

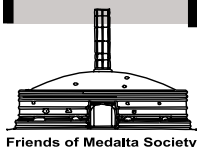
#7

Fall  
1999

# The Medalta Review

(A newsletter for Collectors of Alberta Made Pottery)

Celebrating  
Alberta's  
Ceramic  
History



Friends of Medalta Society

## Some Recent Finds

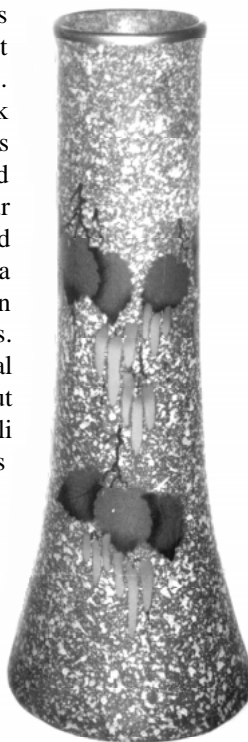
Over the summer a couple of real surprises showed up in Calgary, both at garage sales. Hoping for that lucky find is what keeps the collector going to garage sales and flea markets week after week without finding anything at all. But then without warning the chase pays off.

Can you imagine walking into a garage sale and seeing a dried flower arrangement sitting in a tall slender vase, beautifully decorated with an attractive floral pattern. Well it happened this summer, and while I am not sure of the exact words exchanged they were close to what is recorded here.

"What would you like for those dried flowers over there."  
"I'm not sure, is \$5.00 too much and I'll even throw the vase in for that price."

Wow! My heart would have stopped beating on the spot as anyone familiar with Medalta's designs and shapes would know that the vase those dried flowers were sitting in was a mint condition 14" high style No. 69 vase.

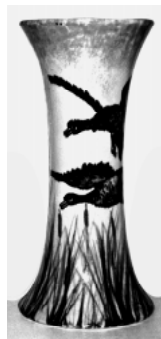
As is typical for the No. 69 vase, it was not stamped with the Medalta name but only with the size and the number 69. The background colour is a fairly dark blue heavily speckled with white. This type of background with the thick and heavy white speckling on a base colour is referred to by Medalta as a sand colour, and perhaps this would be a sand blue although I have never seen that term used in the Medalta records. Just what Medalta called this floral decoration is unknown at present, but to me it looks like clusters of red chili peppers. The image shown here does not do justice to the beauty of this vase as the green leaves above the bright orange to red peppers are difficult to see against the dark background colour when viewed in black and white, and it is even difficult to make out the gold band around the rim.



Some of you will recall that a similar vase, with a delicate floral decoration on a sand grey background, sold about a year ago for \$400.00.

The second beauty to show up was even more rare. While I have recorded about six of the large No. 69 vases

with floral decorations on them I have only heard of one other vase finished with the glazed decoration of geese flying over bulrushes. That one, 12" in height and the larger one of the two shown here, sold at auction about two years ago for about \$500.00, and apparently this one, when it first surfaced about five weeks ago, went for garage sale prices of \$10.00 or less.



## Medicine Hat Potteries

### Tree Branch Pattern

The last of Jack Harmer's collection that was auctioned off by Hall's included the "TREE BRANCH" pattern, and that name appears below the "Little Chief" stamp on some of the pieces, particularly the plates. Unfortunately, at present,



I do not know enough about when Medicine Hat Potteries introduced new patterns to date it any more precisely than from 1946 to 1955. It is highly unlikely that the pattern was pre-war, and the present evidence suggests that the coupe style of dishes was not introduced until after the war.

While some of Medicine Hat Potteries' patterns were taken over by Hycroft, this does not seem to have been one of them as, to date, no marked Hycroft pieces have surfaced with this particular decoration although the "Autumn" and "Capri" patterns are somewhat similar.

The design is a black branch pattern on a pink background. The bottoms of the flatwares are white as is the interior of the cream and sugar. The cream and sugar are what I call the lopsided ones due to their design. The teapot which was not present at this sale would also have been lopsided. The style numbers of these pieces are A-2, A-3 and A-9 respectively for the creamer, sugar and teapot. •

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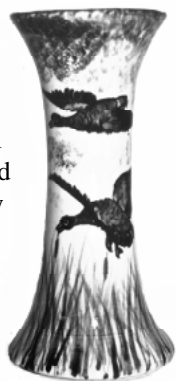
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Continued from page 1

The finish of both is similar with the geese being mainly black, with just a tinge of green here and there, while the bulrushes are in browns, green and some grey, all against the cane coloured background which is slightly darker at the top of the vase.

Both vases are style No. 104 or the hourglass shape, but the one is 12" high while the other is only 10" high. In comparing the two you can see that the handpainted images of the geese are almost identical on both vases, although the positioning of the birds is reversed.

