

MALING

COLLECTORS' SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Issue 8 September 2000

The pot quest goes on

Sightings of “missing” patterns seem to be drying up. So here’s a tip. Very often a missing pattern will turn out to be very similar to a known and listed one - but in a different colour.

For example, a cup and saucer in pattern number 3233 turned up recently. The cup had a red body with a black & white border. It isn’t listed in “Trademark of Excellence”, yet somehow it looked familiar.

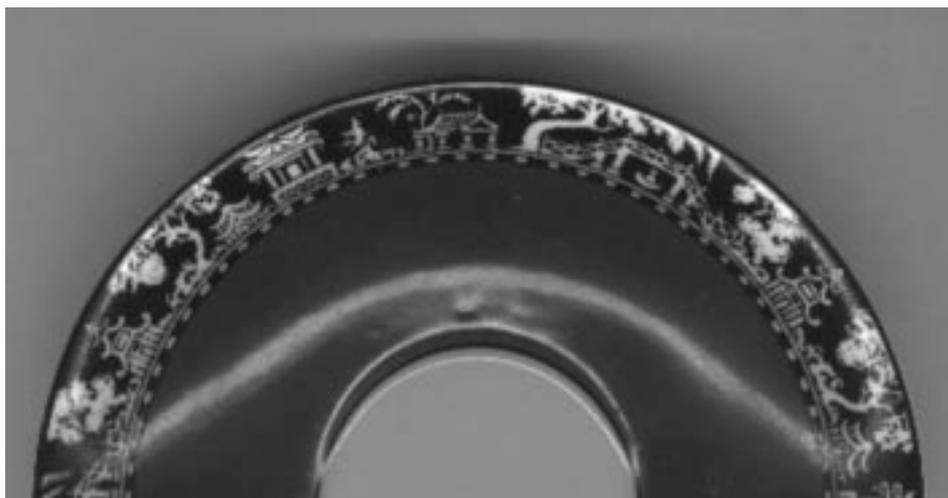
A glance through the reprinted 1920s catalogue revealed that it was almost identical to pattern number 3165, except that the 3165 bowl is red on the outside and black on the inside, while the 3233 cup is white on the inside. Not much of a difference you might think. But enough for 3233 to merit its own number.

Shortly afterwards, a purple cup & saucer with the same border turned up at auction. They were numbered 3244. (And the border pattern is known as “Chinese Border”.)

So don’t let familiarity breed contempt! You may well have missing patterns in your collection, even though they look like something which has been recorded. Please check carefully and let the society know what you have.

We are also keen to complete the list of “missing” vase shapes. Although we know that every vase shape has a number, it’s frustrating to find that many pieces don’t have their number impressed into the base.

Turn to page 3 for a list of the vase shapes which are still to be confirmed.



Saucer with “Chinese Border”



Vase shape 71



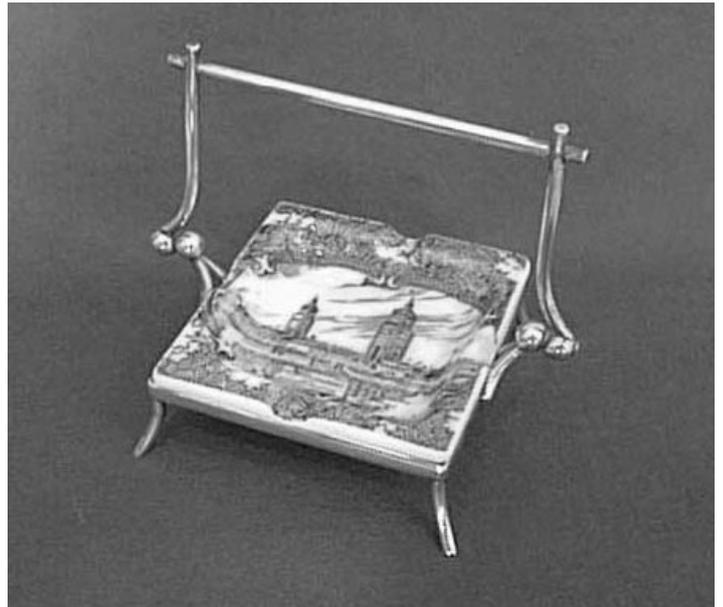
Vase shape 72

An ashtray that gives sterling service

As any Maling collectors should know, the factory always has a knack of producing something that no one has ever seen before, and here is a perfect example. This is, at first glance, just an ordinary "Exhibition Chintz" ashtray, yet it has a silver plated stand that makes it far from ordinary.

