

MALING

COLLECTORS' SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Showroom reappears after all these years

What remains of Maling's original showroom has been revealed for the first time since the pottery closed in 1963. Previously used for storage, some of the original fittings have survived.

Surprising as it might seem, when the Ford B pottery opened its doors in 1879

there was no showroom. This is because the main centre for the retail side of the pottery trade was London. Maling had its first showrooms in Bartlett buildings, Holborn, central London.

With increasing trade with Scandinavia, it was decided to build a factory showroom in 1906 for the convenience of buyers from those countries. The showroom was built over the main entrance to the pottery on the yard side, above existing workshops, with access from the main front office level.

Apart from a small office built in the 1920s, the showrooms were changed little from their creation in 1906 until the factory closed.

Today one of the main display benches remains, virtually intact, save for its top

section, the other bench survives partially, but has been taken to pieces. Two stools and a "banding wheel" used to edge plates etc were found in the office section along with the original brackets used to hold up the shelves seen in the photographs in Trademark of Excellence.



The surviving bench has a series of "pullouts" - no doubt used to show off a choice piece that caught the buyer's eye. These are painted black. Both benches show that the shelves were originally lined with material, supposedly one with white satin for black wares and one with black satin to display white wares.

It has not yet been decided what will become of the showroom, but whatever happens to it, all the original fittings will be kept safe for the future. - Steven



News of the Net

It's always good to receive praise, so we were pleased to get the following e-mail: "I would like to say how much I enjoyed your website. You have a very informative site and I found it very easy to get around and search for what I needed."

Meanwhile, the prize for worst mail of the month goes to the writer of the following:

"I have a dish with Cetem ware on its base and when I searched the net for information your site came up. Do you know anything about it?" David replies calmly: "Yes I know quite a bit about our website - I wrote the thing! If, contrary to the rules of English grammar, you mean do I know about your piece, the answer is no. My psychic powers are limited."

Our "highs and lows" feature appears on page 2.

A hint of colour, Ma'am?



One of the nice things about commemoratives is that they have dates on them. (Disgusted of Tunbridge Wells writes: "I am not a complete idiot, and was aware of that fact. Get to the point.")

OK, the point is that they give us a snapshot of Maling's shapes and decorative techniques at specific moments in time. Take these three mugs made for the Diamond Jubilee of 1897. What is the most significant bit of Maling history associated with the late 1890s?

D of TW writes: "You are presumably alluding to the arrival of Charles Miguet, who was to introduce the technique of colour transfer printing by the lithographic process. Prior to this, Maling wares were decorated with single-colour transfers and colour, if required, was applied by hand." David adds: "I could not have put it better myself."

So, from left to right, we have a single-colour print, one which has been transferred and then painted overglaze,

and finally a colour lithograph on the shaving mug. You can possibly make out that the colour lithograph allows a much greater level of detail. For example, the Union Flag appears behind the Queen - an embellishment which would have been far too time-consuming and costly to paint by hand.

Three decorative techniques within the same year, and confirmation of the changes which were taking place in the pottery.

Getting plastered

Once again, we thank David Johnson of Tyne & Wear for his research into the by-ways of Maling history. He writes:

Remaining with Maling Pottery until 1946, Modeller Norman Carling (1902-1971) and the firm's engraver Cecil Parker left to set up their own business making plaster decorative ornaments and rubber toys. The business was based on Brentwood Avenue in Jesmond, and was known as the Plasta Crafts Co (Rubber toy makers).

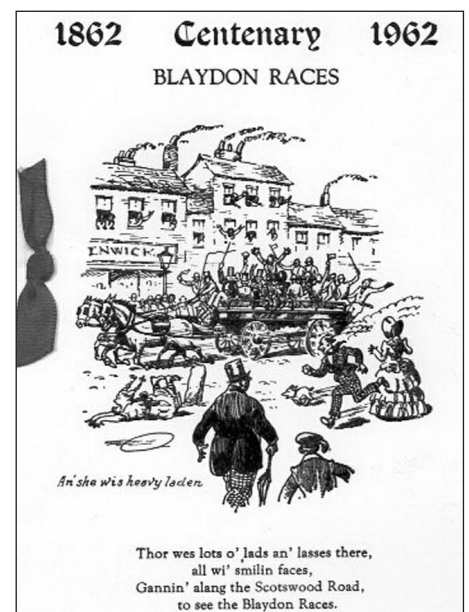
Despite this move, Norman Carling continued to work on a freelance basis for Maling and, indeed, continued producing a number of different shapes right up until closure in 1963.



