HISTORIC ILLINOIS POTTERIES

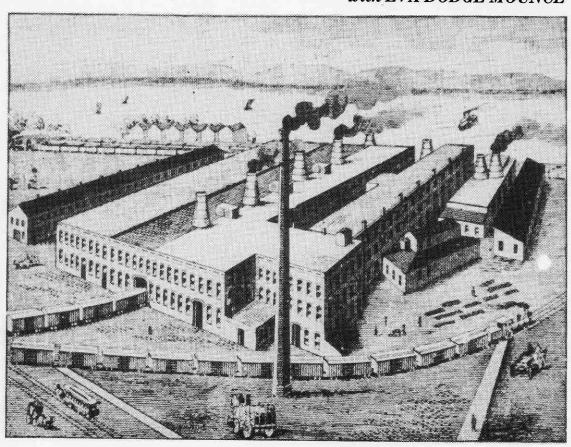
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VOLUME II NUMBER 1

THE POTTERIES OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS

FLOYD R. MANSBERGER with EVA DODGE MOUNCE



HISTORIC ILLINOIS POTTERIES CIRCULAR SERIES

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VOLUME I

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VOLUME II

Number 1 The Potteries of Peoria, Illinois by Floyd R. Mansberger with Eva Dodge Mounce

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Cover: Illustration of the Peoria Pottery Company from a detail on C.J. Pauli's View of Peoria, Illinois (1888).

THE POTTERIES OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS

By
Floyd R. Mansberger
with
Eva Dodge Mounce

Peoria is strategically located in central Illinois along the Illinois River. During the early to mid nineteenth century, Peoria developed as a major industrial and commercial center for the state. With the development of Illinois' railroad system during the 1850s and 1860s, Peoria became a manufacturing and warehouse district for a vast western territory.

One of the early industries to take advantage of the excellent transportation facilities available in Peoria was the pottery industry. Although several small pottery firms were established in Peoria by the late 1850s, it was the establishment of the American Pottery Company (1859–1863) by Christopher Webber Fenton and Decius Clark (Figure 1) that brought national attention to this central Illinois community. Although unsuccessful, the American Pottery Company was significant in that it introduced the factory system to ceramic production in Illinois and was one of the earliest, if not the first, to produce whitewares in the Midwest. The Peoria Pottery Company (1863-1902) absorbed the American Pottery Company and produced mostly utilitarian wares. By the early 1870s, due to the excellent transportation networks that Peoria had to offer and the fine clay and coal resources within easy transport distance, the Peoria Pottery Company supplied much of Illinois and the western markets with quality stoneware products. By the late nineteenth century, the Peoria Pottery Company's distinctive colored wares were recognized far and wide. Today the distinctive salt glazed, as well as slipped or "Peoria Glazed" wares, are actively sought by collectors.

PRE-CIVIL WAR POTTERIES

Although several potteries were located in Peoria prior to the establishment of the American Pottery Company, little is known about these pre-Civil War firms. By 1844 Samuel B. King was advertizing his wares in local city directories (Figure 2). At that time, his workshop was located along Monroe between Fayette and Jackson streets. A single salt-glazed, straight-sided jar with hand-painted cobalt blue decoration and the words "S.B. King" incised into the container has survived to the present and is believed to have been made in Peoria (Figure 3).

By 1855, King had formed a partnership with D.W. Louden (Louden and King Stoneware Manufacturers). The 1856 Peoria City Directory suggests that their pottery was located at the corner of Adams and Walnut streets. The local paper states that "they find a ready sale for all their work" and that the clay used by these two potters was brought from the vicinity of Beardstown. Apparently this partnership was short-lived. The 1857 city directory indicates that Louden was a dealer in fish and King's occupation was not listed. No examples of Louden and King's stoneware have survived to the present.

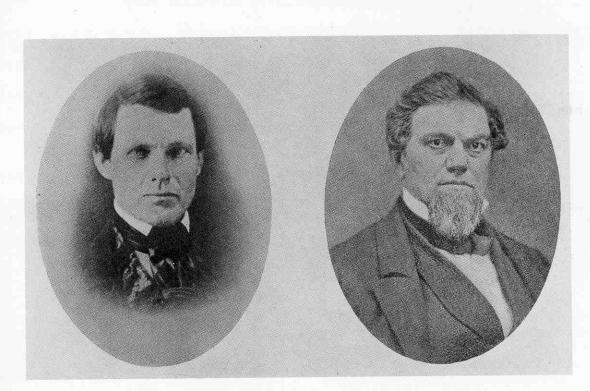


Figure 1. Christopher Fenton (left) and Decius Clark (right).

Another early Peoria potter was Joseph Jaeger. The 1856 Peoria City Directory indicates that he had a workshop on Hale Street between Hamilton and Fayette. By 1860, he was located at the corner of First and Spencer streets. The 1863 city directory indicates that Jaeger was located at 332 Smith Street, and the 1882 Peoria City Directory is the last year that Jaeger is listed within the city directories. At that date, his workshop was located at 416 Smith Street. Although the 1861 city directory suggests that Jaeger produced stonewares, no pieces of his work are known to have survived to the present.

During the mid nineteenth century, the pottery firm of Wolfe and McLee operated in Peoria. Sometime during the late 1850s or early 1860s, George Wolfe and William McLee established their pottery. The 1865 city directory suggests that this firm produced yellow and Rockingham wares. No known examples of their products have survived to the present.

THE AMERICAN POTTERY COMPANY (1859–1863)

In May 1859, the *Peoria Daily Transcript* announced that Christopher Fenton and Decius Clark of Bennington, Vermont were to locate "an immense pottery" (Figure 4) within the state of Illinois that "was designed to give employment to one thousand operatives." At that time, the American Pottery Company opened their books "for subscription to the capital stock of said company" in the cities of Chicago, Peoria, Quincy, Springfield, Alton and Bloomington, all prospec-

SAMUEL B. KING,

Monroe-street, between Fayette and Jackson streets,

PDDO

Makes and keeps

Stone and

OF ALL DE

FLOWER POTS,

RIA

constantly for sale,

Earthen Ware,

SCRIPTIONS.

plain and fancy patterns.

Figure 2. Advertisement for Samuel B. King's stone and earthenware (1844).



