

## Medalta's Hanging Baskets

A Medalta purist, one who collects only pieces that have the Medalta name on them, will never acquire quite a number of pieces, particularly many of the ones made before 1930. Even some pieces made after 1930 went unstamped such as many of the lamp bases, but there are a few vases that are even hard to find such as the No. 63 and No. 69 ones. Perhaps, at one time, they were identified as Medalta-made items by paper stickers placed on them, but for the most part I suspect that they were simply not marked at all.

Medalta's hanging baskets are among the unmarked items that Medalta made over the years, but thanks to catalogue illustrations we at least know what they looked like.

PAGE TWENTY-FOUR

MEDALTA

HANGING  
BASKETS



Made in cream colored unglazed stoneware.  
Sizes 10, 12 and 14-inch.



FANCY  
FLOWER POTS  
AND SAUCERS

Cream colored unglazed Stoneware. Sizes 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 inch.  
Flower Pots and Saucers listed separately.



The caption accompanying the illustrations states "Made in cream colored unglazed stoneware./ Sizes 10, 12 and 14-inch", and this matches what I have seen in the marketplace.

The baskets were unglazed, yellowish in colour and measured close to the ones given here. So far in collections I have seen ones that measured 13¼-inches and 14¾-inches in diameter, likely the 12 and 14-inch sizes.

Hopefully you can read the description for the flowerpot also shown on this page, but if not,

## A British American Hat Ashtry

This low style hat ashtray made by Hycroft was a real surprise when it sold on ebay a month or so ago. As usual, when a Hycroft piece appears, I check my notes to see if I have any record of the item, and much to my surprise this was a new recording for me. There is likely an order for this hat somewhere in the Hycroft invoice records, but to date I have not been able to identify it under BA, British American or Ed O'Neill.



If no Hycroft collectors were interested in

this piece, I was going to go all out and place a bid of \$15.00 US, but I did not get a chance to step in. Firstly, a Hycroft collector placed a bid, going as high as \$23.00 US, bidding against what I must presume was a "gasoline alley" collector. But that was only the start, for within the day others quickly joined in the auction.

When all was said and done, the bidding ended at \$61.00 US or about \$97.00 Canadian. Wow! I never would have imagined a Hycroft hat going for almost one hundred dollars.

After the auction, I did contact both the buyer and the seller to see if they knew where the service station was located. The seller advised that the hat was picked up at a sale in southern Alberta several years ago, perhaps in Medicine Hat, but even that was tenuous. And the buyer, turned out to be a collector in Ontario who acquires B-A items as they once operated a British American service station. •

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## Important Notice

Please note that I have changed my email address to [gettyr@shaw.ca](mailto:gettyr@shaw.ca). My old one [gettyr@nucleus.com](mailto:gettyr@nucleus.com) will remain in effect for another three months or so, but eventually I will drop it. It was a slow phone connection rather than the Shaw high speed cable connection that I need for sending and receiving picture documents from our readers. •

## The Medalta Review

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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.

Subscription is \$25.00 per year. Back issues are available from the Friends of Medalta at \$5.00 each plus postage and handling.

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## From the Editor

Thank you for your support over the past year. As usual, at times, I was tardy in getting the newsletter completed and off to you by the end of each quarter, particularly this one. I will try harder to meet the deadlines, but I will make no promises as researching and writing the articles for the newsletter is a hobby that must take second place to my regular job.

If I must present an excuse, my tardiness this time was the length of the newsletter and the additional pictures. I sincerely hope that the additional information has made your wait worthwhile.

My thanks again to the many collectors that help in making this newsletter possible by sharing their information and collections with me, and thank you for the appreciative words that so many of you offer from time to time.

I can hardly believe that this is Issue # 20. That is five full years of the newsletter. I always knew I was full of it, but 20 issues. That is over 100,000 words, and some 750 pictures of products made in the Medicine Hat area! Surely, I must be running out of material, but I am not. I am still hearing of new finds and there are still so many topics that I have yet to cover, such as the wall plaques. But that is another story...

Ronald Getty, Editor

## Renewal Time

Merry Christmas to each and every one of you, albeit late, very late. I hope that you had a pleasant holiday and found time to celebrate the start of 2003 appropriately.

With the New Year comes subscription renewal time and we ask that you take a moment to do that now. Please take the enclosed renewal slip with your name on it, place it along with your payment of **\$25.00** in an envelope and send it off to The Friends of Medalta Society.

Please note that we have had to increase the yearly subscription fee to cover the increased postage costs. A year or so ago, sneaky Canada Post changed the size of the envelope that mails for 47 cents, making it smaller. As a result the folded newsletter can no longer be mailed at that rate and must now go for the next higher one, about 77 cents.

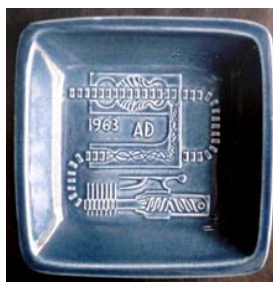
The good news, on the other hand, is that we can now get a couple more pages into the envelope that mails for 77 cents. If I do not have time to actually write more for every issue, I will undertake to share some of Medalta's letters and other documents with you.

You will receive an acknowledgment and receipt for your renewal, but in order to save extra postal costs this receipt will be sent to you with the Spring 2003 issue. And thank you once again for your support and interest in making the newsletter possible.

The Editor and FOMS

## Wanted

Any and all variations of the square shaped ashtrays depicting kilns in the bottom of the ashtray. I am interested in the assorted marks found on the bottom, all colour variations as well as any information that you can provide. As a new collector, I am not in a position to trade, but I am willing to buy your extras. Please contact Bill Bouthillier at 403-275-0089 or send an email to [bill.bouthillier@shaw.ca](mailto:bill.bouthillier@shaw.ca). •





## Hycroft's Homecoming Commemoratives

A collector of Hycroft's named advertising, souvenir and commemorative items eventually may have to decide to limit the collection to a few special themes, and thanks to the large number of items made by Hycroft you have a wide range to choose from. One possible theme is that of an homecoming event, where everyone who ever lived in a town, district or what have you is contacted and extended an invitation to return on a specific day for a celebration to mark a special event.