In the Blaydon Races centenary year of 1962 and from his own company, he produced at least two items that we know of made entirely of plaster to commemorate this extraordinary event. The most notable of these is a plaque (26.5cm in diameter) showing the horse drawn brake (probably a Parker's Omnibus - "An' she wis heavy laden") with all six verses plus chorus of the famous Tyneside anthem by George Ridley.

It is such a quirky item with much revelry and gives us an indication of how it would have been on that famous 9th day in June, one hundred years earlier. Being made of such a fragile material, these items have become rather scarce today and one can only speculate as to just how many have survived.

One strange coincidence from the centenary year is that the firm of T&G Allan (Stationers) of Newcastle upon Tyne produced a Blaydon Races Song Card as part of a Tyneside Song Series, with an almost identical design to that on Carling's creations. Perhaps it was a standard design by Carling and reworked for his own items, or perhaps it was by another?



Once again, the Net proves that good quality Maling will cost you dear, while more ordinary pieces can come in at bargain basement prices. Last month a lamp base in "Dragon" pattern fetched 730 USD. More than forty pieces of Maling (mostly odd saucers, plates, etc) were bought for less than 5 GBP on eBay.

How Maling was made

Les Dixon concludes his account of the manufacturing process

Dipping

One of the most important constituents of a finished pottery piece is the glaze. Glaze is an opaque liquid with a consistency of cream. It contains a glass-like substance called frit, clay, borax and flint, these are ground to a fine powder and mixed with water. The most difficult problem is that of mixing the glaze with a clay body. If the proportions were slightly wrong then the glaze would contract in the firing leaving a "crazed" pattern on the surface of the ware.

Coloured glazes were obtained by the addition of oxide. For example, green was obtained from the oxide of chrome, zinc oxide produced a brown colour, pink and blue were obtained from the oxides of tin and cobalt respectively. A matt glaze was achieved by the addition of calcium oxide.

The ceramic items were dipped in a trough of glaze and then left to dry. The water would then evaporate leaving a thin film of glaze on the surface of the ware. Ware-Cleaners then removed all the surplus glaze. Glaze was also applied by aerographing. Once the items were cleaned they were passed to the Glost Placers for firing.



Lustre Decoration

For lustre decoration solutions of metallic resinates were used. This was applied by means of a brush or spraying with an aerograph gun. Gold, platinum and silver produced various lustre colours such as ruby, bronze, various shades of green and mother of pearl. Care was taken to ensure an even density of colour and parts of the ware to be left

white had to be carefully blocked out beforehand. All lustres were applied over the glaze and then fired in an enamelling kiln.

Through constant experimentation it was discovered that certain lustres reacted differently at varying

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“My favourite is a fake!” says Vic

We're always interested to hear the stories behind your favourite pieces of Maling. Vic Brown writes:

I bought this paste pot at a Chamock Richard Sunday antique fair several years ago for £10, from a small dealer who professed no knowledge of CETEM ware, nor indeed of Maling. Don't they all, when they want to shift something!

The pot and lid are a pair, and the pot, underneath, bears an impressed triangle with C.T.M. initials inside, as per Maling Mark 1.12 (impressed), from the Book of Excellence. The simple, and somewhat crude, black and white transfer design on the lid celebrates the birth date, life span (83 years), and death date of the Duke of Wellington.

There is no real doubt that the paste pot and lid are early C.T.M. ware, but the lid design is where the trouble starts. If it

were to be a genuine commemorative piece, produced just after Wellington's death (Sept. 1852), it would predate the use of mark 1.12 by some twenty-three years. So, can the decoration be contemporary with the pot?

Closer inspection of the glazing (very well done; very hard), covering the decoration on the lid, shows it is more pristine than that on the sides and interior



of the pot. I am told that during the early 1950's there was a faking scam going on, where Victorian middens, cellars, backs of garden sheds etc. were combed for discarded 19th century domestic white ware pottery containers; commemorative transfers rather skilfully applied, and flogged off for about £10, then more than the weekly wage of skilled tradesmen and young professionals (I know; I was there, but this isn't about how Lillian and I used to share a ninepenny pork pie at the end of a bad month.)