Figure 3. Salt-glazed jar with cobalt blue decoration and inscribed "S.B. King" (late 1840s to mid 1850s).

tive homes for the hopeful company. The July 15, 1859 issue of the Peoria Daily Transcript stated that:

The process by which the American Pottery Company (that are about to locate their works in Illinois) are enabled to manufacture an article of table ware superior to the best imported English ware, was the result of discovery made a little over a year ago, and through the medium of Illinois clay. Messrs. Fenton & Clark had previously been engaged in the Pottery business at Bennington, Vermont, where they had by successive discoveries, gradually risen from the manufacture of common brown earthen ware, to

the fabrication of Parian, lava, flint and porcelain-but not the granite table ware. The specimens exhibited by them at the World's Fair in New York, attracted largely the attention of the country. A year or so ago, the Illinois Central Railroad Company sent Messrs. Fenton & Clark a sample of clay found on the line of their road, and it was while experimenting with this clay that Mr. Clark made the discovery by which the famous English stone table ware is entirely eclipsed. The process has been secured by patent, and Messr's Fenton & Clark, associated with Dr. [Thomas] Johnson of Fulton County, in this state, and Messrs. [George] Lascell and [Amos] Johnson, two N. Y. gentlemen, are now

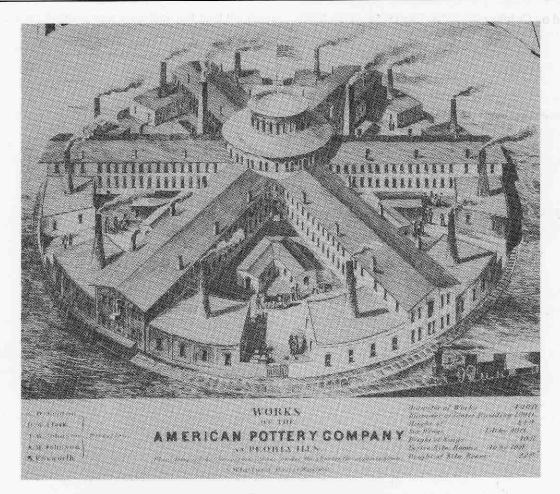


Figure 4. Illustration of the "Works of the American Pottery Company" from a detail on Map of Peoria County, Illinois (1861).

preparing to open the business on an extensive scale—having decided to locate the works in this state.

In July 1859, "a committee of Peoria businessmen was formed to solicit subscriptions for a proposed pottery" to be erected within their city. By August the committee traveled to Bennington, Vermont and invited Christopher Fenton and Decius Clark of the recently defunct U.S. Pottery Company to consider Peoria as a location for their proposed pottery. Decius Clark was the son of General Clark, for whom old Fort Clark in Peoria had been named. Beside Peoria's excellent transportation facilities and proximity to quality

coal and clay (the three reasons given by Fenton, Lascell and Johnson for locating in Peoria), it may have been the Clark family's connection to early Peoria that helped to convince Fenton and Clark to locate in Peoria.

Apparently by the end of July, Fenton had decided on Peoria as the location of the pottery. Time was not wasted as plans were drawn and construction begun. The October 18, 1859 issue of the *Peoria Daily Transcript* stated that the contract for the brick work (to T.S. Lupton) and carpentry work (to S. Whitford, master builder) for the pottery had been awarded. The architect for the uniquely designed new Pottery building was

Charles Ulricson. The cornerstone of the pottery was laid on October 24, 1859. The October 25, 1859 issue of the *Peoria Daily Transcript* stated that:

The work of excavation having progressed sufficiently to allow the masons to operate, the foundations of the pottery buildings were commenced yesterday . . . the 'works' are to be located on the square lying between Caroline and Mary streets, bounded on the east by the Bureau Valley railroad and on the west by Adams street. The Pottery, proper, is to occupy so much of the central portion of the square as can by comprised within an expansive circle twelve hundred feet in diameter. In the center is the office which rises up like the hub of a wheel and out from it are to go six 'wings' as the buildings for manufacturing ware, &c., are called, but to make our simile correct should be designated 'spokes,' all terminating in the wall which is erected on the outer rim of the circle. The kilns for burning are to be placed in the open space between the 'wings.' The advantages of this plan for overseeing the workmen and regulating their operations are innumerable. A man in the office has but to turn round in order to take a complete survey of the entire establishment. Such power as may be required is furnished by a steam engine located in the basement under the office. The buildings are all two stories high exclusive of the basements . . . The work on the remaining portion will be pushed forward with as much vigor as circumstances will allow. This grand consummation, which will give us the largest pottery establishment in the world, we cannot believe is far off.

The June 24, 1860 issue of the *Peoria Transcript* stated that:

We paid a visit to the American Pottery Works on Tuesday. Two kiln wings are nearly completed, and one is under cover—one kiln is up and nearly ready for the inside fire brick. The company are engaged in manufacturing their own brick at a savings of nearly \$30 per thousand. The company expects to turn out their first kiln of ware by July.

The first fire was built in the kiln at the American Pottery Company's works on Friday June 15, 1860. After the firing of the kiln (to

produce the necessary kiln furniture such as saggers), all that the company was waiting on was the arrival of the steam engine and associated machinery which was to arrive from Rochester, New York and Burlington, Vermont. In reference to the new pottery buildings being built in Peoria, the New York Tribune (according to the Peoria Journal Star 1/6/82) stated that "the largest and finest pottery in the world is being built."

When Fenton arrived in Peoria he brought Decius Clark, his superintendent at Bennington, and his chief designer and moldmaker Daniel Greatbach. In 1838 Greatbach had immigrated from the Staffordshire district of England. He was a master craftsman and was responsible for many of the best known designs that Fenton and his potteries produced.

Throughout 1861, 1862, and 1863, the Peoria Daily Transcript actively carried stories on the new pottery and its products. One of the last articles pertaining to the pottery was carried in January 1863 and stated that work at the pottery would be suspended for the winter months as soon as the kilns of ware that were presently manufactured were burned. Considering that the plant had previously stayed in operation throughout the entire year and that "during the winter of 1861 they were expected to turn out work to the value of \$1200 to \$1500 weekly" (Peoria Daily Transcript) the seasonal closing seems unusual. In May 1863, the paper stated that John Bryner had purchased an interest in the American Pottery Company. In December, 1868, after a five-year hiatus in the local newspaper, The Peoria Daily Transcript reported that "one wing of the pottery has been rebuilt," (emphasis added) suggesting that the building may have been destroyed. A later newspaper article suggests that the American Pottery Company was destroyed by fire. It is generally assumed that the American Pottery Company closed its doors in 1863.