That special day is often the fiftieth, sixtieth or seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding or incorporation of the town and, therefore, the naming on the piece may take several forms. Some will simply say what anniversary, while others may make reference to a Golden Anniversary or Jubilee. What I have chosen to focus upon is the items that make specific reference to a homecoming. Perhaps in a future issue, I can illustrate other anniversary commemoratives but for now it will be limited to homecomings.

Why this limitation? In part due to the desired length of articles in the newsletter, but more importantly, due to the fact that it was easy to pull these records together. General town commemoratives cannot be identified quickly, as a search under the term "anniversary" gets far too many records including business, store, church and wedding commemoratives.

I regret that I do not have pictures of all the pieces discussed here to share with you, but time simply was not available to get photographs of the missing ones, and at the time that I catalogued these pieces, I did not have a digital camera. Nor did I have the funds to purchase the film to photograph the 1000 or so items comprising the Hycroft warehouse collection.

### Clearwater Lake:

Invoice number 9677, dated 11 June

1980, was sent to the Clearwater Historical Fund of Medicine Hat, billing the group for 200, 9" scalloped plates at \$7.50 each, marked "Home Coming/1980" and clockwise to the right "Clearwater Lake - Long Valley - Wilkinson - Abelein - Fifteen Mile Lake" and with the artwork costing \$35.00 extra. About a month later, on 4 July 1980 (invoice 9707), 50 more scalloped plates were received, also at \$7.50 each.



The examples that I can share with you all came from the Hycroft warehouse, and so far I have not recorded any of these homecoming plates in private collections. Which of these three the committee selected is presently unknown, and the invoice is not specific enough to be of any help. For all I know, they could have selected more than one design, as did the town of Schuler, or it may have even been a different decoration/layout than the plates found in the warehouse.



All examples were produced using the 9-inch scalloped plate. The first two are effectively the same plate as the only apparent difference is the size of the year 1980. Using a white plate, the central wild rose decal is executed in pinks and green within a gold circle, the lettering placed around the border is in black and the plate is trimmed with gold around the edge.



The other plate has the same wording, layout and gold trim with minor changes such as an additional dash or two. The main difference is the decal filling the center of the plate. In this instance the pink Spray Rose decal was used.

### Millicent:

So far I have recorded two 10½-inch plates commemorating this homecoming, one from the Hycroft warehouse and the other in a private collection. Unfortunately, I have not seen the one in private hands as yet, so I do not know if it differs in decoration, colour or layout of the naming. The one in the FOMS collection is described as having a central decoration of a comic figure of a dinosaur. The naming arched above the decoration says "HOME-COMING 1980", and on a ribbon below it says "MILLCENT IMPERIAL COLONY PATRICIA". The decoration and naming is in black, placed on a white plate with thick/thin gold banding at the rim and with an inner black stripe.

To date I have not been able to identify an invoice for this plate. Many invoices only make reference to decorated and/or personalized plates without giving any indication as to the actual naming; and, unless the order was invoiced to the town itself, it can be hard to identify in the Hycroft records. Many orders were sent to an individual, rather than the town, making them all but impossible to identify. I even looked up all my computer entries for 1980, but nothing showed up there either.

### Oxarat:

For the Oxarat homecoming, I have three different designs to share with you. All three were found in the Hycroft warehouse, and as I have not yet seen another sample in a private collection, I cannot be sure which of these three, if any, was the one finally selected for the Homecoming commemorative. The invoice in this instance gives us a pretty good idea of what was actually made, but more about that later.

The reason for three variations being found in the warehouse is simply because Harry Veiner would not discard any plate that might eventually be saleable. When an order was placed, oftentimes the request was just a generally one, with specifics as to the arrangement of the wording and the selection of the decorative decal going unstated. Hycroft would then make up a variety of examples, such as the ones shown here, and send them off to the customer to make a selection.



Many times these prototypes ended up back at the factory to be placed in storage, and many years later, after the factory stopped producing these wares, Harry Veiner started selling off the accumulation through his store located in downtown Medicine Hat called The Hat Hardware. That is how some of the prototypes got into the hands of collectors, and that is why it can be so hard to tell which pattern was the actual one selected as the commemorative. In time we will be able to identify the piece that was chosen, as it will be the one appearing in more than one collection.



For the Oxarat commemorative, I still do not know the item selected, as so far I have not seen the Oxarat plate in any private collections. My guess is that it was the one with the large Tiger Lily decoration in the center as the invoice shows that the *Oxarat Sewing Circle, Oxarat, Saskatchewan, was billed for 100, 9.5" plates with the Tiger Lily or Wheat pattern at \$1.75 each on 15 June 1971 (877), marked "Saskatchewan Homecoming/ '71/Oxarat Sewing Circle" and with the artwork and silkscreen at \$15.00 extra.* It may well be that there were 50 of both the Tiger Lily and the Wheat decoration. As usual, if you have any of these plates in your collection, I would welcome the information as to the specific pattern, and a photograph of the plate using the Wheat pattern would be appreciated.



The first two plates shown here are similar, differing in the colour of the naming and in one having additional gold rings around the central provincial crest surrounded by a Tiger Lily wreath. On both the crest is mainly orange and green in colour. The double ring variety has the lettering in black while the other is in brown, and both are executed on white plates that are lightly speckled with brown, have gold banding around the rim and have another broken gold stripe within connecting the naming.

The plate with the Tiger Lily filling the center, and captioned "*Tiger Lily/EMBLEM OF SASKATCHEWAN*", has the flowers in orange and yellow and its leaves in green. The naming is in black and in this case the plate is a plain white with gold banding. My guess is that this is the one that will be found in the marketplace. Perhaps a wheat pattern will also be found as suggested by the invoice. Only time will tell.

### Wrentham:

The invoice records for the Wrentham homecoming show that a number of pieces were billed to the Wrentham Historical Society. *On the 25 June 1980, invoice no. 9690, they received 100, 9" scalloped plates at \$8.35 each marked "Tyrell's Lake, Kessler, Owen, Patience, Independent. 1980"; another 100, 9" scalloped plates at \$7.75 each with "WRENTHAM HOMECOMING/*



1913[on train engine/1980"]; and, additionally, 100 white hats at \$5.75 each marked "Wrentham Home-Coming 1980./Alberta 75". Four months later on 2 October 1980 (9805) an additional 30, 9" scalloped plates marked "Tyrell's Lake, Kessler, Owen, Patience, Independent" were invoiced at \$8.35 each.

