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Front of former Gréber manufacturing workshop in Beauvais.



Cut-out décor of three thistles. Departmental Museum of Oise.



Ovoid vase with large opening by Charles Gréber.

Reputed ceramicist, **Charles Gréber** (Beauvais 1853-1935) left a lasting imprint on Beauvaisian ceramics and developed his family business, created by his father in 1870, whilst making his fame.
Once Johann Peter Gréber gave up the running of his**Beauvais** sandstone manufacturing company to his two sons (1880-1899), which continued producing salt glazed stoneware, following the regional tradition. However, geometric décor was moving towards naturalism, in accordance with the popular trends of the time. Vine branches, wreaths, oak leaves, and realistic scenes were thus now found on stoneware. Following Parisian changes, they also started to produce enamelled and architectural ceramics, and glazed ceramics, in a green watercolour. The items made during these years of collaboration are signed, every one out of two, with a hollow engraving of the letters **"G.B"** (Gréber Beauvais) in an oval shape. After the death of their father in 1898, the two brothers went their separate ways, and Charles took on his family's pottery factory from 1899 to 1933. There, he developed ceramic architectural covering and flambé sandstone, which henceforth became specialities of the **Gréber company**. He very quickly became well known and won several awards at national and international exhibitions, for example he won the **"Knight of the Legion of Honour"** in 1926. At this time, he also donated a collection of his work to the departmental **Museum of Oise**. Following his donation, other members of the Greber family also donated to the museum.
The work of **Charles Gréber** can be categorised into four themes : ceramic decoration for buildings, ceramics for interior and exterior architecture, and finally pottery. Architectural ceramics are found on Beuvaisien buildings as well as Parisian buildings, and fit perfectly in the architectural aesthetic style of Art Nouveau, from the 1900s, where the use of colour was highly important. In his semi-industrial production of ceramic coverings, his best work was his very colourful fireplace made out of flambé sandstone. When producing ceramic coverings, he used the principles of Art Nouveau, but adopted an even more energetic approach. He used even more geometric shapes in places where the original Art nouveau would have focused on a variety of foliage (roses, ivy; pine leaves).
He continued to produce more handmade pottery, since it was the reason he became a Manufacturer, whilst following the Parisian trends. He produced a large quantity of flambé sandstone with enamel colours superimposed in relief with animals and foliage. **Charles Gréber** is thus an accomplished artist who knew how to adapt his taste to the trends of the time and make items that were of exceptional quality.

## See also

La famille Gréber — Ernest Chaplet — Vallauris — Art Nouveau — 1900 World's Fair

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