The reasons for the failure of the American Pottery Company are unknown. Perhaps it was simply a matter of a disastrous fire. But these had been troubled years for Christopher Fenton. In late 1860, Fenton's wife died. Shortly afterwards, the Peoria Daily Transcript indicated that "the American Pottery [was] under the management of H.G. Anderson." The 1863 Peoria City Directory

indicated that Fenton apparently was not living in Peoria at that time. Potentially the death of his wife caused him to lose ambition in his Peoria adventure. Without Fenton's leadership, the pottery apparently floundered and eventually closed. On June 7, 1865 at the age of 59, Christopher Fenton died of "accidental causes" in Joliet. Fenton's master modeller, Daniel Greatbach moved to Trenton, New Jersey, "where he died in poverty."

THE PEORIA POTTERY COMPANY

Some confusion exists as to the early history of the Peoria Pottery Company. The 1863 Peoria City Directory lists William Travis and John Bryner as stoneware manufacturers located at the corner of North Washington and Caroline streets. The 1864 city directory indicates that John Bryner was the "proprietor" of the Peoria Pottery Company. It appears that both the American Pottery Company and Peoria Pottery Company were two separate firms operating during 1863. It is not known when the Peoria Pottery Company began operation but it is suspected that it was circa 1863. With the American Pottery Company producing only refined tablewares and potentially enameled brick and the Peoria Pottery Company producing utilitarian stoneware, the two firms were non-competitive.

In 1863, John Bryner of the Peoria Pottery Company apparently bought an interest in the troubled American Pottery Company, Thereafter, apparently due to a fire, we hear nothing more about the American Pottery Company. It appears that Bryner may have established the Peoria Pottery Company in 1863 as a non-competitive firm to produce utilitarian stonewares. The city directory in 1863 suggests that the firm was located on the same site as the American Pottery Company and suggests that the two firms may even have shared manufacturing facilities. Potentially, after a disastrous fire at the American Pottery Company's works, Brynor purchased a controlling interest in the company and absorbed it into the Peoria Pottery Company. Future research should concentrate on this issue.

By 1865 the Peoria Pottery Company (Figure 5) employed over 50 workers, including Decius Clark. In 1867 noted mold maker Ralph Wolfe joined the

company. In 1870, George Wolfe became part owner of the Peoria Pottery Company with J.E. McClure. An article in the *Peoria Daily Transcript* (August 1871) stated that:

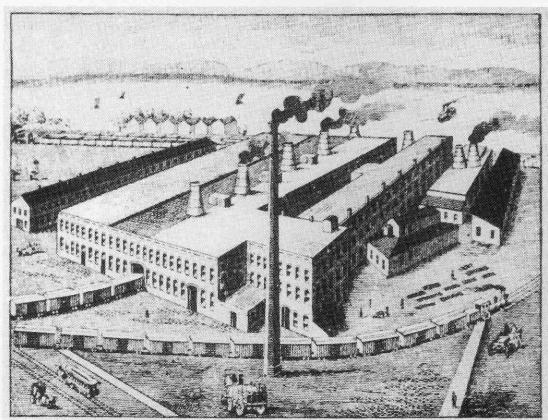
We understand that Mrs. Lydia Bradley Clark contemplates rebuilding the pottery, upon the ruins of the old American Pottery, as soon as a clear title can be obtained to the premises. The old original stock company that built the American Pottery have still some claim upon the grounds. When this is removed it is the intention of the lady to rebuild, upon the old foundation, and we understand that the proposed building will be as large as the old one, with the exception of the basement and will cost from \$10,000 to \$15,000. It was her intention, we understand, to have built this season, but her inability to get the title cleared will postpone the improvement until next year.

Apparently, Mrs. Clark had trouble in obtaining the title to this property. In a similar article in an April 1875 issue of the *Peoria Daily Transcript* we learn that:

It has been a well known fact that the Peoria Pottery has been doing a large and increasing business in the manufacture of common earthenware, and that the demand has been so great that it has been impossible to furnish a sufficient supply. The goods are of a splendid quality, and their reputation has increased the demand this season to such an extent that the capacity of the works are inadequate to meet it.

It will be remembered that the original pottery building burned down several years ago, and that a small establishment has improvised from the walls of the ruins in which the common ware has been made up to the present time.

Mrs. Lydia Bradley, the owner of the property, has decided to rebuild the works of the same size as they originally stood. The dimensions will be 40 x 100 feet and two stories in height & the contract will include the two outside kilns. Mrs. Bradley has let the contract for the whole work to Benjamin Carman, who will do the carpenter work, and he has sublet the brick work to Colemand & Parrish. The whole amount of the contract will amount to \$4,000 and it calls for the completion of the building ready for occupancy, by the 15th of June.



PEORIA POTTERY CO.

Figure 5. Illustration of the Peoria Pottery Company from a detail on C.J. Pauli's View of Peoria, Illinois (1888).

The new building will have double the capacity of the present structure besides furnishing room for the manufacture of an improved style of jugs and jars.

The present pottery turns out annually 500,000 flower pots, 36,000 fruit jars, and 100,000 milk pans. The business has been of a healthy growth, and has paid handsomely. This enlargement of the present works shows that its prosperity is on the increase, and we trust that the proprietor will receive a corresponding benefit.

In 1875, J.E. McClure left the company and Austin Johnson, an agent for the Bradley estate, was brought into the partnership. A year later, Lydia Bradley was listed as an additional partner in the pottery. After construction of the new facility, and under the direction of Wolfe, Johnson and Bradley, the Peoria Pottery Company flourished and many new employees were hired. The 1880 Peoria County history states:

Four large kilns are in use for baking the pottery, round in shape, and with a diameter of 16 feet inside. The foundations for another kiln have been laid and it will be built and made ready for use in the coming spring. An idea of the extent of the works may be gathered from the fact that it has a capacity for turning out 30,000 gallons of milk pans, jugs, etc. or 300,000 flower pots per week. An average of fifty hands are employed the year around. Fifteen tons of coal are used per day. The clay used comes by rail

from Scottsburg in McDonough county in this state, and is of superior quality. Of this 9,000,000 pounds per annum are used. This is the largest pottery for the manufacture of fine glazed stone ware in America.

Additionally, in 1881 the *Peoria Daily Transcript* indicated that the pottery had been increased another story in height nearly doubling the size of the factory.

