

TRENTON POTTERIES



Newsletter of the
Potteries of Trenton Society

Unpublished Notes by E.A.Barber circa 1892

From the Collection of

Jacqueline Beaudry Dion & Jean-Pierre Dion

Saint-Lambert, Canada

We were thrilled to find some time ago, inserted in the Catalogue of the 1956 *Exhibition of Early Arts of New Jersey*, a two-page document entitled *Excerpt from Unpublished Notes on New Jersey Potteries by Edwin Atlee Barber*. This is an original carbon copy typed on a very thin paper watermarked Edgeworth/ onion Skin/ rag content /VALLEY AHER(?) Co.

The document refers to the Jersey Porcelain and Earthenware Company, the American Pottery Manufacturing Company and the Jersey City Pottery. This text would presumably have been written by Barber at the end of 1892, in preparation for his 1893 work on *Pottery and Porcelain of the United States*.

This is a draft that Barber obviously intended to correct in some respects and expand in others. A careful com-

parison with his later publication shows that some sentences have been restructured, others have been used *in extenso* while occasionally some words have been replaced by more accurate ones. We also learn from the document the source of the View of the Old Jersey Pottery, reproduced in Barber's book: it is from the *Memorial of the Centennial Celebration of the Battle of Paulus Hook*, written by George H. Farrier in 1879.

Although most of the information in this document has been used in Barber's book, it is a piece of historical value revealing the existence of a more extensive and maybe more valuable document about the Trenton potteries. By presenting it to the public we do hope that the full Notes may some day be brought to light.

References

Barber, Edwin Atlee
1893 *Pottery and Porcelain of the United States*. G.P.Putnam's Sons, New York.

Barber, Edwin Atlee
1904 *Marks of American Potters*. Patterson and White, Philadelphia.

New Jersey State Museum.

1956 *Early Arts of New Jersey: The Potter's Art, c. 1680-c. 1900*. Catalogue of an Exhibition at the New Jersey State Museum.

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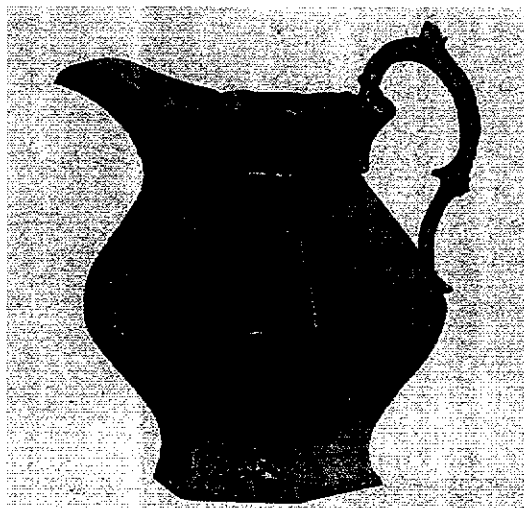


Figure 1. Harrison Pitcher (Barber 1904, p. 43).

Unpublished Notes

Excerpt from Unpublished Notes on New Jersey Potteries by Edwin Allen Barber

The Jersey Porcelain and Earthenware Company was incorporated in "the town of Jersey, county of Bergen", on December 15th, 1825. A good quality of porcelain was made here for about three years, but the manufacture of earthenware was discontinued, when the factory passed into the hands of Messrs. D. & J. Hoadley, about 1830, and their chief product, of superior quality, became the single product. Four years later David Henderson organized the American Pottery Manufacturing Company "for the purpose of manufacturing the various kinds of pottery, at the works already erected." A few years afterward the English method of transfer printing in decoration was adopted here, for the first time in America. During the Presidential campaign of 1840 a large, eight-sided water-pitcher, of cream-colored or light yellow ware, was made, decorated with black underglaze, prints, consisting of an engraving of a log cabin, a vignette portrait of General William H. Harrison, and the American eagle. Many other engravings were executed, but the copper plates were, at a later date, stolen or lost. (Daniel Greatbach, who came of a family of noted English potters, was employed here as a modeler, and designed many ornate pieces, including pitchers with hunting-scenes in relief and hound handles, figures of Christ, Toby mugs, Apostle jugs, relief portraits of eminent men) including Daniel O'Connell, and other pieces.