The Medalta stamps on the vases are identical, G.19+G.20, indicating that they were made between 1931 and 1933, and one really wonders if the two were in fact not produced at the same time and sold as a pair. •



## The Mount Rundle Decoration

Medicine Hat,  
April 19/39

Medalta Potteries Ltd.  
380 - 3rd Street West  
Calgary, Alberta.  
Dear Sirs;

The Service Hardware of this City, have requested that you forward them, a complete price list of Medalta Products, showing their discounts on both firsts and seconds.

Mr T. Hulme states that Mr Waines has his decoration note book, which they were using at the Hotel on Mr Waines last visit here. Please return same as soon as possible.

We trust you will forward the customs papers for faucets from New York which are now here.

Enclosed please find a letter from Morris Taylor of Jasper Alberta enquiring about tourist souvenirs, we would suggest the following, small elite 1 pt pitcher with colored decoration of Three Sisters, Mount Rundle, No 1 Vases with mounted police, Hat Ash Trays, Flat Ash Trays, or you may ask them to supply us with some scenic photography for silhouette treatment.

Yours very truly;  
Medalta Potteries Ltd.

P/O.

Per \_\_\_\_\_

Several years ago a collector sent me pictures of a cream and sugar set with the caption "MT.RUNDLE/BANFF". It was a real pleasure to see this set as it related to one of the letters that I had copied from the Medalta files held by the Provincial Archives in Edmonton. The letter dated 19 April 1938, reproduced here, also mentions the

Three Sisters decoration on the Elite pitcher and mounted police decals on the small No. 1 vase.

The Mount Rundle decoration is underglaze and in full colour against the honey coloured body. As was typical for the Elite set, the interior was finished in white.



The size of the pitcher is 1/2 pint as indicated by the impressed marking on the bottom.

In regards to the other decorations mentioned in this letter, I have probably recorded one of them. The mounted police decoration is likely the one shown here as it is the only police decoration that I have recorded. It, though, rather than being glazed like the Mount Rundle decoration was in bright coloured lacquers against a pale green background. It is too bad that the face is largely worn off, as it looks like it would have been an attractive decoration. I have not yet seen the Three Sisters decoration on any Medalta product. If one of our readers has a piece with this image, please send me a picture of it to include in a future newsletter issue. •



## The Medalta Review

**Editor:** Ronald M. Getty  
216 Maddock Way N.E., Calgary, Alta  
T2A 3X3 Canada Phone: 403-273-1132  
gettyr@nucleus.com

**Photographer:** Jim Simpson  
**Design & Layout:** Tony Hansen

**Published & Distributed by:**  
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Box 204, 703 Wood Street SE  
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Phone or FAX (403) 529-1070  
David Jamieson, Chairman

The Medalta Review is published quarterly in the interest of keeping collectors of Alberta made pottery informed on newly found products, current prices, history of the potteries and other aspects relating to the Alberta pottery industry. Each issue includes a Hycroft and Medalta section. Other columns will bring you reports regarding Alberta Potteries (Wyatt and Yuill), Athabasca Potteries, Medicine Hat Potteries (Little Chief), Medalta (1966) Ltd., Provincial Industrial Enterprises (PIE) or Sunburst Ceramics, and our question and answer column will reply to inquiries from our readers and museum visitors.

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## The ELITE Pitcher: 1938 to about 1946

This is probably a good time to take a more detailed look at the Elite pitcher as it is one of the pitchers that we have not yet discussed in the newsletter. It was a replacement for the squat Cyma pitcher, another one of the twelve or more pitchers that Medalta produced over the years.

The Elite pitcher came in 1/2, 1, 1 1/2 and 2-pint sizes, and the size is usually marked on the bottom as an impressed numeral. The

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the half  
pint one  
as it was  
marketed

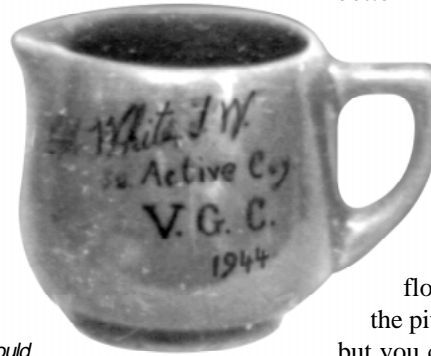
along with a matching sugar bowl. In this regard the Elite pitcher is unique. None of the other true pitchers came with a sugar bowl to match. There was no barrel, ship, Cyma or Cypress style sugar bowls. Other cream and sugar bowl sets such as the domestic dinnerware patterns with the swirl and thumbprint designs on the rim were limited to one size of pitcher, not the full range of four as in the Elite pattern.

In addition to the 1/2 pint, the one pint size is fairly easy to find as well, particularly in comparison to the two larger sizes which are both relatively hard to find. As you can see from the illustrations the pitcher is globular in shape and relatively low in profile. The walls were fairly thick and as a result the pitcher stood up pretty well to regular use.