The most fascinating part is that the stand was added at the factory, not later as one might expect. The ashtray has been reduced in size to fit the stand when still wet or 'green' as those of you who witnessed Doug and Vi's demonstration will know. Once biscuit fired, the ashtray has been ground to fit the stand properly and then decorated in the normal way. I have not seen another example; who knows what else might have had "fittings" added at the factory?

David adds: I have seen a "Blue Egypt" plate which had been drilled in the centre to take a fitting which turned it into a cake stand. However, as the hole went right through the Maling castle mark, I'm inclined to think that this must have been done after the plate left the factory. As to how you drill a hole through a fully-fired piece, I don't know. And I'm certainly not going to experiment on any of my Maling plates to find out!



News of the 'Net

It's been a very quiet couple of months, with no one coming to the society with problems about computers or the 'Net. So, this month, there aren't any tips! But, feel free to e-mail if you run into trouble.

Those of you with Internet access should have noticed that there's now a separate members' area on the society website, which changes monthly. At the moment, we're running through the known vase shapes and putting out a request for photos of "missing" ones. This area is password-protected to keep the information from the eyes of non-members, so please e-mail if you haven't received the password.

The Internet auction continues to be busy. Four foxes' head stirrup cups in red, with matching jug, went at auction on eBay for just over \$4,200 in July. That's over £2,800 in "proper" money and, while not a record for Maling at auction, is quite a tidy sum.

Unfortunately, fakes and mis-information are still around. Within the last month, the famous fake Ringtons teapot surfaced on eBay, as did a supposedly "rare & valuable signed Lucien Boullemier" piece.

Ringtons fakes - usually in "Willow Pattern" - have been around for several years. Be wary of square caddies if they appear thickly potted and have a domed, rather than flat, lid with no Ringtons' logo on the underside of the lid. If they have a handle and spout added, to turn them into a teapot, run away very quickly!

The nonsense about "signed" Lucien Boullemier pieces comes from the time when LEB left Maling for New Hall in the mid-30s. Here he produced the range of "Boumier Ware" - similar in appearance to his designs for Maling, but all carrying a facsimile signature. There's quite a lot of this around, so don't believe in that "rare" description.

Finally, as ever, my choice of nonsense from the 'Net and a few vituperative comments (which are to be taken as personal views, and not those of the society). All are genuine, and all culled from the 'Net in the last three months.

Mailing bowels. Not through my letter box, you're not! But that's just a gut reaction.

Coronation mug for King George V. Age c1900-1911. It would have shown remarkable foresight to produce it in 1900, when Victoria was on the throne and Edward VII still to reign before George V got his turn in 1911.

Maling pottery, marked Newcastle upon Tyne. A lovely addition to your Staffordshire collection. You're an American. Aren't you?

Maling handle-less cup. I believe the experts on the Antiques Roadshow refer to these as bowls.

Maling teapot - like Japanese sake pot. Wicker handle, yes, but no spout. Do you think it might be a biscuit barrel?

Society matters

Thanks to those of you who gave your views on what the society can do to a) attract new members and b) give better value to existing members.

The most popular choice for the first of these was to advertise in antiques publications. As an interim measure, we have started a campaign of press releases which we will send out every couple of months in the hope of getting some free editorial coverage. It does seem to be working. We will also be doing some advertising later in the year and into 2001.

If you would like a supply of membership leaflets to put into your local antiques centre, please get in touch.

As for services to members, your choice was for colour pages in the newsletter. The next question is: what would you like to see in colour? One suggestion was for colour pages to be themed chronologically so you might, for example, have a page of Cetera wares from the 1900s or a page of 30s Deco wares. Maybe next issue?