The name of the works was changed about 1850, to the Jersey City Pottery, and Messrs. Reuss and Turner became proprietors. They introduced the manufacture of ornamental shapes in vases for decorators, and produced in large quantities, for many years, porous cups for electrical purposes.

Toby Jug, of White lined Rockingham ware, Jersey City Pottery, about 1840

Unpublished Notes

Until recently hundreds of old vessel moulds were stored in the loft of the old building, which stood in its original condition until 1892, when it was torn down to make room for a manufacturing establishment. The moulds, which had been accumulating for more than half a century, were hauled away and ruthlessly dumped on the meadows and destroyed. Thus disappeared one of the oldest ceramic landmarks in the country, which had been the cradle of the pottery industry in the United States, where many of our older potters had learned their trade.

View of the Old Jersey City Pottery,

1826 - 1892

(From "Memorial of Paulus Hook")



Figure 2: Toby Mug (Barber 1893, p. 120).



Figure 3: The Old Pottery, Jersey City (Barber 1893, p. 119).

*"Fancy Rockingham" Pottery: The Modeller and Ceramics
in Nineteenth-Century America*
September 9, 2004 to February 27, 2005

On September 9, 2004, the Lora Robins Gallery of Design from Nature, University of Richmond Museums, will open *"Fancy Rockingham" Pottery: The Modeller and Ceramics in Nineteenth-Century America*. The exhibition, which remains on view through February 27, 2005, presents more than seventy examples of "Fancy Rockingham" pottery. Selected from several New York collections, the objects highlight the range and variety in styles, glazes, and materials found in these decorative and utilitarian ceramics from the nineteenth century.

Evolving from English roots, Rockingham ceramics became distinctly American through the creations of the ornamental designers whose works crisscrossed the country. The Rockingham pottery in the exhibition, presented in thematic groups, is explored in terms of the designers and the modellers who created the forms and decorations, the methods used in their production, and the commercial potteries that made them.

The term "Rockingham" originated in the late-eighteenth century to describe a dark brown glaze created by potters in Yorkshire, England, working at the estate of the Marquis of Rockingham. American potters who immigrated from England in the early 1800s adapted the glaze and its application techniques to the tastes of the new market, where it quickly became one of the most popular wares of the mid-nineteenth century.

Diana Stradling, an independent scholar and guest curator of the exhibition, states in her catalogue essay, "Rockingham, in the strict interpretation of the word as it is used today, is a

brown glaze, but we are using it as a metaphor for the whole range of American ware which, when relief-molded with decorative or ornamental or narrative patterns, was called 'fancy goods' in its day, whatever the color."

Prominent modellers with works highlighted in the exhibition include Daniel Greatbatch (who worked in Bennington, Vermont, and Peoria, Illinois) and Charles Coxon (who worked in Baltimore, Maryland, and South Amboy, New Jersey), Josiah Jones, and Stephen Theis. Thematic groupings within the exhibition include a selection of the very popular Rebekah-at-the-Well teapots featuring the Biblical character Rebekah; animal figures from lions to cows to poodles; utilitarian wares from foot warmers to chamber pots; and hound-handled pitchers that often depict a boar hunt on one side and a stag hunt on the other. The latter are so named for their dog-shaped handles in which the dog's head rests at the rim of the pitcher and the hind feet connect with the bowl below.

In addition to their skills and techniques, British-born potters also brought with them popular motifs. The "Toby" jugs and mug in the exhibition feature a popular English character, Toby Fillpot, the subject of an eighteenth-century English barroom ballad. The "Discovering the Maker" section of the exhibition places objects with shards that have recently been discovered at several archeological excavations in Trenton, New Jersey.

Organized by the University of Richmond Museums, the exhibition

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"Fancy Rockingham" Pottery: The Modeller and Ceramics in Nineteenth-Century America

(Continued from page 4)

was curated by Diana Stradling, an independent scholar. Published by the University of Richmond Museums, an illustrated catalogue with essays by the curator and William B. Liebeknecht, Principal Investigator, Hunter Research, Inc., Trenton, New Jersey, is available.