A few of the Medalta letters refer to this pitcher as the "Pear Pitcher" but eventually the name "Elite" was chosen and incorporated into the mould. One of the

earliest references appears in a letter dated 2 April 1938.

*"Re the decoration of the Three Sisters and Mount Rundle on the Cyma pitchers: This decoration is of a very attractive design. It takes three stencils and a little brush work to complete it. However it*



*could be done in one color and one stencil such as the house decoration. We really recommend the first one and*

*although it requires more work which will increase, yet it should be a much better seller. We have made a new pitcher - called "Pear" - corresponding in shape and handle to the non drip teapots. This pitcher will replace the Cyma pitchers, which are casted. The Pear pitcher is jiggered with handle attached and is really of a very pleasing shape. We told Mr. Perry not to sell any Cyma pitchers with the above decoration, told him to only get the opinion of the trade on this decoration. We will have samples of the Pearpitcher next week."*

While the date of introduction is well documented to early 1938, the date when it was discontinued is still open to question. One commemorative 1/2-pint pitcher dated 1944 has shown up so we can presume it was still in production at that time. I have found no listings for it after 1944, and the Medalta stamps that have been observed on it all date before 1947. The next style of pitcher, the "Cypress" pitcher with a

basket-weave design on the bottom half, was in production by 1947.

O t h e r  
decorations that you can find on this pitcher include the maple leaves and two or three different floral patterns. Many of the pitchers are white lined but you can also find them in

solid colours. So far the range includes a royal blue, cream, yellow, crimson, black at the rim flowing into a deep red, and a blend of greens sometimes with a dash of blue included. When you find a matching set, you actually have quite a nice cream and sugar set and I have visited a few



collectors who make regular use of their set.

The 1/2 pint Elite pitcher with accompanying sugar bowl was also used as an Ogilvie/Merchant advertising item. On June 11, 1938, Medalta quoted prices for items decorated with G38/10, shaded golden brown, and stamped with the Ogilvie/Merchant name; the 6" salad bowl would be 14 cents and the 1/2 pint Elite pitcher 19 cents. In a future issue of the newsletter, I will take a closer look at these Ogilvie pitchers and sugar bowls and provide a listing of the ones that have been recorded so far. •

## Announcing Another Hall's Pottery Auction

Frank Hall has advised me that there will be another auction this Fall devoted exclusively to Alberta Made Pottery. It will be held at 7:00 P.M. on the 25<sup>th</sup> of October and he expects to have about 300 separate lots again. The pieces which he presently has in hand are all put away and therefore

they were not available for me to view. I have no idea as to the range of pieces that will be included but as usual I would expect to find a few surprises and hopefully even a few unique pieces.

As requested for previous auctions, please contact Hall's Auction to let them know that you would like a detailed listing when it is available. Write to: Hall's Auction, 5240 1A Street S.E., Calgary, Alberta, T2H 1J1;

phone 403-640-1244; fax 403-259-3682; e-mail [hodgins@cadvision.com](mailto:hodgins@cadvision.com) and check the web-site [www.hodginsauction.com](http://www.hodginsauction.com) from time to time. Hopefully pictures of the collection will once again be posted on their web-site. Also please keep in mind that a listing and pictures, if included, will not be available until about 2 weeks before the sale. See you at the sale. •

## The ELITE Sets Made For Dairyland

Quite a few collectors have the Elite cream and sugar set advertising "Dairyland" which was of course a company providing dairy products in the Vancouver area. Bruce Douglas made some inquiries for me and found that the company's address was 405 West 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, in Vancouver, from 1938 to 1941, the time when the Elite sets were ordered. Apparently the company is still in business today, now located in Burnaby.

The earliest set is the one most sought after by collectors as it shows a scene of the Dairyland plant on the side. The scene within an oval format shows the Dairyland building with a road and fields in the foreground. The building is mainly shown in a blue-grey with the road in yellow and some additional hand coloured specks that may be cows in the fields. I have never run across a letter dating this set but by the stamps found on it and knowing that the Elite pitcher was not in mass production before May 1938, we can date it from about June 1938 to November 1941 when the order was placed for the new set.

The new set is the reason for reproducing this letter from the Medalta files as it clearly shows that this set did not include a sugar bowl with the word Dairyland on it. Rather it was marketed with a sugar bowl finished in a solid crimson colour with no stamping on it as indicated by the note penned to the end of the sentence. The pitcher is relatively plain as it simply has the name Dairyland (with an underlining tail) written across its side. As I recall the name is written in blue oxide and therefore it is well accented against the primrose or light yellow background. •



CODES:  
A.B.C. 5TH ED.  
BENTLEY'S  
ORIENTAL 3 LETTER

TELEPHONE MARINE 7847  
CABLES:  
COLOREXIM

### Columbia-Orient Export and Import Co., Ltd.

B. A. CUNLIFFE, MANAGER

B. W. CUNLIFFE, SECRETARY

AGENTS:  
Medalta Potteries Ltd.  
Hotel & Hospital Supply Co.  
J. H. Middleton & Co.  
Circle Bar Knitting Co. Ltd.