Oddities & Rarities

In this series of articles, we'll try to bring you information about pieces which you may not have come across before.

Elizabeth Anne Cleminson

E A Cleminson was a Maling paintress from 1910 until 1920 and, thanks to her son, we can now give a few details about her. Her father was the accountant/book keeper at the pottery and his two daughters, Elizabeth and Georgina joined the pottery as apprentice paintresses. Georgina had to give up due to poor eyesight, but Elizabeth continued until she married and had a son in 1920. Her son has two production pieces by her painted with her mark of "X".

Also in the family collection are three plates all signed and dated by her. Her son believes that they were her designs, but we know that one in "POONA" is actually designed by Clifford Toft. It is much more likely that the plates dated 1912, 1913 and 1914 are actually test pieces painted as part of the four year apprenticeship she would have served at that date. Two of these plates are shown here and are in designs that I have not encountered. Have you?



Apprentice plate signed "EA CLEMINSON 25th . 3 . 1914"



A pair of yellow ground "No6" shape vases in pattern number 212 circa 1908. Painted by Lizzie Cleminson and signed with her mark "X"



Apprentice plate signed "EA CLEMINSON Jan 9th 13"

The vases we want

2, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 47, 51, 52, 53, 54, 56, 57, 59, 60, 62, 63, 64, 66, 68, 70, 76, 79, 82, 83, 84, 85, 87, 88, 94, 95, 96, 97, 102, 105, 108, 109, 111, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 133, 134, 138, 139.

The Old Maling

Keith Cockerill writes:

I recently found myself involved in the exploration the North Hylton Pot Works, birthplace of the Maling Pottery in 1762.

The Hylton riverside area nestles in the shadow of the A19 bridge, with the inns on either side of the river now frequented by locals, walkers, and coast to coast cyclists. Old ferry landings and posts remain on each bank of the river, however, to remind the observer that, before the construction of the Sunderland Iron Bridge in 1796, this was the main river crossing for coaches on their journey north to Newcastle and beyond. The old Maling pottery site itself, can be found a couple of hundred metres upstream of the old river crossing, on the north side of the river adjacent to Hylton Manor House and Farm.



Chimney to the east of site, viewed from the rear

Recently, Hylton Manor House became a subject for discussion in the *Sunderland Echo*. A 1930s watercolour painting of the house appeared in the paper, together with a story of its imminent sale at an auction house in Newcastle.

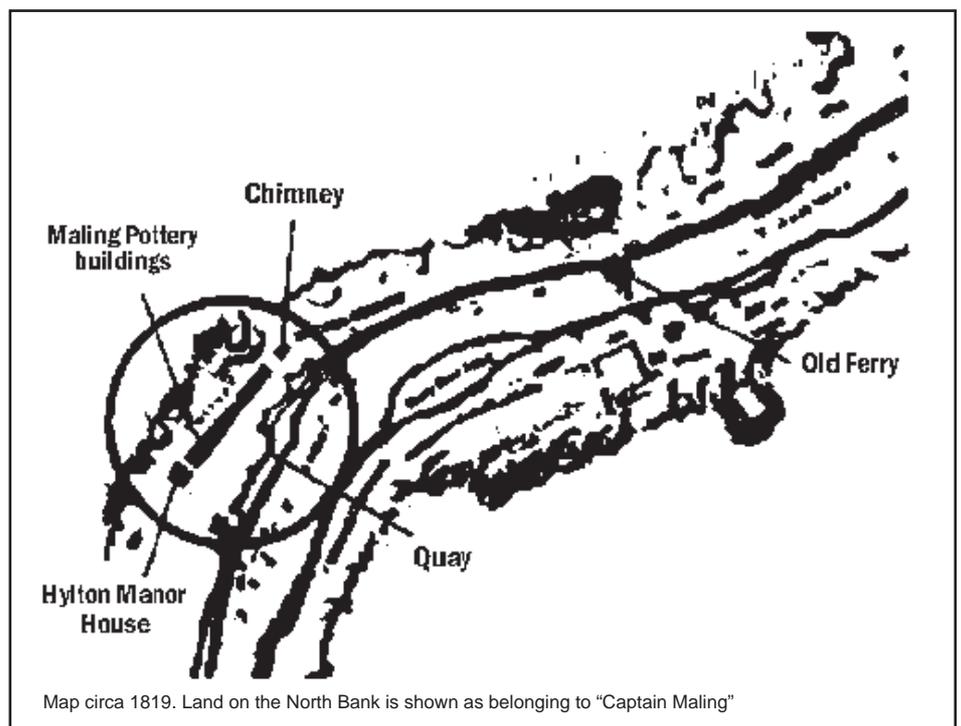
Subsequently, the owner of the house successfully bid for the picture, and the continuing story sparked several nostalgic letters to the paper about the site itself. I contributed a short letter to identify the area as being of historical importance with respect to the birth of the Maling Pottery. These events rekindled my interest in the site, and I decided to attempt an investigation to ascertain whether any of the original pottery buildings remained standing.

