.8 cm

Ø: 9.2 cm

An apple-green (pingguo jung) glazed water pot in an elegant beehive shape, with a slightly everted footrim and mouth. The opening is wide with a narrow white rim. The underside has a thin crackled transparent glaze and the interior is left unglazed. The bright even-textured green colour, was obtained by adding copper oxide to a lead glaze over a transparent high-fired glaze. On the bottom is a small rectangular label inscribed in black with 'J.K.8.' The wooden stand has a faux-bamboo foot and a label with the initials 'J.K.'. This object would have been intended for use on the Chinese scholar's desk, as a water container for washing brushes or diluting the ink cakes.

The shape is known as a beehive form taibo zun, but is also referred to as a qizhao zun (chicken coop) as its shape also resembles the bamboo cages used to transport chickens to the market. These vessels were often produced in a mottled red glazed known as 'peach-bloom'; other colours - such as this vibrant green - appear to be used more rarely.

James Keiller (1836-1918) was Swedish engineer and a member of a distinguished Gothenburg family of Scottish descent. He and his Scottish born wife Alice, were both avid collectors of Chinese porcelain. They travelled often, even visiting China on several occasions, acquiring Chinese ceramics along the way. Their collection eventually comprised a staggering 2500 pieces. James Keiller is especially renowned for his efforts in recovering the sunken wreck of Swedish East Indiaman Gothenburg, which sunk fully laden in Gothenburg harbour in 1745. Under his patronage 4360 pieces of Chinese porcelain were salvaged between 1905-1909.

Provenance:

James Keiller (1867-1962) Collection, Sweden
(label nr.8)