

MALING

COLLECTORS' SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Issue 43 June 2009

Keep seeking the facts

We are all familiar with Maling's castle mark. But, in a moment of idleness (otherwise known as: "how am I going to fill this newsletter?") a puzzle occurred to me.

The castle keep in Newcastle is square with a turret at each corner. One of the turrets is higher than the other three. So, how come Maling's best-known mark shows a castle with only three turrets?

Come to that, why does the Newcastle city logo depict a very similar view?

The answer is obvious when you look at the photograph below. Shoot the castle from the correct angle (diagonally) and the high turret appears to be flanked by two lower turrets to left and right.

Maling had a few goes at getting this view. The earliest known castle mark, dating from the CTM years, shows the castle square on. The high turret can be seen on the left.

The Cetem years introduce a diagonal view, but an attempt has been made to maintain the

correct perspective. I can only conjecture that this was a rather fiddly thing to engrave.

Later castle marks are much simpler. Perspective has been done away with and we have a flat view of a castle which appears to have only three turrets (not to mention a door where there isn't one in real life!).

So, who got the idea of the castle first? The answer, of course, is the city. Their website records:

"The castle motif goes back to the earliest times. Originally the town took its name from the 'New Castle' built by order of Robert Curthose, eldest son of William the Conqueror, in 1080. A castle was depicted on the twelfth century common seal.

"The earliest example of the three silver castles on a red shield, dating from about 1400, is in the window on the north side of the chancel in St John's Church."

That may not add much to your knowledge of Maling, but I have to fill these newsletters somehow.



COLLECTORS' DAY – 5 SEPTEMBER. See page 2

Post-war pots bring our story to a close

David Johnson concludes his series on Ringtons ware with a look at the post-war years.

With the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939, once again Samuel Smith and his tea company faced great disruption. By 1943 Over 400 Ringtons employees had been called up to fight for their country and a fleet of more than 200 vans was taken off the road. The inner strength and great determination that had once seen Sam Smith through a First World War were yet again being called upon to see him through a second.

With war at an end in September 1945 and business at an all time low, Samuel Smith began to pick up the pieces and once again re-employed all former surviving employees returning from war. With recovery under way it was left to Sam's successors to complete the Ringtons Tea story as Sam died on the 12th August 1949 at the age of 77.

1953 Maling ware was once again being produced for Ringtons with the first post-war piece being the "Pekoe" shape jug decorated in the embossed "Blossom Bough" design.



This appeared to be a popular choice with Ringtons customers and a promotion which would see nearly 50,000 of these made by 1955.

1955 saw the "Jesmond" shape teapot with the embossed "Autumn Leaves" design. Once again this proved a popular choice with Ringtons customers and large orders from Maling had been achieved by 1957.



In March 1962, Ringtons ordered 100,000 "Grecian" shape jugs from Maling in the "Godetia Spray" pattern, which had been their choice from a previous series of neo-classical vases and jug samples produced. These are not marked, suggesting that they were not exclusive to Ringtons.

The summer of 1963 brought to an end the long life of C. T. Maling & Sons, but according to Les Dixon one final order of embossed "Anemone" tea caddies had been placed by Ringtons prior to closure. Sadly, Ringtons refused to complete this order resulting in Maling being left with thousands of caddies.

High quality premium offers have continued to be commissioned from other reputable manufacturers such as Wade Ceramics and Masons. 2007 celebrated Ringtons Centenary year and the 25th anniversary of the Ringtons and Wade Ceramics partnership. Now in the fourth generation of the Smiths, this family



business has moved with the times both in products and outlets.

Tea bags were introduced in the 1960s and coffee production increased to meet the demands of the 70s. With 28 offices, a catering division and five retail stores, Ringtons continues to thrive and succeed within a competitive tea industry. Samuel Smith built a business on giving his customers value for money and this traditional value continues today as Ringtons' company policy.

David H adds: You may wonder why 1953 doesn't include Ringtons items made for the coronation of Elizabeth II. They are genuine, but are they Maling? There is an attempt to imitate Maling's "Cobblestone" design in the gilded panels, but the transfer of Queen Elizabeth and the shape of the items don't seem quite right.

Both Wade and Sadler have been suggested as the supplier. Neither David J or I can state with any confidence that these items are Maling.

Sorry that a paragraph went missing from the article in newsletter 42. Under 1928 mention should have been made of the tea/coffee pots in blue "Broseley". They were shown in the accompanying photograph and, although not factory marked, they are considered to be genuine Maling. A fake item is shown on page 4.

WE'LL MEET AGAIN

The collectors' day has been sorted.

Date: Saturday 5 September

Venue: Churchill Community College, Wallsend, NE28 5TN

Price: £15 per head

Please send cheques to the PO Box address on page 4. The cost includes lunch and light refreshments. The agenda will be the usual mixture of panic and improvisation.

From Egypt via Elijah

Andrew Pye adds further information on “Denon’s Egypt”. He writes:

This is a series pattern, showing different views in Egypt. To date four scenes have been recorded and are believed to originate with the Staffordshire potter Elijah Jones.

The story starts in May 1798, when Napoleon set sail from France with 328 ships and 38,000 men to annex a new empire in the East. Accompanying this military expedition were some 175 civilian scholars, the Commission of the Sciences and Arts, whose knowledge and experience embraced all manner of academic subjects.



They were to map, survey, analyse and gather every last fact about the new Empire, which was to be initially focused on Egypt.