To date, I have not seen either of the scalloped plates in the marketplace, as the samples that I recorded all came from the Hycroft warehouse. But I have seen the hat ashtray in the marketplace, albeit only one example, and it was found in Calgary.



Both plates shown here were produced using the 9-inch scalloped plate. They are identical in colour and design with the schoolhouse and naming being in brown against a white plate trimmed with gold banding and an inner gold stripe. The only difference is that one has gold dashes between the names of the town. At present, I do not know which one was actually chosen as the commemorative. That will have to await finding pieces that were acquired by the residents of the area. Regretfully I do not presently have a photograph of the 9-inch scalloped plate decorated with the steam engine that was found in the warehouse. Presumably the residents of the town acquired it, while the people in the district got the plate with the schoolhouse scene on it.



The steam engine plate is described as having "Wrentham Homecoming" above and "1980" below a decal of a central steam locomotive with "1913" in gold on the coal car. The scene and lettering is in black, placed on a white plate with gold banding around the rim. There is no doubt in my mind that this specimen is close to what was actually produced, but I am still awaiting confirmation from a collector who has picked one up in the marketplace.



The hat ashtray shown here has the Alberta 75<sup>th</sup> logo (executed in red, blue and white) placed at the front of the hat, and at the back it states "Wrentham/Home Coming/1980" in gold.

### Schuler:

The Schuler homecoming order was billed to the Schuler Community Association, and it at least tells us about one of the events that occurred on that occasion. This is what invoice no. 4495 dated 25 June 1973 said: 19 large beer

steins at \$4.25 each (plus 3 free ones) and 3 small steins at \$3.00 each.

The nineteen large steins were individually named to each contestant and stated "Schuler Home-Coming/Beard Growing Contest/1973". The 19 names were "EDWIN HERRMANN, TED HERMAN, TOM HERMAN, JIM HERMAN, LEO SCHAFFER, GORDON BECK, GARY MEIDINGER, TED SCHULER, TOM WEISGERBER, KASPER WETSCH, BILL TRIEBER, JOE P. DUCHSCHERER, GORDON HAAG, BRIAN JANS, BOB HAGEL, REINHOLD KNODEL, MARVIN FISHER, LARRY MARTIN & CLARK FINLAY".

The three small ones were apparently for the winners of the contest as they were marked "'Trim Beard'/Hon. Mention/Schuler/Home-Coming/1973"; "'Frontier Original Beard'/Honorable Mention/Schuler/Home-Coming/1973"; and, "'Schuler Special Beard'/Hon. Mention/Schuler/Home-Coming/1973".

The three free large steins were also given as prizes as they stated "Schuler Home-Coming/Beard Growing Contest/'Trim'/Runner Up/1973"; "Schuler Home-Coming/Beard Growing Contest/'Frontier Original'/Runner Up/1973"; and, "Schuler Home-Coming/Beard Growing/Contest/'Schuler Special'/Runner Up/1973".

In addition the town was billed for 500, 9.5" plates with "Schuler, Alberta./50th. Anniversary/Home Coming/1923-1973" in brown and with gold trim at \$1.65 each, with 25 each of the Angus, Hereford and bucking bronco scenes, and with the rest decorated with the Alberta rose and the wheat decals. The silkscreen for the naming cost \$15.00 extra.



A later order was placed for 107, 9.5" plates, gold trim, at \$1.65 each, on 4 September 1973 (4796). A note on the invoice stated 55 wild rose, 30 bucking horse, 10 Hereford bull and 5 Angus bull decorations.



I have not seen any of the beer steins as yet, and I think it is safe to presume that they are still cherished by those taking part in the beard-growing contest. Of the plates, I have pictures of four of the five varieties of the 9½-inch plates to share with you. I am still waiting to see the Black Angus decal.

All of the varieties shown here have the naming in brown on a white plate with a central decal, gold banding around the rim and another broken gold stripe within connecting the naming above and below the decal.



The first one shown here is what the invoice refers to as the wild rose decoration. It is in fact a wreath of Alberta wild roses (in pink, yellow and green) surrounding the multicoloured Alberta provincial crest.



The other pictures show the Hereford bull with surrounding lariat loop, executed in brown, and the waving wheat decal in brown and yellow. At present, I am not sure which pattern of wheat, the large or small decal, was chosen as the production item.



## Duchess:

The town of Duchess, where my wife was raised, held its homecoming in 1972, and while I was likely there, I do not remember the event at all. Perhaps that is the best testament that one can give to the good time that was had by all!

At that time the population of Duchess was under 400, but as you can see from the invoice record, 500 commemorative plates were ordered. The extras not only accommodated those that had moved away, but also the nearby ranchers and farmers that called Duchess their home.



For some reason our family did not get a plate, and while I do not know the reason, I suspect that we missed the opportunity to place our order when asked to do so.

The commemorative plate is made using the standard coupe-style, 9½-inch, dinner plate, product no. 309. In the center is the Alberta provincial crest within a wild rose wreath, at the top it states "DUCHESS ALBERTA[arced]/50th/Anniversary" and at the bottom "Home Coming/1922-1972[slightly arced]". All the naming is in brown, found on a white plate with thick, thin gold banding around the rim and with another gold stripe within connecting the naming. Invoice # 2842 dated June 28, 1972, records that the town acquired 500, 9.5" plates with the Alberta rose decal and gold trim, at \$1.75 each, with the silkscreen and artwork at \$15.00 extra. •



## Medalta's Cookie Jars

For some time I have wanted to do an article on Medalta's cookie jars as I find them quite colourful. And if I had to define this interest, I would say that it goes back to the first very good collection of cookie jars that I had the pleasure of seeing and recording. G.B. of British Columbia is the proud owner of that collection, and as far as I am concerned it is still one of the best collections anywhere.

When I walked into the living room, if you can believe it, I almost missed the cookie jars. How can one miss cookie jars? It was not hard to do in that home as the whole house was filled with Medalta, and it was a few minutes before my eyes wandered to the massive crossbeams of the log-home some eight to ten feet above the floor. Some of the beams had been flattened on the top and that is where most of the cookie jars were sitting.



For three or four glorious days I ate, slept, fondled and photographed Medalta. I saw so many pieces and decorations that I had never seen before. I thought I had died and gone to the heaven for Medalta collectors.