In 1885 Lydia Bradley left the company. From 1885 until 1892, the firm was managed by George Wolfe and Austin Johnson. By 1894, Johnson also had left the firm and George Wolfe was listed as "superintendent." The last year of operation for the Peoria Pottery Company was 1901. George Wolfe had been with the company for 31 years (1870–1901) and the success of the Peoria Pottery Company during these years can be attributed to his management. In 1902, the company was purchased by the Crown Potteries of Evansville, Indiana. The Crown Pottery Company produced refined table and toilet wares (whitewares) for a few short years, closing in 1904. Efforts to reopen the pottery during 1946 were unsuccessful.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE POTTERY WORKS

The American Pottery and later Peoria Pottery Company were located within "Birket's Addition to the City of Peoria." This land was subdivided into residential lots by John Birket in April 1856. In October 1859 lots 6 and 7 within Block 124, the entire Block A, and a portion of Mary Street were vacated for the industrial development of the American Pottery Company. Later, with the further development of the pottery, the alley in Block 124 and the eastern end of Cornhill Street were also vacated.

The only known representation of the American Pottery Company's plans for the new pottery buildings is the illustration "Works of the American Pottery Company at Peoria, Ills." published as an inset for the wall map Atlas of Peoria County, Illinois in 1861. The idealized plan of the American Pottery Company buildings illustrated in this woodcut consists of a series of six two-story workshop wings radiating from a central four-story circular office complex. The twelve kilns

were located in pairs at the opposite ends of the workshop buildings. Together, the central office formed the hub, the workshops the axles, and the kilns and associated buildings the rim of a large, wheel-shaped industrial complex. The prominent display of the American flag over the office building emphasizes the national spirit important in the marketing of the American Pottery Company during the turbulent early 1860s.

An article entitled "A Visit to the American Pottery Company" in the *Peoria Daily Transcript* (November 21, 1860) describes the new pottery buildings:

On the sight of the old French Fort, named Creve Coure . . . stands a block of brick buildings upon which is typically stamped the word manufacturing. Standing by itself and alone from the mass of brick which apparently surrounds it is a tall chimney or smoke stack which marks the spot known as the American Pottery Works. It will be a stupendous design when carried out, but as yet only one or two buildings have been erected, yet sufficient in its embryo state to give an idea of what its magnitude will be when completed. From the plans we were shown it is contemplated to build it in the following manner. First, there will be a circular building, 300 feet in circumference, five stories high, surmounted with a beautiful dome, and which will form the centre of [the] pottery works. From this building diverge six ells, three stories in height, 150 x 40 [feet] in dimensions. On the outer end of each of the ells, extend at right angles, two wings each 70 x 40 feet, containing each two kilns, the whole structure forming a circle of 1200 feet around which range 24 massive kilns, the whole forming a perfect enclosure and six arched gateways for entrance between the wings. This is to be the building when completed. At the present time they have one ell finished and are putting up the room of design, a building 2 stories in height and 25 x 45 in dimensions.

In this new ell spoken of, in which all work at present is done, we first visited the basement where we saw the clay mills, some grinders and crushing machines in operation. There was also the celebrated Woodbury Steam Engine; which move silently yet with mighty force, and near the boilers was a heating furnace for furnishing hot

air for the purpose of heating the building. On the first floor of the second story we saw large kilns, which are filled with sagurs of hollow earthen vessels, filled with the various kinds of ware to be glazed, and placed in layers upon each other for burning-From the kiln room, we next passed into the glazing room, and the mould rooms where we saw some most beautiful designs. In the third story we visited the ware and mould rooms, in the latter of which we found an intelligent master modeller who is paid at the rate of \$3.50 per diem and who is considered the best modeller in America. From thence we passed into the show room, where we saw crockery ware in great profusion, of the most beautiful designs and elaborate workmanship.

In 1878 the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company (Figure 6) illustrated the Peoria Pottery Company's buildings. Their plan map clearly indicated the American Pottery Company's intent to build the circular industrial complex emphasized by the 1861 woodcut. Apparently the initial construction resulted in the completion of one of the anticipated six wings of the facility. Although the original central office complex had been replaced by a one-story rectangular engine and grinding room complete with "Blungers," the workshops (spoke) and four kilns (rim) were constructed as per the original plans. By 1878 a large two-story warehouse had been attached to one of the kiln wings, indicating an abandonment of the original concept.

Later sources confirm abandonment of the concept of the circular industrial complex. Illustrations of the pottery from this period include two views from C.J. Pauli's *Bird's Eye View of Peoria* (1888) and the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company's 1891 (Figure 7) map. The 1888 illustrations clearly emphasizes the strategic location of the factory within the "Y" created by the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad lines (Figure 8).

Major expansion had taken place at the pottery between 1878 and 1888 with the construction of four new bottle kilns and a large warehouse. These improvements were built as a massive rectangular block along the northeast side of the complex effectively negating the earlier circular design. A separate long and narrow two-story horse shed, straw shed, and a cooper's/carpenter's shop also

had been added to the complex by this time. The 1888 booklet *Peoria*, *Picturesque And Descriptive* contains the earliest known photograph of the "Plant of the Peoria Pottery Co." In October 1986 the abandoned buildings that once housed the Peoria Pottery Company were demolished (Figure 9).

THE CERAMIC WARES

Little is known regarding the products of the American Pottery Company. As the 1880 Peoria County history states, the American Pottery Company "principally manufactured white ware." Ramsey, in his book American Potters and Pottery (1939:111), claimed that the firm of Tempest, Brockman and Company was the first firm to manufacture whiteware in the Midwest. Apparently, they built a pottery in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1862 and did not begin production of whiteware until 1867. Fenton and Clark's manufacture of whiteware during 1860, if not the first whiteware production in the Midwest, is clearly one of the earliest attempts to manufacture American whitepaste tablewares west of the Allegheny mountains.

In July 1859 Fenton, Johnson, and Lascell opened a store in Smith's Block, next to the Peoria House in downtown Peoria "for the exhibition of specimens of their manufacture." As the *Peoria Daily Transcript* stated:

Although opening of the rooms had not been previously advertised, the store was visited throughout the day by a large throng of our citizens, who, with scarcely an exception, frankly confessed their entire ignorance that such wares can be manufactured in this country. We will attempt no description of the articles on exhibition, for the reason that we wish all of our citizens, men and women, to visit the place and see for themselves.

Later, the *Daily Transcript* had this to say about the pottery on display:

The crockery ware on exhibition by the Pottery Company in Smiths' block has been put through some pretty hard tests. Ten penny nails are driven into boards with the cups without injury to the latter; save a little scarring. This test has been made before scores of visitors.