Purists may advocate hurling this piece of desecrated Maling back into the midden from whence it came, but that is not for me. Not even an offer to "float off" the decoration in some mysterious restoration would be entertained. I've got an early C.T.M. paste pot and lid; never seen one before or since, and a story to tell for little enough cost - and that's the way I like it.

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temperatures which ranged between 605 degrees C and 705 degrees C. The electronically controlled temperature kilns were thus a great advantage for the firing of lustre wares.

Glost Firing

Before 1950 Maling possessed eight Glost kilns which were equipped to take saggars. The ware was placed in each saggar on stilt pins so that the glazed surfaces were not touching - otherwise the pieces would have been fused together. Rolls of plastic clay were put between each saggar in order to make them airtight and prevent fumes from affecting the ware. They were also washed with alumina and china clay to stop the glaze being sucked from the ware whilst being fired.

Electric kilns introduced in the 1950s were much easier to load and use, "Kiln Furniture" consisting of refractory tiles and intervening pillars separated the ware which was loaded on platforms of trucks and then pushed on rails into the kiln. Glost firing took about 30 hours, reaching a maximum temperature of 1050 degrees C. After this firing the ware would either be decorated over the glaze in the previously described manner or, if the decoration had been completed, sent to the Glost warehouse where it was checked for faults.

Hand Gilding

In this century Maling decorated many of their products with gold. Although an expensive form of decoration, it enhanced the beauty of the finished piece. Gold was applied in two ways: as gold-leaf and as powdered gold dust mixed into a paste. Whilst blue, green or red coloured bands were usually applied under the glaze by means of a brush, gold rims and edges were added after the ware was glazed and fired. The ware was then fired again at the very top of the kiln at 750 degrees C and then burnished with fine silver sand or blood stone to remove the dullness which resulted from the firing.

The Packing and Despatch Departments would then select and assemble ware to customers' orders ready for packing. The ware was inspected after each stage of manufacture, but all finished items were passed by qualified inspectors. Maling ware was consigned to all areas of the United Kingdom, to many European countries as well as to Australia, South Africa and the United States.



This year marks the 75th anniversary of the NE Coast Exhibition. Here's the final part of an article which marked the 50th anniversary.

As the second largest hall, the Palace of Engineering housed the heavy engineering, mining, shipbuilding and constructional displays, representing the industrial giants of the North East Coast. These included Parsons, Swan Hunter, Head Wrightson, Redpath Brown, Vickers Armstrong, Clarke Chapman, Reyrolles, and many more. Here were displayed the great advances in turbines, generators, steel production and construction.

The Palace of Arts was situated on the north side of the ornamental lake and was approached by a wooden bridge. The large central hall and its radiating galleries showed displays of paintings, etchings, sculpture, photographs and silverware. These were all loaned by local art galleries and private collectors, such as the Duke of Northumberland. Many of the paintings were on public show for the first time and this is probably reflected in the attendance figures of over 500,000 in spite of an extra entrance charge on four of the six days that the Exhibition was open each week.

The Women's and Artisans' Sections housed some of the most popular displays in the whole Exhibition. They contained 'live' displays of women demonstrating pottery-making, basket weaving, needlework, enamelling, painting and other artisan crafts. Lectures were given on the diversity of women's occupations and their value to the community. Other displays included cookery, domestic science and first aid.

Not only the vast size of the buildings but the African Village, Great Water Chute and the carillon are amongst the most vivid memories of older people today who visited the Exhibition as young children. Not only do memories survive, but out of the 430 or more exhibits in 1929, over 140 still exist today. Exhibition Ale and Smith's Crisps were born at the Exhibition, they are still going strong. A child was also born at the Exhibition, his mother being one of the 'exhibits' in the African Village.

(PS - for those of you with a copy of our "Maling Memories" video or DVD. Peggie Stewart has recollected that she made a small faux-pas in her account of the event. Maling paintresses were on the Townsend stand in the Palace of Industry, and not on the Ringtons stand - and neither stand was in the Palace of Arts. Our thanks for the clarification Peggie. - David)



www.maling-pottery.org.uk

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£20 p.a. (UK),
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