136 WATER STREET  
VANCOUVER, B. C.  
CANADA

November 8th, 1941.

Medalta Potteries Limited,  
Medicine Hat,  
A L T A.

Dear Sirs:

We are in receipt of the sample Sugar and Cream stamped "Dairyland", which you have sent for our inspection in connection with our order No. 1286.

Our customer prefers the decoration on the sample Cream Jug, in which the stamping is done under the primrose color. You will, therefore, proceed with this order, as we advised you on October 17th, namely:

You will execute 200 pairs of Sugars and Creams in assorted colors, without any stamping and 600 pairs with the Creams as your sample (which I am returning to you), that is, in primrose with the name stamped under the glaze and the Sugars in crimson. *with no stamping*

Please advise us that these directions are understood by you.

Yours sincerely,

COLUMBIA-ORIENT EXPORT AND IMPORT CO., LTD.

*B. A. Cunliffe*  
Manager

BAC-D.

## Blue Mountain Sale Calgary

The recent September Blue Mountain sale brought few surprises, but perhaps once again some of the choice pieces exchanged hands before the sale opened to the public.

I even bought a few pieces this time which I had intended to donate to the Friends of Medalta, but before the day was over I had passed them along to collectors that had helped me over the years. One of these pieces was the plaza sugar bowl produced for the hotel china trade. It was not in the best of condition as it was crazed on the white interior with brown staining seeping into the craze lines, but it was unusual in that the usual dark green exterior was quite dull. I do not see the plaza sugar bowl too often, and therefore I consider it to be one of the harder hotelware pieces to find.



**Plaza Sugar**  
CAT. No.  
W172 - White  
GB172 - Green Band  
BB173 - Red Band  
S172 - Slipware

Packed 6 doz. to carton.  
Shipping weight approx. 40 lbs. per carton.

The picture shown here is taken from the 1947

Medalta Hotel China catalogue as I do not have a snapshot of the dark green/white lined one in my photograph collection.

In a future issue I will have to show you what I thought was the bargain of the day at the Blue Mountain show. It was a pair of bookends made by J.W. Wyatt, 1931-1936, depicting the three monkeys, see no evil, hear no evil and speak no evil. What a steal at \$50.00.

Another nice item I heard of was one of the Alberta Pottery birch-bark pattern plates made by Yuill's company which had the name of the town of Bowness, Alberta, below the scene of a ram. This too I hope to get a picture of.

And the last item that I will mention was a piece that showed up on the last day of the sale. It was a Medalta beer stein but what a special one as it had the crest of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in gold on the side of the blue stein. In my opinion it was a bargain at \$35.00, and it must have been newly brought out on the last day of the sale as it is unbelievable that it would have been missed by all the serious collectors that went through on Friday and Saturday. •

## Ash Tray, Pitcher Follow-up

Thanks to a number of collectors for contacting me and for sending me photographs or photocopies of their finds, I can report some new additions to our listing of flat ashtrays and ship style pitchers.

The first one was a complimentary ashtray given out by the O.C. Arnott Co. Ltd., Investment Bankers, located in Calgary. This particular flat ashtray is indeed special to the Medalta collector who owns it as O. Clair Arnott was one of the partners who bought the assets of Medalta in 1929.

I have not yet taken the time to see if I can find the order for this ashtray by looking through Medalta's financial ledger which would date it precisely, but from the Medalta mark on the bottom, the G.15 stamp, we can date it from 1930 to 1932. The circle and advertising is in black against the cane coloured center, while the rim is glazed in a dark green. The ashtray is the ridged bottom variety but it is somewhat unusual in that it measures 5 7/8 inches in diameter whereas most flat ashtrays are only about 5 3/8 inches in size.

The other round flat ashtray reported to me was one given away by the Hotel Tilley. It is the usual size of 5 3/8 inches diameter, the lettering is brown against the natural cane colour of the clay, the mill scene in the center is the rubber stamped variety, the bottom exhibits the two encircling ridges just inside the basal ring and the oxide stamp is the G.30.a one.

Although I had not previously seen a sample of this ashtray, I was able to list the order in the Booklet which I wrote some 8 years ago, "Medalta's Advertising Premiums and Named Hotelwares," as the Hotel Tilley was billed \$21.50 for the order of 144 ashtrays

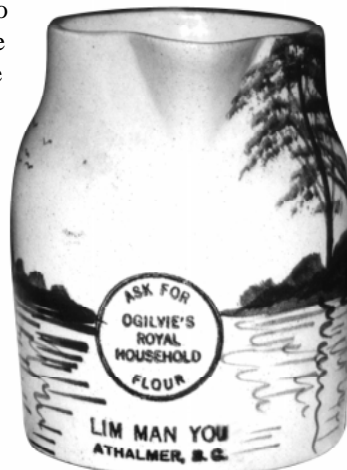
and an additional \$1.30 for the rubber stamp used to place the naming on the ashtrays. The billing date was December 1937 and that, coupled with the words "Best Wishes" indicates that it was a Christmas giveaway.