Concurrently on view at the Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, is the exhibition Stoneware Pottery of Eastern Virginia (September 11, 2004 to February 1, 2005). This exhibition features nearly 50 objects representative of the utilitarian salt-glazed stoneware that was manufactured between 1720 and 1865 from potteries in Richmond, Yorktown, Petersburg, Charles City, and Alexandria. Together, "Fancy Rockingham" Pottery and Stoneware Pottery of Eastern Virginia offer a wonderful overview of American stoneware pottery from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

PROGRAMMING

Lecture and exhibition walk-through, Wednesday, September 8, 2004, 7 p.m.

"All That is Brown is Not Necessarily Rockingham," with Diana Stradling, curator of the exhibition.

Opening reception and preview of the exhibition, 8 to 9 p.m. (following the lecture), Lora Robins Gallery of Design from Nature, University of Richmond Museums.

University of Richmond Museums comprises the Lora Robins Gallery of Design from Nature, the arts and natural sciences museum; the Marsh Art Gallery, the art museum; and the Joel and Lila Harnett Print Study Center.

Admission to all museums is free and open to the public. Call (804) 289-8276 for information and directions or visit our website at <http://oncampus.richmond.edu/museums>. Please call at least two weeks prior to your visit to make arrangements for group visits and tours.

Also currently on view at the University of Richmond Museums:

MARSH ART GALLERY

Visions from the Soul: Woodcuts by Hans Friedrich Grohs (through October 8)

Cuba Plástica: Recent Art from Cuba (through October 8)

Martha MacLeish: Wall Constructions (through December 12)

Semi-Annual Student Exhibition (through September 19)

JOEL AND LILA HARNETT PRINT STUDY CENTER

"In Praise of Folly" by Desiderius Erasmus: Wood Engraving by Fritz Eichenberg (through December 5)

LORA ROBINS GALLERY OF DESIGN FROM NATURE

Cheers!: Drinking Glasses from the Permanent Collection (through July 10)

Museum hours: Tuesday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, 1 to 5 p.m. Closed Fall Break (10/09-12), Thanksgiving Week (11/22-11/29), Semester Break (12/17/04 - 1/03/05), and Spring Break (3/5 - 3/14).

New Rockingham Pottery Book from University Press of New England

Rockingham Ware in American Culture, 1830-1930: Reading Historical Artifacts
by Jane Perkins Claney

Rockingham ware was an inexpensive brown-glazed ceramic that was ubiquitous in America from the mid-nineteenth through the early twentieth century. Popular as an antique today, it is regularly sold at venues ranging from flea markets to antique shows. Despite its prevalence in American life for nearly a century and its continued presence as a collector's item, little has been written on this subject of vast interest to collectors, museum curators, historians, and archaeologists.

Jane Perkins Claney has written the first and only full-scale study of Rockingham ware to consider not just its history as a manufactured object but also its role in domestic life. Both an artifact study and a case study in material culture interpretation, this volume offers a totally comprehensive approach to the study of Rockingham ware and serves as a model for future studies of similar objects.

Following a chapter on her methods of identifying and interpreting historical evidence, Claney describes the physical characteristics of Rockingham ware and its production history. She places Rockingham ware within the context of nineteenth-century design and discusses its "Americanization" by U.S. manufacturers. Turning next to usage and meaning, Claney shows how certain Rockingham-ware vessels were used in the expression and main-

tenance of cultural identity and the enactment of social roles. Exploring gender and class ramifications, she demonstrates that although the ceramic was used at all social-class levels and in all types of communities from urban to rural, the choice of vessel forms and decoration differed markedly. Rockingham-ware teapots, for example, were favored by working-class women and rarely appeared in middle-class homes, while middle-class men living in cities formed the market for Rockingham-ware pitchers decorated with hunting scenes. Rockingham-ware spittoons, on the other hand were used universally – even by women. With the specific cultural roles of Rockingham-ware vessels so clearly understood, the vessels themselves become texts through which to interpret the past.

The book features fifty halftones, fourteen of which are presented also in color, and an extensive archaeological database.