My first reference document was John Rennie's 1819/22 map of the area. It highlights the River Wear and ferry landing in good detail but, more importantly, shows the old buildings of the North Hylton pottery site. My second reference point was a colour edition of the local "A to Z" in which I located the present day Hylton Manor Farm. By matching the scale of John Rennie's map to the "A to Z" and photocopying it onto cellophane, I was able to place both maps together and study the relative positions of the old pottery with the current buildings.

On Rennie's map the most westerly building, which is detached from the main pottery building, aligned with Hylton Manor House in the "A to Z".

Furthermore, old "farm buildings" immediately east of the Manor House coincided with the run of the old pottery, as shown on the 1819/22 map. The old pottery quay at the river's edge was also in good alignment on both maps. It became apparent, therefore, that some structures which were part of the original pottery could still be in existence.

Following the discovery that some of the pottery buildings could still be standing, I decided to attempt to photograph them. It is quite a difficult site to photograph, as it is fronted by clusters of trees. During the summer months the outbuildings are hardly visible at all from the south side of the river, but in the early part of year it is just possible to get some sort of picture. I climbed the steep south bank of the river under the huge box girders of the A19 bridge to gain the required vantage point, and photographed the entire site with the quay in the foreground at the water's edge. The position of the farm outbuildings clearly related to the quay in the same manner as the pottery building on Rennie's 19th century map. Immediately to the east, however, other parts of the old pottery would appear to have been demolished.



Map circa 1819. Land on the North Bank is shown as belonging to "Captain Maling"

Pottery at Hylton

The stone built Manor House and pottery/farm buildings are now interconnected via a modern brick built structure with an entry archway into the rear of the property.

Further scrutiny of the “A to Z” map showed a roadway to the rear of the building. I crossed to the north side of the river, approached the property and was surprised to discover a large chimney at the eastern end of the site. It is so well camouflaged by the trees that it cannot be seen at all from the south bank of the river. However, as it is a red brick construction, I do not know if it can be credited to the old pottery.

A high, crumbling stone wall frustratingly restricted further inspection of the site from here, but at one point I was just able to obtain a photograph of what may have been the rear of the old pottery.

After Robert Maling vacated the pottery and transferred business to Newcastle, Hylton Pot Works continued to operate as a small scale enterprise until its closure in the middle of the 19th century. The 1851 census describes the pottery as: “The whole of an earthenware manufactory, unoccupied and going rapidly to decay.”

Given this description, and the fact that it is around 150 years since pottery was produced at the site, it seems incredible that any of it should survive. However, I am left with the opinion that this may be the case.



Farm buildings, probably the first Maling pottery



Hylton Manor House, now joined to former pottery buildings

Put Pen to Paper

What Maling-related tales have you got to tell other members? And, please, don't say “none”!

Over the next few issues we'd like to run a few themed articles with contributions from members. For example:

What was the first piece of Maling you bought, and why?

What was your best, or possibly worst buy?

What was the piece you nearly bought, and then regretted not buying?

All contributions are welcome, even if it's only a couple of sentences. I'll kick things off with a tale of the one that (almost) got away.

A few years ago, at Newark, I was walking around the showground with a friend and fellow collector. On one of the stands I spotted what appeared to be a Maling “Ming & Chang” soup bowl.