I might add that the collector who picked up this ashtray got it for nothing. Sometimes it pays off to be known as a collector of Medalta as in this case that is all it took to land this special piece. I wish someone would surprise me with a phone call saying that they have found this ashtray, and if you want it to come by and pick it up!

The ashtray advertising "Edmonton's Gas Company" was included in the listing of round flat ashtrays given in Issue #3, Fall 1998, but I forgot to show a photograph of it. The design or logo in the center makes this one worth showing, albeit a little late.

The new ship style pitcher reported to me was one named to LIM MAN YOU of Athalmer, B.C. It bears the usual impressed markings on the bottom and is decorated with the handpainted mill scene. It dates 1932 to 1934 and is marked with the rarely seen Ogilvie slogan within a circle and with the stores name below.

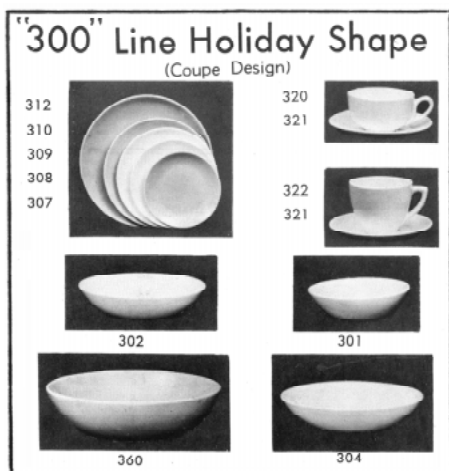
The other new find reported to me was a 1 pint ship style pitcher named to "J. Skogg & Son, General Merchants, Wildwood, Alta." It is decorated with the silhouette owls and the Ogilvie slogan is the "ASK FOR" one. I do not yet have a photograph of this pitcher to show you but you can add it to your list in the meantime. •





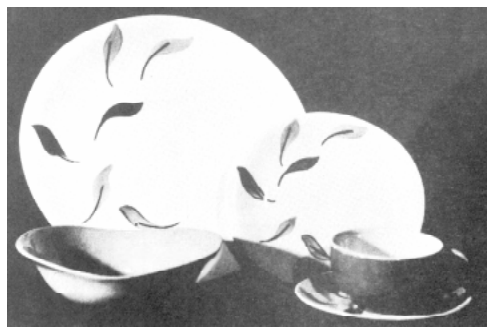
## Hycroft's Dinnerware Patterns

With this issue of the newsletter I will be starting a series of articles covering the various dinnerware patterns that Hycroft produced over the years. I will start the series by showing illustrations of the basic shapes as taken from various Hycroft price lists and with a general discussion of the three shapes that you are most likely to run across, namely the Balmoral, coupe and orbit ones.



Also in this issue I will provide a photographic record of all the back stamps that include the pattern number along with the pattern name. A later issue or issues will give the remaining Hycroft stamps that

The back stamps by themselves though are not too relevant if one does not know what the pattern looks like. Therefore, we will also start to illustrate and discuss selected patterns in this issue.



Future newsletters will look at other patterns and list the ones that have not yet been seen. Hopefully, our readers will be able to send me photographs or photocopies of stamps not shown herein as I am sure that there are many yet to be recorded.

### The Three Shapes

The first one, the "300" Line Holiday Shape, is more often referred to as the coupe design. It is a plain round pattern with the rim turned upwards slightly and it is one of the patterns that Hycroft inherited from its predecessor, Medicine Hat Potteries. The "300" Line refers to the style numbers assigned to the various pieces as you can see from the illustration that all of them are in the 300s.

The second shape also was inherited from the Medicine Hat Potteries and was known at that time as the "Matina" pattern. It too is basically round but due to the swirl pattern on the rim it has a slight scalloped appearance. Perhaps Hycroft should have stayed with the name "Matina" as it was well recognized but rather they choose to call it the Balmoral Line, perhaps hoping that a new name would bring new sales. Once again the illustration taken from a Hycroft Price List dated July 15, 1957, shows

that the style numbers assigned to the pieces were all in the 400s.

The third pattern, the orbit shape, appears to have been a new design by Hycroft as I have never seen any oval or orbit shaped dishes with the Medicine Hat Potteries "Little Chief" stamp on them. Perhaps I should not even be showing the orbit pattern here as the Hycroft patterns that I have listed and the back stamps which are shown are only found on the Coupe and Spiral Flute wares. The earliest record for the orbit shape so far is 1958 and therefore it is possible that samples could be found with the pattern number on the bottom.

### The Back Stamps

Most if not all of the Hycroft factory stamps shown here are in fact discrete rubber stamps giving both the Hycroft name and the pattern name and number. The Diamond stamp shown here is typical of the layout but as you can see by the illustrations there are exceptions.