When I got up that first morning, I was pleasantly surprised to find that G.B. had breakfast on the table. What I remember most, though, is not the break-



fast, although I am sure that it was good, but the dishes that we ate from. Our dishes were Medalta made, and for that first breakfast, he used the colourful thumbprint or whorl border dishes in their various colours of pink, yellow, blue and blue-green. Later meals saw us using the swirl-border pattern, the encircling ridges Fiesta-like pattern, and hotel china in various colours.

But back to the cookie jars. When I first looked up high on the walls and saw the cookie jars

my eyes quickly fell on one, a cookie jar with the black silhouette owls sitting on a tree branch. Wow what a sight, and what was that on the back just barely visible from the side?

With a gleam in his eye, my host turned it around to show me the Ogilvie advertising on the back. After having a bit of fun with me, he 'fessed-up' that he had actually painted the whole cookie jar.

What he had done was buy an unhandled style cookie jar from which most of the lacquer decoration was worn, completely stripped it, and then painted it in the Ogilvie colours. The fun he had teasing other collectors and I attests to how well it was done.

STONE CROCKS JUGS "MEDALTA WARE" BOWLS TEAPOTS, Etc. MADE IN CANADA

### MEDICINE HAT POTTERY COMPANY

FOOT OF BATHURST STREET at Fleet Street  
TELEPHONE ADELAIDE 2959

TORONTO  
CANADA

February 15th 1935.

Medalta Potteries Limited,  
Medicine Hat,  
Alberta.

Gentlemen:

Glazed Ship Cookie Jars:- The first sample we saw of the lot which you shipped in our last car was the Frigate stencil. Only yesterday we discovered one of the Ship design. We are very much pleased with it and must apologize for the criticism we made in our last letter.

Now that you have the two we can probably use them both to advantage by giving the customer a choice. We believe that we can shift quite a lot of them this year as the design is quite attractive.

Another design which is always attractive is the Dutch Windmill Scheme and we are mailing the top of a refrigerator set to you which will give you a rough idea of what we mean. You may be able to add something to it to improve the appearance.

We hope that you are improving on your yellow glazes to prevent them from crazing. This is important not only in your yellow glazes but also in your linings of Artware.

Yours very truly,

MEDICINE HAT POTTERY COMPANY.

AWP/K.

Mgr.

STONE CROCKS JUGS "MEDALTA WARE" BOWLS TEAPOTS, Etc. MADE IN CANADA

### MEDICINE HAT POTTERY COMPANY

FOOT OF BATHURST STREET at Fleet Street  
TELEPHONE ADELAIDE 2959

TORONTO  
CANADA

February 23rd 1935.

Medalta Potteries Limited,  
Medicine Hat,  
Alberta.

Gentlemen:

We have your letter of February 20th and observe that you have most of the lines in stock as per our specifications. We hope that you will have them all in stock before the cars are shipped.

With reference to the 45 Cold Decorated Cookie Jars--we are glad that you mentioned this to us. Only last week we have had no end of trouble with these Cookie Jars and we have had to replace a great many of them. You might substitute for the 45 Cold Decorated Cookie Jars, the yellow all-glazed, assorted Ship and Frigate designs. Please make a notation on our sheet accordingly and when the orders reach you you will understand to supply them assorted.

With reference to the 2 only #25 Lamp Bases, Black Ship Design, you are quite right in assuming that these are the same as the samples you sent us some time ago.

Yours very truly,

MEDICINE HAT POTTERY COMPANY.

AWP/K.

Mgr.

## Types of Cookie Jars

I have not yet met a Medalta collector that does not have a few cookie jars in his collection. Not only are they colourful and available in a wide range of decorations, but also they are relatively easy to find in the marketplace, and oftentimes not too highly priced. It is certainly getting harder to find ones in pristine condition, if you can live with some wear you can surely find one.

Four different styles of cookie jars can be found in the marketplace: a small cookie jar with rope style handles, a large one also with rope style handles, an intermediate sized one with no handles and an intermediate sized one with lug or ear-style handles.

As far as I can tell, all were introduced within a fairly short time span. The earliest variety appears to be the small rope-handles one, and the only reason for placing it first is because it is the only one that is marked with the "MEDALTA/HAND MADE" stamps. Hand-thrown items were only made for a year or so at the most while moulds were being developed.

The earliest date I have for cookie jars comes from a photograph taken at a trade show in Edmonton in October 1931, and the picture of it shows the large rope-handle style cookie jar. The next record I have is the inventory reports. The 1931 report mentions both biscuit jars and large cookie jars, while subsequent years mention large and small cookie jars.

Based on this evidence, it is safe to presume that the small rope-handle cookie jars date to early 1931 and perhaps into late 1930. The large rope-style handle cookie jar likely was developed next, and apparently it was followed by the intermediate sized jars, first the unhandled variety and then the eared-handle variety.

Just when cookie jars were discontinued is not clear from the Medalta records. Off and on throughout the

1930s they are mentioned in the Medalta papers, such as the 1935 letters reproduced here that mention the frigate design (often called the galleon by collectors). And they were certainly still being made in late 1940 as a shipping slip dated December 4 mentions cookie jars being shipped to Ontario. I suspect that cookie jars were discontinued during or shortly after World War II, as they do not appear in the records or photographs that have survived from that time period. Also, when one looks at the Medalta oxide stamps found on cookie jars, they all date before 1947.

While Medalta made a distinction between cookie and biscuit jars, I will not as I cannot be sure on what basis Medalta's staff made theirs. Perhaps it was on size, but for all I know it could have been based on whether the jar was made of stoneware or earthenware or even its decoration.

When I did most of my recording of collections there were several issues that I did not address at the time due to not being aware of them. One of these was the stoneware/ earthenware issue and the other was the presence of and/or the colour of the lining, be it clear or white. In recent recordings I have started noting these variables, but at present my notes are far too incomplete for examination purposes.

One other variable that I did not note was the details in handles. As far as I know all the lug-style handles are the same both in size and decoration. If differences exist, I have not yet noted them. For quite a while I assumed all rope-style handles were the same, but they are not, the ones on the smaller jars are different from the ones on the larger jars. Why I did not look for differences was larger due to the entry found in a letter dated November 23,



1938. As you can see it, mentions that the rope-handles for cookie jars were made in a mould.

With this overview of cookie jars behind us, we will now take a detailed look at each of the varieties. For descriptive purposes, I have placed them in the order in which I believe they were introduced.