A key figure amongst the scholars was Dominique Vivant Denon, who had been selected for his skills as an artist and engraver and his antiquarian interests. He was Napoleon’s artistic advisor. Later he was to become director-general of French Museums and received the title of Baron.

Denon contributed to the 24 volume “Description de l’Egypte” created by the Commission and produced his own two volume “Voyage dans la Basse et Haute-Egypte”, which was published in 1802. It appeared subsequently in a number of editions and was translated into English and German.

Later, in 1825, a single volume “condensed” version was published in English. It was a



large folio book entitled “Egypt Delineated”, however, on the spine was simply “Denon’s Egypt”, so probably it was this volume, which inspired the china pattern of the same name.

The timing would fit as “Denon’s Egypt” was initially made by Elijah Jones, a potter in Staffordshire, who is first recorded as active under his own name in 1828. Initially, his pottery was in Hall Lane, Hanley, but he moved to Phoenix Works, Shelton in 1831 and in the following year to the Villa Pottery at Cobridge, where he remained, entering into partnership with Edward Walley (a relation by marriage) in 1841.

Jones appears to have left this partnership in 1845, leaving Walley to continue in his sole name. He possibly formed a new partnership with Thomas Vigers in 1845 or 46 in Cobridge (though a trade directory lists Henry, rather than Elijah, Jones). Jones then moved to Mill Street, Shelton in 1847, where he potted under his sole name for a couple of years.

A backstamp is recorded for “Denon’s Egypt”, with the initials E. J for Elijah Jones. It seems that the later partnerships of Jones & Walley



and Jones & Vigers may not have produced this design as no backstamp has been recorded with the initials of those partnerships. However, it was common to continue to use an existing backstamp, even though the trading name of the business might have changed. There was cost involved in re-engraving even a backstamp.

After the death of his wife, a new career attracted him. He retired from potting and became an auctioneer, taking over the established business of Ralph Johnson.

No record has been found of Elijah Jones selling copper plates or stock in trade. However, if he did, it is likely that, in his new occupation, he held his own auction early in 1848. Certainly subsequent to that date Denon’s Egypt re-appeared with Maling backstamps. The printed backstamp was re-used, but with the initials removed.

There is one item recorded with MALING impressed, which suggests manufacture in the



white before 1853, although decoration could have been applied later. The majority of items have C T Maling, which is 1853 or later and one item is recorded with a date code for August 1888, so it appears that Maling found the pattern to have enduring appeal.

Note that the first piece illustrated is by Jones, not Maling, but has been included to show the pattern.

Trust no one

Here's a cautionary tale about the danger of assumptions.

In the last newsletter I said that I had always assumed that the ladies on the “Denon’s Egypt” plate were in European dress. However, my researches into Denon’s engravings suggested that they were, in fact, wearing 18th century Egyptian costume.

I began to wonder where my assumption had come from, and why I hadn’t looked more closely at the pattern before and trusted the evidence of my own eyes.



The answer came when I was browsing the Shire Album “Maling and other Tyneside Pottery” (1986) in search of something else. Here, author RC Bell describes “Denon’s Egypt” as “two Europeans walking through an Egyptian landscape”.

So that “fact” had worked its way into my mind and stayed there for over two decades. It’s not often the experts are wrong but, as they said in “The X Files”: “trust no one”!



Members help find Herbert

A couple of readers have come forward to identify the mystery man pictured on the vase in newsletter 42.

He appears to be Prime Minister Herbert Asquith who was PM at the start of WWI and remained in office until 1916, when he was replaced by Lloyd George.

These dates tie in well with our conjecture that the vase was part of the patriotic items produced by Mr Miguet in the early years of the war (see below).

Further confirmation of identity comes in this cartoon by "Spy" (a regular contributor to "Vanity Fair" magazine). This is certainly Asquith. Compare the two likenesses – the pose, the rotund figure and the quiff – and I think we can say we've found our man.



... and I'm a Dutchman



Would you accept this as a "Ringtons prototype", as advertised recently on eBay? If so, you probably also believe in the Easter Bunny and the Tooth Fairy.

It is, we believe, a fake (as mentioned briefly in the article in newsletter 42).

Reference was made there to the thick potting, crude transferring and the giveaway domed lids which identify fake caddies. In this case, a fake caddy has been further embellished with a handle and spout the like of which would have drawn scorn from anyone who worked at the pottery in 1928.

The vendor asserted that this piece had been in the family for some 30 years. We can only beg to differ, as job lots of these items are still being seen at antiques fairs.

The mark, although making no reference to Maling, is believed to be a copy of marks used on Ringtons ware in the 1920s.

As we said in newsletter 42: "caveat emptor".

Do you remember Eva?

We have identified another paintress thanks to this email.

"I have a pair of candle holders which were painted by my aunt who worked at the Maling factory in Newcastle. They are the Clematis design (6461), painted in 1945 by Eva Cuthbertson. Her monogram was a 'T'. Her mother Charlotte also worked at Maling and, in the 1901 census, is recorded as a 'painter (sculpt)'. Do you have any information regarding either?"

Unfortunately, no. However this photograph of Eva, taken in 1944, may strike a chord with someone.



If the world of Maling collecting were logical, we might assume that Margaret Robson (mark "T1") could have some working connection with Eva. But Margaret, who worked through the 50s until closure in 63, has no recollection of her. Margaret was trained by Betty Hill (mark "B1"). So the allocation of paintresses' marks remains a mystery.



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Joining fee: £20 (UK); £25 (overseas)
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