It wasn't factory marked, but the pattern number (7507) said that it was “right”. The stallholder had gone walkabout, so I decided to hang on and see if I could pick it up for a song. My friend decided to move on.

It was a while before the stallholder came back and the deal was struck. As I went into the next hall, my friend was already coming out clutching a package which he hadn't had before.

“Look at this”, he said. It turned out to be a daisy plate in the Chinese Birdseller pattern (as illustrated

in “Trademark of Excellence”). A beautiful piece dating from the 1850s, when CT Maling was in charge of the Ouseburn Bridge pottery.

I was inclined to kick myself for having waited so long to buy a tatty old soup bowl when there was treasure like this waiting just around the corner.

But, collecting Maling is rather like waiting for a bus. Nothing for ages, then three come along all at once. Two months later, at Newark, the vendor who had sold the first plate had, not one, but two of them on his stall!

Needless to say, one of them is now in my collection. Interestingly, I haven't seen another one since. - David

The Keiller Connection

I have already shown how, as early as the 1870s, Keiller's were purchasing millions of marmalade pots annually from Maling. As collectors' pieces, therefore, most of these have little rarity value. Their worth throughout the English-speaking world lies in their sturdy good looks and their handiness as containers for every imaginable little domestic item. In 1906, Sir Henry Irving recalled how, in the part of Claudius in a low-budget Dundee production of "Hamlet" many years before, he "drank to Hamlet out of one of Keiller's empty jars", the audience reportedly rising to the gesture with "tumultuous joy".

A number of newsletter readers (Bob Davis, Julia Irwin, Peter Robinson, Lillian and Vic Brown) have kindly sent me details of nineteenth-century Keiller pots in their possession, and my website has attracted information from numerous home and overseas correspondents, the majority of the latter American - something of an oddity, perhaps, given that Keiller's had no US trade worthy of mention before 1880.

In upstate New York, a snorkeller chanced on a pot in Lake Placid, and Michael Mayette found one on the bed of the St Lawrence; in Philadelphia, George Forman of the

University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine found a crock in land once belonging to William Penn; in Colorado, a pot was retrieved from an abandoned mining settlement; in Hawaii, Bert Ikezawa owns one that came from a Oahu hotel; and from Greenwich, Connecticut, Jack Badman sent me photographs of the three dozen Keiller pots in his own remarkable collection.

Further reports came in from Michigan, Wisconsin, West Virginia, and South Carolina, with additional communications from Connecticut and Pennsylvania, and another from Quebec. More locally, Dennis Northmore, Education Officer at Kingston-upon-Hull City Museums and Art Gallery, and a student of the auction market, has offered me a useful summary of current values.

Most of the pots described are of 1lb size - some stumpy, some slender, rimmed for cover ties, and all bearing the standard dark-blue late-Victorian inscription: "Grand Medal of Merit Vienna 1873" (above an oak-leaf wreath), "Only Prize Medal for Marmalade London, 1862" (below the wreath), "James Keiller & Son's Dundee Marmalade" (within the wreath), and a small letter of the alphabet (just under, or sometimes within, the bow at

the bottom of the wreath). There are also miniatures and 2lb pots with the same inscription.

No information is given on cut or content, though a number of the American finds show the addition of "Great Britain", and sometimes "1lb Nett" as well. These London-Vienna containers are preceded, chronologically, by ones citing only the 1862 award - specifically "International Exhibition, 1862" (above the wreath), "The Only Prize Medal Awarded for Marmalade" (below), and "James Keiller & Son's Marmalade Dundee" (within).

A pot in my possession predates both awards, carrying the simple inscription "Finest Quality Dundee Marmalade" inside a shield bearing a thistle motif along its base. I assume it to be an early Keiller's item, since they were the only Dundee producers before the 1860s, and since the naming of the manufacturer was universal in later years. Dennis Northmore has two certain Keiller pots pre-1862: one with the standard oak-leaf wreath and bow, and the inscription "Superior Dundee Marmalade", the other stating, within the same wreath, "James Keiller & Son's Marmalade Dundee" - both with comparatively delicate shaping and printing, suggestive of careful craft production in these early years.