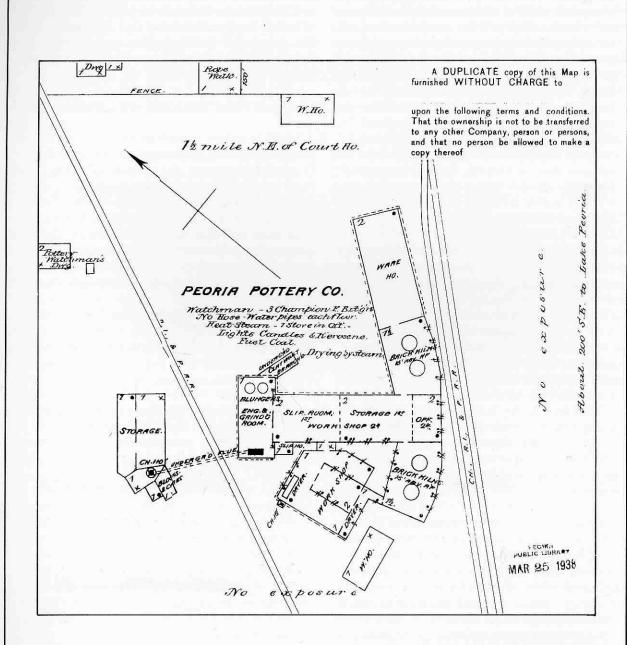


Figure 6. Sanborn Fire Insurance map of the Peoria Pottery Company (1878). The position of the four kilns (rim) in relation to the workshops (spoke) is reminiscent of the early circular plan.

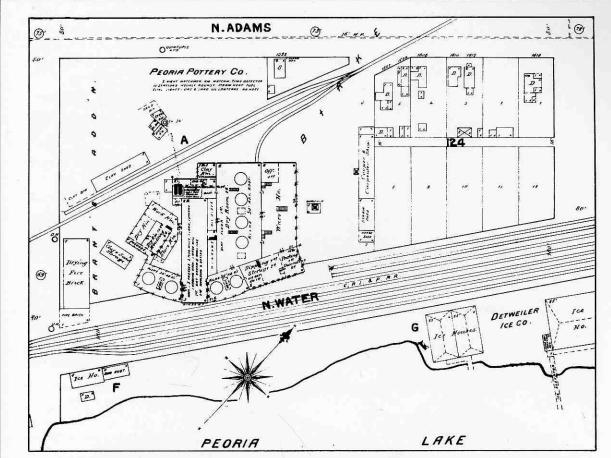


Figure 7. Sanborn Fire Insurance map of the Peoria Pottery Company (1891). Earlier circular plan has been abandoned.

Water pitchers of this manufacture have been thrown with violence across a large room striking on the solid wall and falling from thence on the floor without breaking. Our housewives will tell us that such ware is worth having.

The 1861 Peoria City Directory indicates that the American Pottery Company was producing "China, Queensware, etc." A correspondent for the Peoria Daily Transcript (November, 1862) wrote:

We visited the American Pottery Works yesterday afternoon, and found as in days of yore the establishment busy as a bee hive. About sixty operatives are now engaged, and at the present time they are manufacturing an excellent article of c.c. [cream colored] dining and tea

ware, which finds a very ready market in this and the adjoining states.

Again that same month, the paper stated:

The Pottery Company opened a kiln on Monday, of white granite dining, tea and toilet ware, new in pattern and of excellent quality in glazing and finish.

A correspondent of the *Henry County Dial* (as cited in the *Peoria Daily Transcript* in July 1860) stated:

While at Peoria last week, having a few hours spare time, I visited the Pottery which is being built at that place The specimens of ware

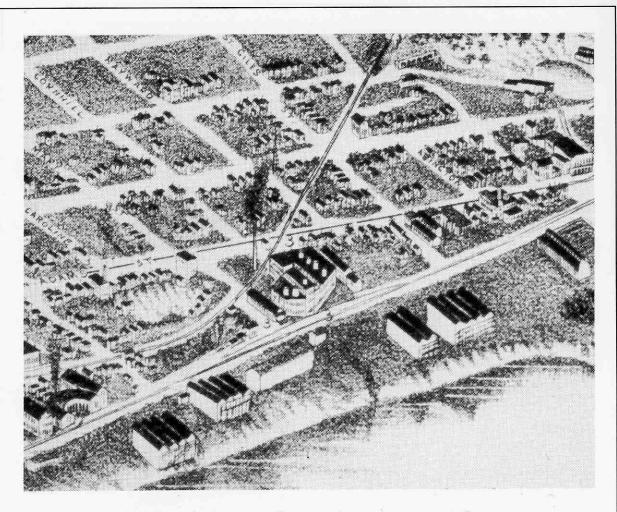


Figure 8. Illustration of the Peoria Pottery Company from a detail on C.J. Pauli's View of Peoria, Illinois (1888).

already made embrace all kinds, from the common brown earthenware to fine china and porcelian [sic] In addition to the making of crockery ware, the company make a glazed brick of all varieties of color from a plain stone to the finest variegated marble, which are intended to be used for the front of buildings.

In January 1861, four separate issues of the *Peoria Daily Transcript* carried stories on the American Pottery Company and their wares:

A beer pitcher of brown earthen ware, manufactured by the American Pottery Company was shown yesterday. It differs in one respect from the common pattern, which is that the nose is covered by a strainer which holds back the froth and gives a clear stream of liquid. It is invaluable for saloons.

The American Pottery Company are manufacturing a beautiful raised blue ware for dinner and toilet setts, which is pronounced by

churns) have been attributed to the Peoria Pottery Company and include both straight-sided and ovoid forms. Characteristics of these early Peoria wares include their hand-turned manufacture, their distinctive hand-painted cobalt blue floral motif, and beaded handles. The ovoid jars and churns do not have an impressed manufacture mark but do have an impressed gallon identification (often highlighted in cobalt blue). The straight-sided salt glazed-jars have an impressed "PEORIA POT-TERY" (printed on two lines) which is highlighted in cobalt blue. Both ovoid and straight-sided forms have identical cobalt blue floral decorations, suggesting that both products were indeed manufactured at the Peoria Pottery. A single jug has the distinctive hand-painted floral motif, a handpainted gallon designation, and an impressed "PEORIA POTTERY" (printed on one line) (Figure 10).

Apparently, the Peoria Pottery Company continued the production of several of the distinctive American Pottery Company's products, especially pitchers and cuspidors. The Cascade Pattern pitcher was one of Fenton's original designs that dated from his work at Bennington (1847-1848). At Bennington, these pitchers were apparently produced mostly in Parian Ware and White Porcelain. Identical pitchers are known from Peoria manufactured with a vellow paste and clear glaze (Yellow ware) and impressed on their base "PEORIA POTTERY." Similar impressed marks are present on Rockingham glazed pitchers with a Rose Pattern and a single Rockingham glazed cuspidor (or spittoon). Although neither the Rose Pattern nor the Acanthus Leaf Pattern associated with the cuspidor has been identified with Fenton. it is suspected that the molds for both products may have come from the American Pottery Company's inventory. It is believed that these wares were produced by the Peoria Pottery Company during the first few years of their production (circa 1863) through the early 1870s) and were associated with the salt glazed wares (Figures 12 and 13).