### Cookie Jar: Small Rope-Handle Style (about 1930-1931)

The earliest style of cookie jar is the hand made one, and so far all but one of the examples that I have examined have been marked with the M.6 (HAND MADE) and M.7 (MEDALTA) stamps. All have been finished in coloured lacquers and all measured between 8.25 and 8.75-inches in height. I did not take any diameter measurements, but I am sure that one would find a good variation there as well due to be hand-thrown.

As you can see from the picture included here, the rope handle of the small cookie jar has only a double twist, while the one found on the large jar has a triple twist. I suspect the rope handle on the small jar is also hand-made, but such a conclusion requires a much closer look at the handles than what I have made.



**Jiggermens Prices:** The price on the Churns with a rope handle will be the same as regular churns. Thompson's work on this is the same, as he must cut off the regular handles. The rope handles are made by the girls and stuck on. This handle is from the old mould of cookie jars handles.



If there is an unhandled variety of this cookie jar, I am not aware of its presence, but it would not surprise me to hear from a collector that has one.

The decoration of these cookie jars is quite limited, as so far I have only seen a tulip decoration and a Dutch pastoral scene. The tulip decoration is the one most often seen, and in my opinion it is not very attractive as the tulip flowers and stems are quite stylized obviously being applied with cut stencils. The colour selection was anything but attractive with most been in drab, dark colours. The leaves are invariably in dark green, while the tulip flower itself and the background colour vary. So far I have recorded the following:

- red tulip on yellow background
- blue tulip on beige
- light blue tulip on dark blue
- orange tulip on yellow
- red tulip on green



So far I have seen only a couple examples of the Dutch pastoral scene. The cows and the background mill scene and trees were in black, while the background colour varied. So far I have seen a yellow and blue backgrounds, and I have a report of a green one as well.



As you will see in a moment, some of the other cookie jars have decoration numbers written on the bottom. So far, I have not recorded the use of any decoration numbers on this style of cookie jar.

Finally, I would like to mention that I have seen fewer examples of this cookie jar than of the other handled ones. My records indicate that I recorded some twenty five examples and I must say that many of them were not in the best of condition, either being dirty or showing wear to the coloured lacquers.

In spite of being somewhat harder to find than other styles, the price is usually less, often in the \$100.00 to \$150.00 range. The dull colours and limited decorations probably accounts for this.

### **Cookie Jar: Large Rope-Handle Style (1931-1938)**

As I mentioned earlier, this cookie jar is illustrated in a trade show photograph dated October 1931. In fact, it was in production by June 1931 as one of the Dutch pastoral pieces that I recorded was given as a wedding gift at that time. Tentatively I have placed its discontinuation as 1938, but it might even have been a year earlier. The reason for selecting 1938 is due to a couple of things. Firstly, none of the Medalta stamps used in 1938 or later are found on this style of cookie jar. And, secondly, the letter dated February 23, 1935, reproduced here, makes mention of having to replace many of the cold decorated cookie jars (cold decorated was one term used by Medalta to describe lacquer finishes). I believe that once the glaze decorations were proven, Medalta would have moved quickly to produce them rather than the lacquer finished ones.

Of the various styles of cookie jars, Medalta's largest one is seen the most often. Perhaps this is an indication that it was more popular than the ear-style handle cookie jar but I believe it is sim-

ply a reflection of the greater number of decorations that you can find. As listed below, the large rope-handle cookie jar can be found with at least nine different decorations, not to mention more background colours, while only two decorations have been observed on the smaller eared cookie jar.

In reviewing my records I found that I had recorded over 75 of these cookie jars and I have probably seen at least another thirty since I stopped taking notes. Measurements vary from 10½ inches to 11-inches high, most being closer to 11-inches. And while I did not often record the type of clay used, where I did, it was the yellow earthenware clay.

As to the sealing of the interior, I have recorded both a clear glaze bringing out the natural yellow colour of the clay and a white glaze.



There are several facts about this style of cookie jar that are interesting. First in looking at glazed versus lacquered jars, they are almost all finished in coloured lacquers. In fact, I have seen only five glazed jars. Four of these were the hand-painted sailboat while the other was finished in a solid blue glaze. Secondly, almost all are marked with the M.7 stamp in addition to an oxide stamp or the coloured paper maple leaf decal (designated P.1 in the Medalta Stamps booklet). Finally, it is the one cookie jar most often marked on the bottom with a number penned in black, the number standing for the specific decoration and background colour used on that piece.

DATE December 31st, 1932. DETAILS OF Decorated W. a SHEET No. STOCK

CALLER BY ENTERED BY PRICED BY CALCULATED BY VERIFIED BY

STOCK No.	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	PRICE	PER	EXTENSION	TOTAL
	Amounts Brought Forward				1433.94	
#3000	Bulb Bowls	58	.19	ea.	11.02	
2001	" "	70	.19	"	13.30	
	" " Blue	64	.19	"	12.16	
	Birds	237	2.50	doz.	49.37	
#167	Lamp Bases	7	.40	ea.	2.80	
103	Camel " #1500	4	15.00	doz.	5.00	
	Lamp Bases Fitted	4	1.60	ea.	6.40	
	Small Cookie Jars	8	.30	"	2.40	
	" Glazed " "	5	.30	"	1.50	
#45	Apple Blossom "	40	.45	"	18.00	
46	Yellow Blue Bell	49	.45	"	22.05	
47	Pink-Black-eyed Susan	1	.45	"	.45	
49	Green-Tulip	40	.45	"	18.00	
50	Mauve-Yellow Tulip	1	.45	"	.45	
60	Orange-Corn flower	3	.45	"	1.35	
Ind.	Globe Teapots- Mill	518	1.80	doz.	77.70	
	Boston Low "	159	1.80	"	28.85	
42's	Teapots - Mill	10	2.16	"	1.80	
Ind.	Boston Low Teapots-Owl	27	1.80	"	4.05	
42's	Teapots - Owl	2	2.16	"	.36	
36's	" "	34	2.58	"	5.13	
24's	" "	4	3.24	"	1.08	
42's	" Cottage	38	2.16	"	6.84	
36's	" "	61	2.58	"	13.11	
20's	" "	207	2.94	"	55.61	
42's	" Ship	65	2.16	"	11.70	
36's	" "	149	2.58	"	32.05	



## Decorations:

That the numbers found on the bottom of many cookie jars stands for the hand-painted decoration and background colour comes from the yearend inventory sheets. I have reproduced part of the 1932 sheet that mentions cookie jars, and as you can see it gives the decoration number followed by a brief description. Taking one example from about half way down the sheet the entry reads **#45 Apple Blossom Jars** followed by the quantity of 40 priced at \$.45 each for a total value of \$18.00. For stock taking purposes, the value of 45 cents appears to be the wholesale value of the piece. I should add that this is the only time the yearend inventory sheets give decoration numbers, but as you can see from the list below, as many other numbers can be found on the pieces themselves. The ones listed in italics are given in the Medalta records, while the others are my description.