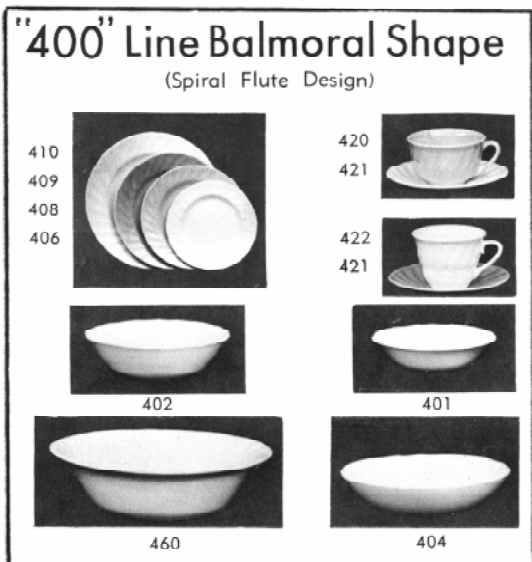
The Festival stamp for example has the pattern name and number printed out. Is this marking one rubber stamp? I doubt it. I suspect that the pattern and name were added by hand until they could get a proper rubber stamp made up, but so far this is the only stamp that I have seen and it is from a single occurrence.

The Game Birds in Flight stamp is also an exception to the general pattern as the pattern name and number is above



the Hycroft name. To me, it also seems to be slightly misaligned so perhaps that particular stamp was in fact 3 separate ones. The 22K GOLD found below the main stamp is very definitely applied using a separate rubber stamp.

As you look through the pictures you will see others that appear to be misaligned such as the Monarch Rose one. Are they separate rubber stamps or not? Only time will tell and I think the answer may well be in the Hycroft business records that I have not yet looked at. The accounts payable records likely list every rubber stamp that Hycroft bought over the years.



give the pattern name but not the number. As a general rule these are later in date than the ones shown here.

Another exception to the general layout is the Pioneer pattern stamp, and the differences in this case can be explained by the fact that this pattern was brought out some ten years later than most of the other patterns shown here. The Pioneer pattern appears in the invoices for 1966 and 1967 and at that late date it is unusual for the pattern number to be given.

In order to determine when these stamps were used to mark Hycroft's products it was necessary to prepare a chart of pattern names and numbers as gleaned from the invoice records. Space does not permit giving that listing here, but it will appear in the next issue of the newsletter.

What it shows is a continuous assignment of pattern names and numbers from 501 through to 565 although I am still missing a few numbers in my list. The other pattern numbers found on these early stamps more or less go up by 100s from 1100 to 1900. Pattern numbers higher than 1900 were assigned but unlike the earlier numbers they generally were not incorporated as part of the rubber stamp.

### Selected Hycroft Patterns

In this issue we only have room to look at a few of Hycroft's dinnerware patterns. More will follow in future issues, and for each we will look at the colour variations, date range and other aspects when we have them.

#### DENIM-No. 1200

Denim was made on the coupe shape dishes, and the first year that it appears in the Hycroft sales records is 1957. It had a long history of production as it was still listed in 1969. From what I could see in the invoice records it was not that popular a pattern, but it did last a long time.

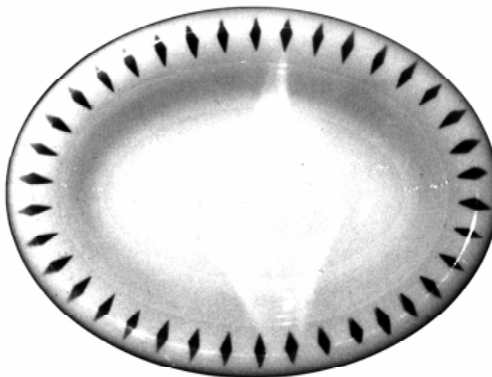
Denim actually came in two varieties, Plain

Denim and Speckled Denim but the only name that I have ever seen on the back stamps is Denim. The pattern came in at least five different colours: yellow, blue, green, brown and pink. In the plain variety the coloured band with the wavy black line beside it was applied to a plain white plate. The speckled variety had the same coloured bands applied to a speckled base which is described in Hycroft's ads as matching speckled backgrounds. This does not mean that the speckling is the same colour as the band as the blue banded pattern is usually on speckled grey and the grey band on a speckled pink, but other colours may indeed be against a speckled background of a similar colour.

The plain Denim appears to be quite hard to find as I have not seen it in too many collections. Perhaps it was just too similar to the more popular Calico pattern.

To give you some idea as to prices 20 piece sets sold for \$4.00 in early 1957, 32 piece sets for \$7.75 and 53 piece sets for \$11.00.

#### DIAMONDS-No. 1400



As I mentioned earlier, I have not yet seen the Diamonds stamp on an actual piece. The illustration shown here is taken from an impression of an actual rubber stamp in the Friends of Medalta collection.