By the 1870s and 1880s, the Peoria Pottery Company was manufacturing a wide variety of wares. The *Illustrated Catalogue* of the Peoria Pottery Company which was published probably between 1885 and 1890 illustrates the wide range of wares produced during the 1870s and 1880s. All of the wares illustrated in this catalog and produced dur-

ing these late years (post-1870-75?) are characterized by non-hand-turned or molded wares with a distinctive dark Albany-like slipped exterior which often attained a high sheen and pumpkin color. This exterior finish was referred to by the company as their "Peoria Glaze." As *The Illustrated Catalogue* states, "We make no machine pots, but mould all by hand in Plaster of Paris moulds." The 1880 Peoria County history stated that the present Peoria Pottery Company

makes a specialty of fine glazed stone ware such as milk pans, jugs, jars, etc. which are moulded in plaster of paris moulds thus securing great regularity in size, shape and thickness; also manufactures vast quantities of flower pots both plain and fancy in shape. Many of the fancy pots are from original designs and others from the best imported designs. The finer class of goods manufactured are decorated by skilled and highly paid workmen. Experiments have recently been made in the manufacture of majolica with excellent results and the company hopes soon to make its manufacture a prominent item of their business.

Two of the hallmarks of the Peoria Pottery Company were their molded milk pan (page 5 of the catalog) and fruit or canning jars (page 12 of the catalog). The distinctive "Peoria Glazed" molded wax seal canning jars and milk pans were manufactured at least by 1871 when an advertizement for these items appeared in the Illinois State Business Directory for that year. Although according to The Clay Worker (1898), the production of salt-glazed wares continued to the late 1880s, it is suspected that their production was secondary to the "Peoria Glazed" wares by the early 1870s. The 1870s through 1880s were dominated by the production of these distinctively slipped and molded wares. By the very late 1860s or early 1870s, hand turning had all but died out at the Peoria Pottery Company. A single hand-turned bottle or small jar with the distinctive "Peoria Glaze" is known to exist and may date from the late 1860s or very early 1870s (Figure 14).

According to an article in *The Clay Worker* (1898), salt-glazed wares continued to be made by the Peoria Pottery Company until as late as 1888. At that time, the company began manufacturing solely "table and toilet whiteware, both in the plain



Figure 10. Salt-glazed Peoria Pottery (1863 to early 1870s?).







Figure 11. "Peoria Glazed" wares from the Peoria Pottery Company.





Figure 12. Cascade pattern yellow ware (right) and rose pattern Rockingham (left) pitchers. Both have an impressed "PEORIA POTTERY" on their bases and were probably manufactured from Fenton's molds (1863 to early 1870s).



Figure 13. Rockingham cuspidor with an impressed "PEORIA POTTERY" on its base. This was probably manufactured from Fenton's molds (1863 to early 1870s).



Figure 14. Small "Peoria Glazed" handturned jug/bottle (1870s?) with an impressed "PEORIA POTTERY" mark.





Figure 15. Salt-glazed jar (above) with an impressed "PEORIA POTTERY mark (left) (late 1860s to early 1880s).

and decorated." It is not known to what extent the Peoria Pottery Company produced whitewares prior to 1888. Additionally, if one were to take this statement literally, it would appear that the production of the "Peoria Glazed" wares was halted in 1888. It is commonly believed though that the production of the "Peoria Glazed" wares lasted throughout the 1890s (Figure 11).

In 1888 the Peoria Pottery Company began producing whitewares. According to The Peoria Journal Transcript, the best decorators were employed and the company exhibited their wares at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago (1892-1893) where they exhibited "fine dinnerware in delicate pastel colors, including pale green and salmon." Whitewares (particularly table and toilet wares) produced by the Peoria Pottery Company after 1888 are fairly abundant (Figure 16). These wares are identified by their distinctive transferprinted marks on the base of the product. One mark consists of the words "HOTEL" above and "P.P.CO." below an arrow, while the second mark consists of the letters "P.P.CO" intertwined into a cartouche. The attached Standard Price List for 1895 indicates the range of whitewares (Cream Colored, Hotel and White Granite) produced by this firm immediately prior to the closing of the plant.

During the 1890s, decorated whiteware pitchers known as "Presentation Pitchers" were produced by the Peoria Pottery Company (Figure 17). These pitchers are marked with both the "HOTEL" and "PPCO" marks. Like the Cascade and Rose Pattern pitchers, it appears that these pitchers were manufactured from Fenton's original molds. Fenton produced "Sweetheart" or "Presentation" pitchers at Bennington from approximately 1850 until he closed his pottery in that state (1858). Although some of the earlier Bennington Presentation pitchers were Rockingham wares, the vast majority of these were whiteware (White Granite). The whiteware Peoria Presentation pitchers are nearly identical to those known from Bennington except for the addition of a strainer at their spout. In 1861, the American Pottery Company introduced a new type of pitcher complete with a unique strainer designed to hold back the "froth." It is believed that the production of these 1890s whitewares used the early 1860s molds of the American Pottery Company.

ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

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DETAILS FROM BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF PEORIA: Courtesy of the Peoria Historical Society, Bradley University Library, Peoria, Illinois.

DETAIL "WORKS OF THE AMERICAN POT-TERY COMPANY": Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Each of the following issues of the *Peoria Daily Transcript* contained an article pertaining to the American Pottery or Peoria Pottery Company and was used in the writing of this manuscript.

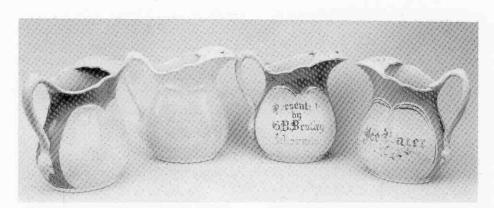
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Peoria Public Library
Bradley University Library, Special Collections



Figure 16. Whiteware manufactured at the Peoria Pottery Company (1889-1902).



 $Figure 17.\ ``Sweetheart" or ``Presentation" pitchers \, manufactured \, at \, the \, Peoria \, Pottery \, Company \, (1889-1902).$

Standard Price-List

Peoria Pottery Co.