As for pots filled in Keiller's Guernsey factory, these were no different from the standard versions between 1857 and 1873. Thereafter, until the move to London in 1879, containers were required by the Board of Customs to carry the supplementary information "40 Pollett Street Guernsey", but none thus inscribed has been reported - possibly because the extra words were applied by paper label, or attached to the crates in which the pots were exported. A crock still bearing the Pollett label would be an exceedingly rare and valuable item.

The classic late-Victorian pot - i.e. the one citing the London and Vienna medals - is perhaps the one most deserving of attention, partly because of its good survival rate, and partly because its standardisation and rough dateability permit some fairly confident appraisal. Later designs seem very variable in format and, with only a few examples to



Different versions of the "classic" 1lb jar

hand, I am unable, for the present at least, to detect any particular logic or sequence to the inscriptions. I have to pass as well on the imprints set in the base of the London-Vienna pot, for the same reason - unintelligible variation (though commonly with `Maling` and `K`, in differing positions).

Despite winning further awards in the years that followed - from Cape Town in 1877, Sydney in 1879, and Melbourne in 1880 - Keiller's and Maling appear to have persisted with the simple London and Vienna inscription for most of the remainder of the century: a matter of convenience, as well as a sign of confidence. Any dating, therefore, has to be attempted not by medal years but by the lettering on the pots (involving, for Maling, some small regular adjustment to the rollers used for printing the transfers), this almost invariably placed under the bow at the bottom of the wreath.

My own database, from the sources mentioned, registers B, C(2), E(2), F(2), G, H(3), I(3), J(2), K, L(3), M(3), N(2), O, P (3), Q, R, S, U, V, W, X, Y - i.e. all the letters of the alphabet except A, D, T, and Z. There is also a P surmounted by a small Q, an S with a T, and an X with a C.

It cannot be said with certainty, however, that these are strictly year-related. On this point I am indebted to David and Steven, and to Dennis Northmore, for their caveats. The letters are bound to be of functional importance, indicative perhaps of batches - these in turn possibly related to specific orders placed by Keiller's, and permitting identification in the event of defective or over-aged produce turning up in the market.

The lettering, however, would almost certainly have been sequential, and Keiller's would have known exactly what months or years they signified. Ideally, for our dating purposes, orders would have been placed annually, with a single big batch per season, and there is a hint in the final Keiller letter reproduced in my last article that this may indeed have been the practice, with some fine tuning along the way ("we have a contract with him [CT Maling] for 4500 hundred



A 2lb jar and a miniature

crates or as many as contain the whole of our next season's make"), and the double-lettering cited above may refer to some system of periodic supplementation - but there is no evidence to hand of any settled practice for the rest of the century, when the trade was rapidly expanding. All this said, it seems probable that the earlier the letter, the older the pot.

If the sequence was effectively annual, the letters would correspond to the period 1873 to 1898 (carrying the pots some years past the firm's incorporation as James Keiller & Son Ltd in 1893). As for the 11-year period between the 1862 and 1873 awards, it may be significant that the three letters reported are as "early" as A, E, and F - i.e. that they do not extend beyond K: the final letter for any yearly inscription. Another known pot for these years has no letter at all, suggesting maybe that the practice began a year or two after 1862.

Needless to say, with the history of Keiller marmalade largely unstudied until very recently, the market remains as yet poorly informed on the provenance and worth of Keiller-Maling pots. Perhaps an increase of both knowledge and interest will bring about an upward revision of these figures. Happy hunting!

I hope to return to this subject more comprehensively (and possibly less speculatively) in some subsequent edition of the newsletter. Any further information on findings will be most welcome.

Bill Mathew

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What of the value of these pieces? It will suffice if I reproduce the auction-based figures given me by Dennis Northmore (though I would be inclined to inflate somewhat for older and better-quality items from the "classic" category).

1lb pre-1862	(no medals)	very rare	£80-120+
1lb 1862-1873	(1862 medal only)	rare	£15-20
1lb 1873-1898(?)	(1862 and 1873 medals)	very common	£5
2lb (do)	(do)	common	£7
2lb-plus (do)	(do)	rare	£20-50
Miniatures (do)	(do)	scarce	£12-20
[Non-Maling late-century glass jars		very rare (since so breakable)	£100+?].