- 45 *apple blossoms on a blue background*
- 46 *blue bells on a yellow background*
- 47 *black-eyed Susan on a pink background*
- 48 *small black flowers on a black background*
- 49 *tulips on a green background*
- 50 *tulips on a mauve background*
- 57 *plums on a yellow background*
- 59 *Dutch pastoral scene in blues and black with features accented with white*
- 60 *cornflower on an orange background*

- 67 *wide band with white and red stenciled flowers on an orange background*
- 69 *wide band with blue stenciled flowers on a green background*
- 71 *wide band with blue stenciled flowers on a blue background*
- 73 *wide band with orange stenciled flowers on a yellow background*

Besides the ones listed here, I have recorded a couple of other decorations. One was another variation of the wide band floral decoration, finished with dark-blue stenciled flowers on an orange background. The other, a real beauty I think, depicts a black sailboat against a blue background.

The only other lacquer decorations that I have seen include two that were decorated in solid colours. One was a dull pink and the other mauve.

One other fact that should be stated is that there is variability in the actual colours of the flowers. For example, when tulips are used, the flowers may be in a solid red, a combination of colours such as red and yellow or even white. The Dutch pastoral is another decoration that comes with a modification. One variety has some of the buildings and other features accented in white while the other variety is plain with no accenting.





**Rarity:**

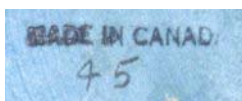
Many of the patterns can be obtained without too much difficulty including the apple blossom, tulip, Dutch pastoral, blue bells and the stenciled flower on a wide band. However, even within these groupings, some colour variations can be very hard to find such as the white tulip or the accented Dutch pastoral scene. The rest of the patterns are fairly hard to find, but particularly decoration 47 (black-eyed Susan), 48 (white flowers), 57 (plums) and 60 (cornflower).



It is also very difficult to find this style of cookie jar in a solid colour, either lacquered or glazed; and, lastly, we must mention the glazed sailboat. It is the most prized of all judging by price, although I have recorded four samples of it so far. The last couple that I saw both went around the \$1200.00 mark.

What do the other large rope-handle cookie jars sell for? The majority falls in the \$150.00 to \$300.00 range, but with some luck you can still get a bargain. Recently I heard from a lady in Ottawa who acquired a complete and near mint apple blossom on blue cookie jar for \$125.00.

Another collector

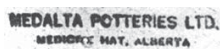
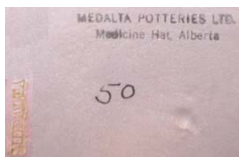


advised me of one in an antique store in Okotoks that was priced at \$650.00. Out of curiosity I phoned the store to find out more about it. Fortunately I did not have to go see it as it had decoration number 60 on the bottom, and was described by the vendor as blue flowers on a pumpkin background, complete with lid and in mint condition. And yes they were asking \$650.00 for it. When she asked if the pricing was OK, I did not know what to say

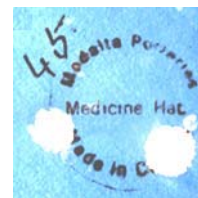
**Stamps Found on Large Cookie Jars:**

The large rope-handle cookie jars show the greatest diversity in being marked with a Medalta stamp, be it a paper sticker, impressed stamp or an oxide/painted one. It is not my intention to show every stamp combination here but rather just an example of each of the individual stamps. (For more information on Medalta's stamps, please refer to the booklet "Know Your Medalta: Stamps and Other Markings".)

- G.9
- G.9+G.20+M.7
- G.9+M.7
- G.16.a+M.7



- G.18+G.20+M.7
- G.18+M.7
- G.19+G.20
- G.20
- G.20+M.7
- P.1+M.7
- M.7

**Cookie Jar: Unhandled Style (about 1931-1934)**

All the evidence suggests that this style of cookie jar was made only for a couple of years, perhaps being discontinued as early as late 1932 or 1933. However, due to not knowing the actual date, I have stretched it to 1934 as that is when the G.9 stamp was removed from use.

The unhandled variety of cookie jar appears to be simply the lug-handled one without any handles. In fact, most of the unhandled cookie jars that I have examined have the incised lines or scour marks in the clay where the handles would have been attached. Such scouring was commonly used to ensure a solid attachment of the handles to the main body when affixing the handle with slurry.



For the most part, my notes did not include the finish on the interior of the cookie jars or the type of clay used in their manufacture. I do know that many of the unhandled ones are stoneware, but I cannot say for sure that all of them are. Some may well have been earthenware ones.

At present my sample size is just over twenty cookie jars and on those jars the only stamps that I have recorded are the G.9 and the M.3.a stamps as shown with this article. In fact, interestingly, over half of the recorded specimens had the G.9 stamp on them. This compares to none of the lug-handled jars being marked with this stamp and less than 10% for the large

rope-handle ones.

Just what this means, I cannot be sure, but it seems to suggest that unhandled cookie jars had a limited time span and that they are closer in time to the large rope-handle ones than the eared ones. I only wish we had more photographs or more details in the letters to sort it all out.

The size range that I recorded, and I only recorded heights, not diameters, was 8 3/8 to 8 5/8-inches. They are definitely smaller than the lug-handled ones, which measure 8 3/4 to 9-inches, but I believe this difference to be due to the different shrinkage rates of the stoneware and earthenware clays.

Only three decorations have been noted and while I have seen and recorded at least three plain, gray-stoneware ones, you could still see remnants of lacquer in the pours of the clay. Obviously they too had been lacquered at one time. I suspect all of the plain stoneware ones were originally finished in coloured lacquered.

The decorations recorded include the white apple blossoms one that you can find applied against both a green and a blue background. The other decoration is the Dutch pastoral one in the usual black on a yellow background.