The only pieces of pottery that I have seen with a diamond pattern on them have all been on heavy hotel china rather than one of the three domestic

patterns mentioned above, and the piece that I have illustrated here is a 4 x 6" oval vegetable dish with the extra heavy rolled type of rim commonly found on hotelwares. The Hycroft back stamp on it did not include either the name Diamonds or the number 1400.

Out of interest Medicine Hat Potteries also listed a pattern named "DIAMOND" in a December 1954 list but so far I have not seen any diamond like design on a piece marked with the Little Chief stamp.

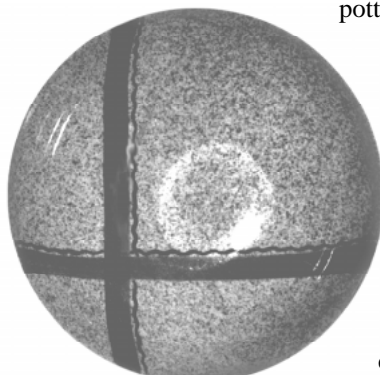
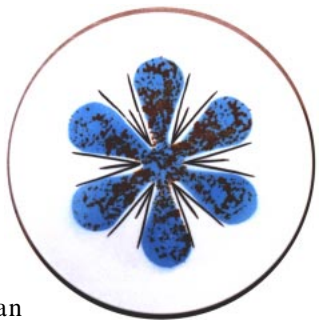
The only actual reference to a diamond pattern which I have from the Hycroft business records was found on an invoice dated 30 August 1955 where the 20 piece Diamond pattern sold for \$2.25. Since the pattern name was given as DIAMOND and not DIAMONDS, it could well be that Hycroft was simply selling off some old stock made by Medicine Hat Potteries.

#### PIONEER-No. 1620

As you can see from the illustration, the back stamp for this pattern is quite different in wording and layout from the other stamps with the pattern number on them. This undoubtedly is due to the significant difference in time as the dates I have for it are 1966 and 1967 whereas all the others date to 1958 or before.

Pioneer is found on the coupe style of dishes. In my opinion it is quite an attractive geometric design, perhaps looking somewhat like a snowflake in that it has six segments. The colours listed in the records include yellow, blue and green (also listed as chartreuse in some records) but so far I have not seen the green variation. It is the six segments that are coloured, and the ones that I have seen have all had some speckling on the blue or yellow. The W-shaped lines between are black and the whole design stands out well against the plain white background.

The prices in 1966 and 1967 were not too much higher than those in the late 1950s as



20 piece sets sold for \$4.25 each.

### FLAMINGO-No. 506

Flamingo is found on the Balmoral or swirl edge style of dishes, and this is the main difference that separates it from its sister pattern Everglades. It was assigned pattern number 506 and Hycroft's invoices indicate that sets were sold from 1955 to 1964. I have only seen it in one colour to date, that being a red hibiscus flower with leaves in several shades of green against a white background. The rim of the dishes is finished with a speckled gold band.



The cup which I have seen with the Flamingo pattern on it is the low swirl pattern one with the B-12 style number impressed in the bottom, and Flamingo is one of the patterns where you could order your plates in either the 9 or 10 inch sizes. The price of 20 piece sets in 1957 was \$4.50 and several 53 piece ones were listed at \$13.44 each.

### EVERGLADES-No. 509

The Everglades pattern, no. 509, is found on the coupe shaped dishes. The shape of the dishes and the lack of any gold trimming is what separates it from the Flamingo pattern. It dates 1955 to 1959 and it too, as far as I can tell, was only available in one colour. Basically it is a large red hibiscus flower with leaves and stems in different shades of green placed on the left-hand side of the white dishes. So far I have recorded no samples with any gold trim on them. The prices I recorded for 20 piece sets ranged from \$3.00 to \$3.60.



The Everglades pattern, on the same coupe style of dishes, was originally made by Medicine Hat Potteries and the pattern name was in fact

Hibiscus (sometimes given as Hibiscus). The only colour variation that I have recorded for the "Little Chief" pieces is the red hibiscus against a yellow background, but the records do mention green and white background colours as well. And there could well be other colours that I have not yet heard of as I have not recorded very many collections of MHP's wares.

### TOP O' THE MORN-No. 526

A recent find finally revealed the decoration that went with this pattern's name, and indeed it is a fairly attractive one when found in mint condition. I suspected that

the pattern likely had something to do with the morning glory with a name like Top O' The Morn and indeed that is exactly what it turned out to be. As far as I can tell it was only produced for a short period of time in 1956.

The pattern is found on the Balmoral or swirl edge shape. The flowers are blue with a touch of white, red and yellow while the stems and leaves are in various shades of green, and the whole floral pattern is accented by subtle grey shadowing behind. The floral pattern fills the center of the flatwares, but it is placed on the side of the exterior of pieces such as the creamer and sugar bowl.