Collectors' Day - September 23rd. There's still time to book!



Q I have bought a milk jug the same shape as the Cobblestone "Clayton" in the "Jam Jars" chapter of "Trademark of Excellence". I was attracted to it because it has the Homestead pattern on it, the same as the Maling Ringtons jug. However, there is no Maling mark on the base just "50" painted under the glaze and the following words impressed: "SIZE 2 Made in England". The colours and pattern are the same as the Ringtons one and the word "Homestead" is there, too. Do you think it is Maling or did other firms use the same design? I only paid £4 and I like the jug anyway, but I do hope it is Maling.

A Sounds like it. The Maling Clayton jug has a distinctive top to the handle. If yours is the same, it will almost certainly be Maling. I think (though I am not yet sure) that Homestead was designed by LEB. More and more it seems that many of the lithos were designed by the Boulemiers. The exception is the VINE pattern. - *Steven*

Q I have bought a butter dish in the green Pheasant pattern, but there is the name "Fort William, Canada" incorporated in the pattern - black lettering on gold background. I don't know of a Fort William in Canada. Any comments?

A Our best guess is that it may have been made for a ship or hotel with the name "Fort William". It's certainly some sort of special order.

Q I have a 22 piece dinner service - "Kelvin". It has 6 dinner plates, 6 soup plates, 6 dessert plates, a medium oval dish, a large oval dish, a gravy boat and a tureen, "Albion" shape. The number on some of the pieces is 3021 (which corresponds with the book) with a subscript 2 but some have the number 3181 with a subscript "w" or perhaps "v". The former have imprint numbers 2.32 which I take means Feb 1932 and the latter have an imprint 3.33. It is in excellent condition except that 2 of the plates are chipped. Could I get replacements for the 2 chipped plates or additional pieces to complete or augment the set? *Pat Smyth (posmyth@meto.gov.uk)*

A 3021 is the correct number for "Kelvin". Maybe the other number is a mistake? It has been known to happen! As to replacement plates, it's over to the members...

Q Does anyone know who the paintress with the mark H4 is/was? I've just bought a couple of cups and saucers in peony pattern with this mark.

A Not at the moment. It's another one to ponder on...

news in brief

TRAVEL BUREAU

Globetrotting members have recently enquired about where to buy Maling in Sydney, Australia, and where to find good B&B accommodation on an antique-hunting visit to London. Obviously, the society can't guarantee to come up with an answer, but we are very happy to pass on your travel-related queries to members who live in other parts of the UK or the world. (Provided you write a newsletter article when you get back! - David)

FREEBIES

As an added service to members, we're pleased to enclose a special offer with this issue of the newsletter (possibly two, depending on where you live if you're in the UK). Society members are entitled to a ten per cent discount on the services of Thesaurus. You tell them what you want to buy (or, in the worst case, have had stolen) and they scour auction catalogues worldwide to look for these items. Full details in the enclosed leaflet. For UK members in the area, there's a two-for-the-price-of-one offer on admission to the next Bowman Antiques fair at Bingley Hall, Stafford. (If any other members are going to be in the area, just let us know and we'll send you a ticket.)

The Doug and Vi Show part II

Doug and Vi Spearman so enjoyed the last demonstration to the society that they want to do it again! Doug is having a proper drainage box made for the moulds - just like the ones he used at Maling - to make the demonstration more authentic. The husband and wife team will also prepare some moulds in advance so Vi can demonstrate the art of "fettling" i.e. the smoothing off of wares after they have left the mould. We have pencilled it in as the highlight of the Spring 2001 collectors' day, which will give all those who did not see this little bit of history the first time around. We are hoping to find a mould maker to tell us how moulds were made to complete the picture.



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www.maling-pottery.org.uk

Chairman: Steven Moore
Secretary: David Holmes
Patrons: Roger Allan,
Tony Boulemier, Fred Hoult,
Caroline Kirkhope,
Dr John Maling

Membership:
£20 p.a. (UK),
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