To order, visit www.upne.com or call 800-421-1561

Maddock Stein Featured as "Stein of the Month"

Stein Collectors International are featuring a Thomas Maddock's Sons football stein as their "Stein of the Month" during the month of September. Visit www.steincollectors.org to see the article and accompanying photograph.

Tatler Dinnerware Set Identification

Stanley Cornwall, of Westport, MA, recently inherited a set of Tatler dinnerware from his parents. (The W. H. Tatler Decorating Company operated in Trenton from 1874 to 1953. See *Trenton Potteries* Vol. 1, Issue 2.) He is trying to identify the name of the pattern in an attempt to replace some of the broken pieces of the set.

Mr. Cornwall believes that the set was given to his parents as a wedding gift by a member of the Tatler family, for his father a roommate of one of the Tatlers at Blair Academy, Blairstown, New Jersey. His parents were married in 1936 and thus the pattern should date to around that time.

PATTERN DESIGN:

1. Color - Cream

2. Border - Gold with what appears to be an embossed design somewhat like a leaf. About 5/16" wide.

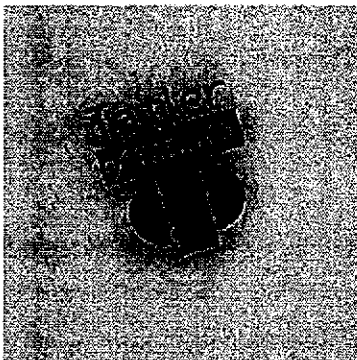
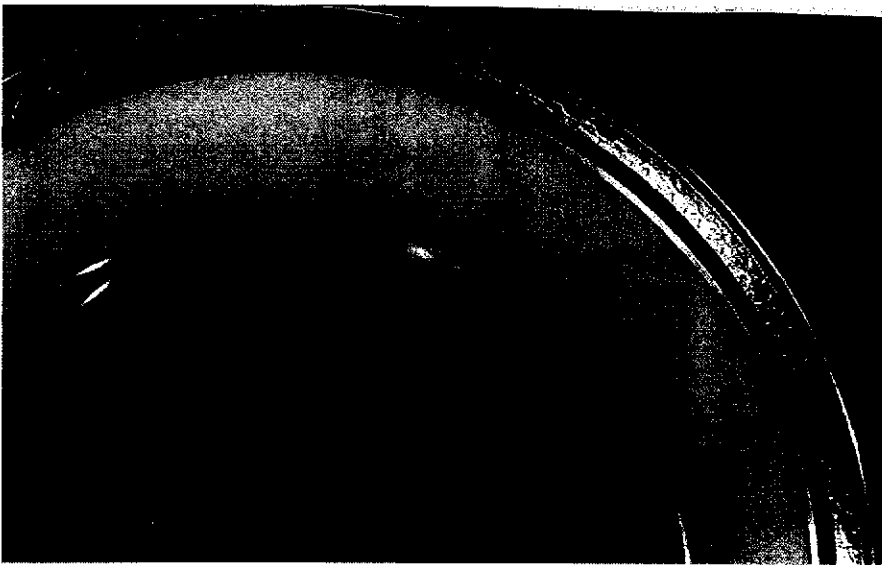
3. Interior Border - Navy Blue - about 1/8" wide.

4. Next - a thin gold line - maybe a 1/16"

5. Next - a very thin gold line around the well of the plate.

6. BACKSTAMP - Tatler of Trenton - Burnt Orange color.

If any of our readers can identify the pattern, or can assist Mr. Cornwall in locating replacement pieces, please contact him directly at Stanley H. Cornwall 126 Cornell Road Westport, MA 02790 508-636-5751 Fax: 508-636-5753 shcsr@earthlink.net.



Above: A detail of the Tatler pattern. The detail is difficult to see in black and white (see description above). The pattern is quite elegant in its simplicity; the body of the plate is a rich cream color.

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Potteries of Trenton Society

POTS Membership

Membership in the Potteries of Trenton Society is open to all interested in Trenton's pottery industry and the ceramic products manufactured here. We welcome pottery workers, historians, archaeologists and collectors. Your contribution is used to support newsletter, lecture, meeting, and conference costs.

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