I have reference to one other decoration in my notes, but it may have been a repaint. It was recorded as having red roses against a blue background. As it was originally part of the Symonds' collection, now in the Na-



tional Museum of Canada collection, I could not readily confirm its authenticity.

This style of cookie jar is also fairly hard to find in pristine condition, and if I had to guess as to why, I would say that the coloured lacquers did not adhere as well to the gray-coloured, stoneware clay as it did to the more porous yellowed-coloured, earthenware clay. As to the price range, most that I have recorded have been in the \$100.00 to \$200.00 bracket when in good condition with not very much loss of the paint.

### Cookie Jar: Eared or Lug-Handle Style (1931-1945)

The pair of handles attached to this cookie jar are more or less rectangular; and, thanks to being a bit hollow underneath, they are fairly easy to hold, unlike the rope-style that your fingers tend to slip off of. As you can see from the picture, the handles are decorated with an incised geometric design.

This style of cookie jar was introduced in 1931 as indicated by the impressed Medalta stamp com-



monly found on the bottom. The stamp reading MEDALTA runs horizontally most of the way across the upper edge of the bottom. The long, flowing tails of the letters, particularly the M and the A, indicate that the piece was designed when Jesse William Wyatt was still at the factory, and he left Medalta to establish Alberta Potteries Limited in 1931. That it was still in production in the 1940s is attested to by the oxide stamps found on the bottom.

My notes indicate that I have recorded over 60 specimens of this style of cookie jar. Most (about 75%) are marked with the impressed stamp M.3.a as shown here, and some have an additional oxide stamp or paper label. The height of the cookie jar ranges from 8 3/4 to 9-inches high. By far the majority, if not all, is earthenware, made using the yellow burning clay. And once again I cannot definitively comment on the colour of the interior, but most, especially the glazed ones, were the natural yellow clay.

While the records are not clear on the production of this item, the evidence seems to suggest that both lacquer and solid glaze decorations were available in 1932 (see the yearend inventory sheet shown here). Sometime around 1934, the lacquered decorations were dropped in favour of glazing this style of cookie jar and from then until 1940 or so, a variety of glaze decorations were introduced. Just when production of this item ceased is not known from the Medalta records, but based on the Medalta stamp evidence, it appears to have been before 1945.





## Decorations:

About 40% of the specimens recorded for this style of cookie jar were lacquer finished ones, and the variety of decorations was considerably fewer when compared to those found on the large rope-handle style of cookie jar. These ones, too, often bear the decoration number on the bottom, but so far only three numbers have been observed.



- 5/51 blue irises on a yellow background
- 52 white apple blossoms on a green background
- 53 yellow/red tulip on a blue background

The numbers are usually penned in black, and as they are applied by hand, you can find them in various sizes, not to mention underlined or not for the 52 and 53 decorations. I also have a recording for just the number 51, but the 5/51 is seen more often.



In addition, to these three I have observed one other decoration on a piece not marked with a decoration number. It exhibited white apple blossoms on a blue background. As observed for the tulip decoration on the rope style jars, one finds colour variations here as well in the colour of the petals, although I have not seen any white ones as yet.

The solid glaze colours were available as early as 1932, and likely continued right through the war. So far I have recorded dark green, yellow, crimson, blue, cobalt and a blue speckled with white. The yellow and dark green ones are the ones seen most often.



So far the glaze decorations include:

- silhouette owls decoration, likely 1934
- stenciled sailboat, introduced 1934-1935
- frigate decoration, introduced 1935
- floral decorations, circa 1938
- maple leaf decoration, circa 1938



## Stamps:

The lacquered cookie jars have only been observed with the following stamps:

- P.1
- P.1+M.3.a
- M.3.a

And, the glazed ones with:

- G.24+M.3.a
- G.27
- G.33+M.3.a
- M.3.a

The one observation worth pointing out is the fact that over half (13 of 23) of the lacquered specimens have the P.1 multicoloured maple leaf decal on the bottom while none of the glazed specimens is marked with the decal. These are also the pieces that show the most similarity in decoration to the large rope-handle jars as they too are marked with numbers on the bottom.



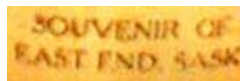
## Advertising/Named Pieces:

The lug-handled cookie jar is the only style on which naming has been found. The ones marked COOKIES in large stenciled letters just above the center are seen more often than the advertising ones, but they too are hard to find. So far I have recorded only five specimens of the ones marked COOKIES, and you can find it is several different glazes. Personally I like the honey glazed one more than the darker reddish-brown one with a black wash around both its top and bottom. The honey one has the lettering in brown while the darker one has the word cookies in a black.



So far, I have recorded only two other named pieces. One had the frigate decoration on one side and on the other it simply said "SOUVENIR OF/EAST END, SASK". In my opinion, the naming was poorly placed as it is too near the bottom and too small. Its exact date is unknown, probably falling somewhere between 1935 and 1940.

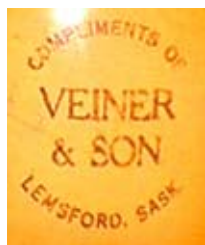
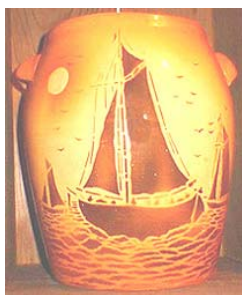
The second item is a true advertique as it is prominently marked on one side with the merchant's name, stating "COMPLI-



MENTS OF/ VEINER/ & SON/ LEMS FORD, SASK."

The other side is decorated with the stenciled sailboat design.

The Veiner & Son cookie jar may date to late 1936. The records as usual lack details but this is what they show. On November 22, 1935, Medalta quoted Veiner & Son at Lemsford a price for 1 pint pitchers with the ship decoration. A month later, the store was billed \$1.90 for a rubber stamp and another \$23.35 for the order of named wares.



The next year, also in December, the store was billed \$24.82 for another order, but this time there was no billing for a rubber stamp. This likely indicates that the same rubber stamp was used for both orders. Unfortunately we do not know the exact products that were ordered, but I would be willing to bet that at least one of these orders was for cookie jars.

The East End piece is known from a single example, while I have recorded two specimens of the Veiner cookie jar. What are they worth? I really do not know as one of a kind pieces are so hard to judge. My guess is that at the right auction, they would go around the \$750.00 mark.