Manufacturers of

White Granite

C. C. and Decorated Ware

Peoria, Illinois

H. S. HILL PRINTING CO., PEGRIA, ILL.

TERMS OF SALE.

Net cash within thirty days from invoice date.

Accounts overdue subject to sight draft, with interest and exchange added, without further notice.

All orders or parts of orders good unless countermanded before shipment

All packages and contents delivered in good order to transportation companies, who are responsible for safe carriage.

Ourgoods being carefully packed by experienced packers, we make no allowance for breakage. Bills of lading being guarantee of good order when shipped. STANDARD PRICE-LIST.

PEORIA POTTERY CO.

MANUFACTURERS OF

White Granite, C. C. and Decorated

WARES

PEORIA, ILLINOIS.

JULY, 1895.

PACKAGES.

Crates from \$1.50 to \$2.00 each.

Hhds. " 1.50 to 2.00 ...

Tierces " 1.00 to 1.50 "

Bbls. " .35 "

Empty packages not returnable.

DISCOUNTS.

WHITE GRANITE.

c. c.

Best Ware.....

Unselected, run of the kiln

WHITE GRANITE.

PRICE LIST.

All prices per dozen, excepting where stated per gross.

BAKERS.		
OVAL.		
5 in	\$ 1	60
6 in	2	()()
7 in	2	40
8 in	3	60
9 in	4	80
10 in	6	00
BED PANS.		
FRENCH SHAPE.		
No. 1	15	00
No. 2		
BOWLS.		
ST. DENIS		
24s	2	()()

30s 1 60 36s 1 34 42s 1 15

BRUSH VASES. Brush Vases..... 6 00

WHITE GRANITE WARE.

BUTTERS.		
Covd. loose drainer, 5 in \$	7	20
Individual, 2½ in		41
CAKE PLATES.		
9 in	:3	20
CASSEROLES.		
OXFORD SHAPE	(a)	
6 in. Covered	8	40
7 in. "		60
8 in		
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CHAMBERS.		
OXFORD SHAPE.		
6s Covered		
9s	9	60
12s	7	20
6s Uncovered	7	20
	()	40
12s	4	80
COFFEES.		
12 CUPS AND 12 SAUCERS.		
St. Denis, Unhdld	1	60
" Hdld	1	86
" Cups only.	1	06
Unhd., " "		80
" Saucers only		80
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OXFORD SHAPE.		
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EWERS ONLY.		
98	7	60
12s	6	25
Mouth	2	80
BASINS ONLY.		
9s	7	60
12s	6	25
Mouth	4	80
FRUIT SAUCERS.		
French, 4 in		60
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10 WHITE GRANITE WARE.

PLATES.
5 in. Flat\$ 90
6 in. " 1 10
7 in. " 1 30
8 in. " 1 50
6 in. Deep 1 10
7 in. " 1 30
8 in 1 50
SALADS.
Low Oval
SAUCE BOATS.
OXFORD SHAPE, OVAL.
Boats, only
SAUCE TUREENS.
OXFORD SHAPE.
Complete, 4 pieces 12 00
Tureens only 6 60
Stands only 2 40
Ladles only
SLOP JARS.
2s
3s 28 80
SLOP PAILS.
Covd. and hand 24 00

10 pieces 9s\$ 3 42

12 pieces 9s 6 62

A 10-piece set consists of 1 Ewer, 1

Basin, 1 Chamber and Cover, 1 Soap,

Cover and Drainer, 1 Mouth Ewer, 1

A 12-piece set is same as above with

Mug and 1 Brush Vase.

Slop Jar and Cover added.

SOAPS.

Square, fast drainer \$ 2 50

Covd., loose drainer, oval . . 6 00

Slab 1 20

SOUP TUREEN.

OXFORD SHAPE. 9 in., Complete, 4 pieces ... 39 60 10 in., " " .. 43 20 9 in.. Tureens only..... 22 40

10 in.. " ... 24 00 9 in.. Stands " ... 10 00 10 in.. " ... 12 00 Ladles " ... 7 20

SUGARS. OXFORD SHAPE. 24s 5 40 308 4 80

TEA POTS.

OXFORD SHAPE.

24s 6 40

WHITE GRANITE WARE. 12

TEAS.

12 CUPS AND SAUCERS

St. Deni	s, Unhd	ld	\$	1	34
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Colorad	0, "			1	60
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Hdld., C	ups only				93
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Pot (2 pieces), 1 Cream, 1 Slop Bowl. A 56-piece set consists of 12 Cups, 12 Saucers, 12 Plates 6-inch, 2 Plates 8-inch, 1 Tea Pot 24s, Sugar Bowl 30s, Cream

Plates, 1 Sugar Bowl (2 pieces), 1 Tea

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30s, Slop Bowl 30, 12 4-inch Fruits.

C. C. WARE.

All prices are by the dozen, except where stated otherwise.

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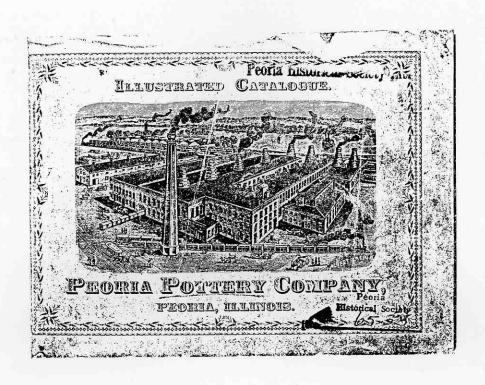
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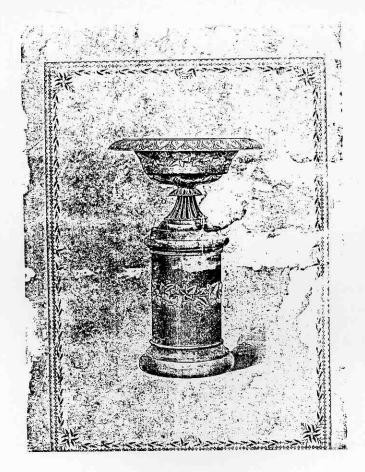
BAKERS.		
2½ in*	1	40
3 in	1	40
4 in	1	40
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BOWLS.		
OYSTER.		
24s	2.	(X)
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OYSTER NAPPIES.		
24s	1	90
30s	1	50
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30s	1	52
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Handled	1	80
Unhandled		50
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22	HOTEL WARE.
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30s,	Round 3 75
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Peoria Historical Society Inc.

CEORGE WOLFE.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE.