To finish off the pattern, decorative gold scroll work is found all around the rim of the dishes.

The cream pitcher and sugar bowl found with this set are the large ones, both with a spiral swirl design on the exterior, with the impressed style numbers B-13 and B-14 in the bottoms respectively.

The popularity of this pattern can be

inferred from the invoice records as being quite low as it seldom appears on the invoice records. The price seems to have been in line with other patterns as the one mention that I recorded from 1956 listed it at \$11.92 for a 52 piece set. If I had to make a guess of the reason for low sales, I would attribute it to the fact that the decoration was overglaze. As a result, the floral image and particularly the gold scrollwork wore or got scraped off quite quickly and once damaged it really was not that attractive.



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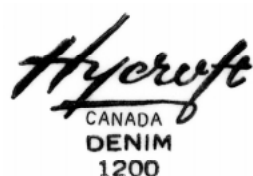
If you are a subscriber and would like an electronic copy of this newsletter (in Acrobat color format) please send an email to [medalta@digitalfire.com](mailto:medalta@digitalfire.com) for information on how to get it. •

## Sunburst & Medalta Catalogs on CD

All Sunburst and Medalta Potteries Ltd. catalogs are now published in HTML format on The Medalta CD. Each displays thumbnails of all the pages, you can click any one of them for a full size reproduction. We are in the process of providing photos of each item represented in the catalogs, starting with Sunburst. We will keep you informed. Check our website for the latest information. •



## HYCROFT'S PATTERN NUMBER STAMPS



## A Facelift for Medalta's BeeHive Kilns

The badly weathered, four remaining kilns at the historic Medalta Potteries site are receiving structural stabilization at long last, seventy some years after they were built which was between 1924 and 1928. The cost at that time was about

\$8400.00 each, so they were by no means a minor expense to the company.

Each kiln measures some 34 feet in diameter on the exterior (30 interior) and has a total internal area of about 700 square feet. The walls are about 30 inches thick with many layers of brick. I do not have the exact height of the kiln but I would estimate the vertical wall to be about 12 feet high with an overall height in the neighbourhood of 15 feet not counting the high central smokestack. They were of course gas fired and constructed with locally made brick which was strapped with steel reinforcing bands. They were commonly referred to as down-draft kilns. The hot air from the burners around the outer perimeter went up the outside walls and was drawn down through the ware and then through the open brick work in the floor and finally expelled up the center chimney.

They were primarily built for firing stonewares, particularly crocks and jugs, but as Medalta expanded its line they were put to good use firing other products at lower temperatures.

Anyone that has seen the

kilns in the recent past has observed the crumbling mortar, broken bricks, bricks falling from place and weeds and even seedlings starting to grow from crevices on the curved domes.

But take a look at them now, or at least at

the one that has been restored to date. Thanks to financial assistance from Alberta Historical Resource Foundation and Parks Canada, restoration is being undertaken - one brick at a time.

Plan a trip to Medicine Hat to see what has and what is taking place at the kilns, but wait until next year now, late spring or summer, as the kilns will soon be snow covered and since the Interpretive Center is now closed for the season.

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## WANT ADS

**Help Wanted:** I would like to do a future article on the Military collectibles produced by Medalta over the years, and I need your help in documenting what is out there. I would like to hear from collectors who's collection I have never recorded and about any new finds in the collections that I have seen. Please contact me by mail, phone or email at the addresses given at the beginning of the newsletter. If you leave a message on my answering machine, I will be sure to return your call. Thanks for your help. Ron Getty, Editor.

**For Sale or Trade:** Are you interested in acquiring the primrose Dairyland Elite cream pitcher? perhaps to match a crimson sugar bowl already in your collection. Call 604-826-2620 and you may be able to get one. Good luck.

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For those who have renewed their subscription, please remember that you get one ad per year, up to three lines long, free with your subscription. Other ads \$1.00 per line, or partial line. Pictures with your ad extra at \$1.00 each. Advertise for wanted items, items for sale, items for trade, requests for information or any other matters related to the collecting/documenting of pottery. •

## Progress at the Medalta Website

If you have not checked the Medalta website at <http://www.medalta.org> please do so. We actually had two sites for the past year but now they have been combined into one with a referring page on the other. We would very much appreciate a note from you if you have suggestions or corrections. Additionally please fill in a membership form or email us a note so we can put your email address on file.

Three new sections have been added. The companies section lists the twenty or so companies that have made ceramics here and shows the logo of each. Some of them provide links to a separate page that goes into detail describing the company. These pages will be developed this winter and will serve as story boards at the Interpretive Centre in the spring. The Appraisals and Membership pages will be used so visitors can get a rough appraisal on a piece of pottery or register for membership on line. •

Box 204, 703 Wood Street SE  
MEDICINE HAT, Alta.  
Canada T1A 7E9  
Phone/FAX 403-529-1070  
<http://digitalfire.com/medalta>