### Rarity/Values:

For the most part, the lacquer decoration pieces sell in the same range as

the unhandled variety, \$100 to \$200.00. The glazed ones, on the other hand, usually fall in the \$200.00 to \$400.000, but some go higher. The maple leaf decoration is particularly prized as some collectors are trying to put together a set of the pieces bearing that decoration. And, once again, I can only guess at what the silhouette owls might go for (both sides of the cookie jar shown here). I am sure that it would be \$750.00 or more.



### Wrap-Up

While this brings my examination of cookie jars to an end, I am sure that some of our readers will have additional observations to pass along to me. Please let me know about any other decorations that you have, and especially new decoration numbers. Perhaps someone even has a different size or a different style of cookie jar.

The one area that I have left uncovered is a discussion, with pictures, of the cookie jar variations that you can find, such as the conversions to lamps. Perhaps, I will be able to share those with you in the next issue of the newsletter. To see pictures now please visit [www.medalta.com](http://www.medalta.com) and click on the Newsletters link. •

### Cont'd from page 1

you can at least get a general idea of its shape and decorative design. Presently, I do not want to discuss flowerpots as I hope to discuss all flowerpot variations in a future issue of the newsletter.

The second page is from the mock-up pages for a catalogue that was supposed to be printed in the 1930s. It is the only visual record that I have run across of the hanging baskets made using red coloured clay.

As you can see the shape and embossed/incised decoration has changed significantly from the earlier basket. The new one appears to be more squat with a flattened bottom, and it now came in 8, 10, 12 and 14-inch sizes.

I have not previously shared this page with collectors, which helps to explain why I have never seen the baskets in anyone's collection. And, in spite of knowing what they looked like, I have never had the pleasure of running across any of them over the years. •

MEDALTA

PAGE SEVENTEEN

### MEDALTA LINE Red Flower Pots



Sizes 2, 2½, 3, 3½, 4, 4½, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 inch.

SAUCERS TO FIT ALL SIZES OF POTS



FERN POTS  
Sizes 6, 7 and 8 inch.

HANGING BASKETS  
Sizes 8, 10, 12 and 14 inch.

AZALEA POTS  
Sizes 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 inch.

FULL SHIPPING INFORMATION ON NEXT PAGE



## Questions and Answers

### E-mail From T.P.

I have a piece of pottery that I found in an old barn in Bridgewater, NS. It is a large ceramic piece with two metal and wooden handles, and it also has a water tap on the front. Also on the front is a picture of a polar bear standing on an ice flow with water around it, and under this picture are the words ICE WATER.

A blue line circles the top, middle and bottom of this ice water container. Towards the bottom of the piece it reads "Supplied by/Moyer School Supplies Limited/Since 1884/Canada's School Furnishers/Moncton Montreal Toronto/Winnipeg Saskatoon Edmonton" and on the back it reads "Medicine Hat Potteries" with a picture of an Indian and hat. On the very bottom is the number 3.

Can you give me any information on the year this piece would have been made? Thanks. T.P.



### Hello Tanya:

You have a 3-gallon ice water jar (as marked) that was made by Medicine Hat Potteries of Medicine Hat sometime between 1938 and 1955 when the company was in business. Many of the ice water jars have the Polar Ice Water mark only and not the "Little Chief" (sleepy Indian) trademark. Since yours has both it is worth a bit more. I have not seen any sell recently, but ten or more years ago, they sold for \$300.00 or more when complete with lid and with no cracks, chips or other disfiguration. They likely still sell for around that price, perhaps a bit more, in western Canada as not too many people collect pieces made by Medicine Hat Potteries. I suspect

the market in the Maritimes is about half what it is out here as I am not aware of Alberta made pottery collectors in that part of Canada. If you have any further questions you can call me at 403-273-1132. Sincerely, Ronald Getty

P.S. If you are thinking of selling it on ebay, the internet auction, remember that shipping could be about \$50.00 dollars; therefore, collectors take that into consideration when making their bids.

### Follow-up E-mail:

Dear Mr. Getty:

I was just interested in knowing a little about it. Won't be selling it. I have had it for about 26 years and it has some cracks in it, but it looks good on my shelf. Thanks again. T.P.

**E-mail:** From P.S., Idaho  
Subject: Medalta vase.

I am curious about this piece, a vase that says Medalta on the bottom, with the number 103. It's glazed inside with a greenish color. On the outside, It has a scene of large birds, mountains etc. I would appreciate any information. Sincerely, Peg

### Hello Peg:

I need a bit more information to help you with the vase that you have. If you send me your phone number I will call you as I have the flat rate for calls within Canada if I call in evenings or on weekends.

You likely have Medalta's stork decoration that consists of a pair of storks in low relief/carving. The multicoloured ones as per the digital picture that I have enclosed are worth more than twice as much as the more common ones

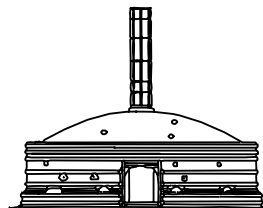
which can be silver, gold or bronze, ones which often have the incised lines accented in black. The value for the multicoloured ones with no chips, cracks and only minimal loss of paint are usually in the \$125.00 to \$200.00 range. The silver, bronze, gold varieties are usually in the \$75.00 to \$150.00 range. If you had a glazed one rather than one decorated with coloured paints, it would be worth more, but I have never seen glazed examples of the storks in relief pattern. These by the way are Canadian prices not US just in case you are from the States.

This is the best that I can do without more information. You are also welcome to call me at 403-273-1132, best after 6:00 PM or on weekends. Sincerely, Ron Getty



### Follow-up E-mail:

Ron. Thanks for the reply to my email. My vase does have the stork decoration and it is the common one in silver with black in the lines. I bought it at a garage sale for 50 cents last summer. I really appreciated hearing from you. I live in Idaho. Thanks so much. Sincerely, Peg •



Friends of Medalta Society

703 Wood Street  
Medicine Hat, Alta  
T1A 8S9 Canada  
Phone 403-529-1070  
FAX 403-580-5868  
<http://www.medalta.org>



Trade show display of Medalta's Car Nott art ware, location and date unknown but likely 1930.

*Photo courtesy of Medicine Hat Museum and Archives, Catalogue No. P-328-336.*