COMPANY, Pottery PEORIA

Peorla

ILLINOIS. PEORIA,

Zintocool Society

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TERMS

TERMS CASH.

All Bills remaining unpaid when due, subject to sight draft without notice.

We pay no exchange or express charges on remittances,

All orders from unknown correspondents must be accompanied with cash or satisfactory references.

res for packages, including drayage, are: Crates or Ehde., \$1.50 each; Caske, 75 cents; Barrels, 35

no claims for breakage. After taking receipt from transportation company for goods in good ur responsibility ceases,

C1

OUR FINE GLAZED JUGS

are designed principally for the use of Druggists, Liquor Deabers and others who require a good article. After the style of our Jars, they are glazed inside and out, and are warrankel perfect and to withstand the action, or acids. They can be used for shipping chemicals, etc., that otherwise require demijohns.

TERRA COTTA LAWN VASES.

The superiority of Terra Cotta over all other materials for this use is generally known. It does not draw the heat of the sun, as from dees, and being proves to no acteat, the plant thrives better in it—at same time proves to are lower. For convenience and safety in slipping, we make then in three parts—the lower two being final; soined by an iron bolt. We puarsaste then to attend the weather.

would respectfully present for your consideration a Catalogue and Price-List of such wares as we manuconfirm aim is excellence in quality and to produce such goods as are certain to give satisfaction. How well we have succeeded in this we think is answered by the rapid increase in our business.

TRADE.

То ТНЕ

We have been compelled to add to the capacity of our works yearly to meet the increasing demand for our goods

THE PEORIA MILK PAN

is now too well known to need much said in its behalf. We claim it to be still the best Pan made. The body being wirefied and the glaze perfect, it is impervious to oils, which is essential in a Milk Pan. Smoothness and

regularity of form were always leading points with us.

OUR FLOWER POTS AND HANGING BASKETS

have been so well received by the trade that the making of them has already become a large item in our bush. ness. These Rots are of a light yellow golor and made of a clay much superior to that which is neadily nut to enset goods. They are designed, as will be seen in the cout, effect the style of our Pan, and are made so that the shoulder of one rests on the edge of the other, thus preventing the wedging of one into the other, which is two main cause of breakage in shipping; nor do they take our as much room in the greenhouse as the committee.

We make no nucleive pols, but mould all by hand in Puester of Paris moulds. In this manner we get .. the regularity of the mechine pot and at the same time all the advantages claimed for the hand-made.

OUR FANCY FLOWER POTS

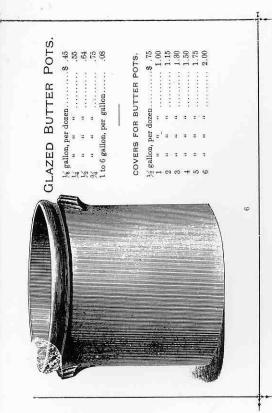
are copies of some of the finest imported goods - are made and finished in the very best style.

are superior to any that have been offered to the trade. They, as well as the rest of our goods, are made in Plas-ter of Paris moulds, by which method we obtain a regularity of size, shape and thickness that cannot be reached in any other manner.

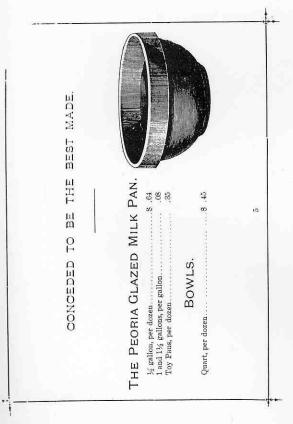
is mude and glazed similar to the Milk Pan. For fruits that are affected by light they are preferred to all others.

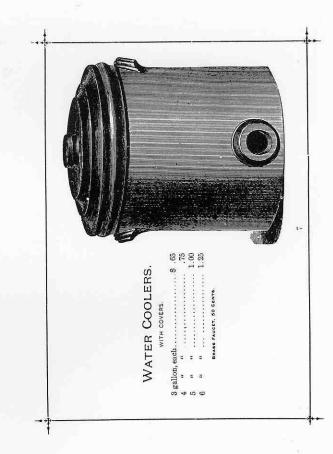
THE PEORIA FRUIT JAR

OUR GLAZED BUTTER JARS

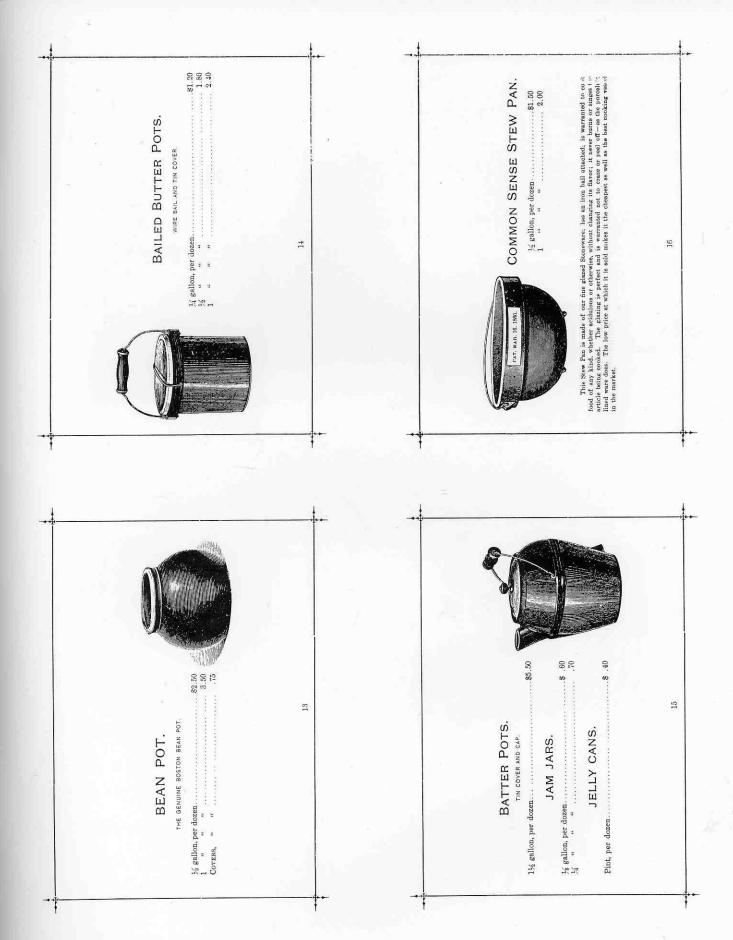


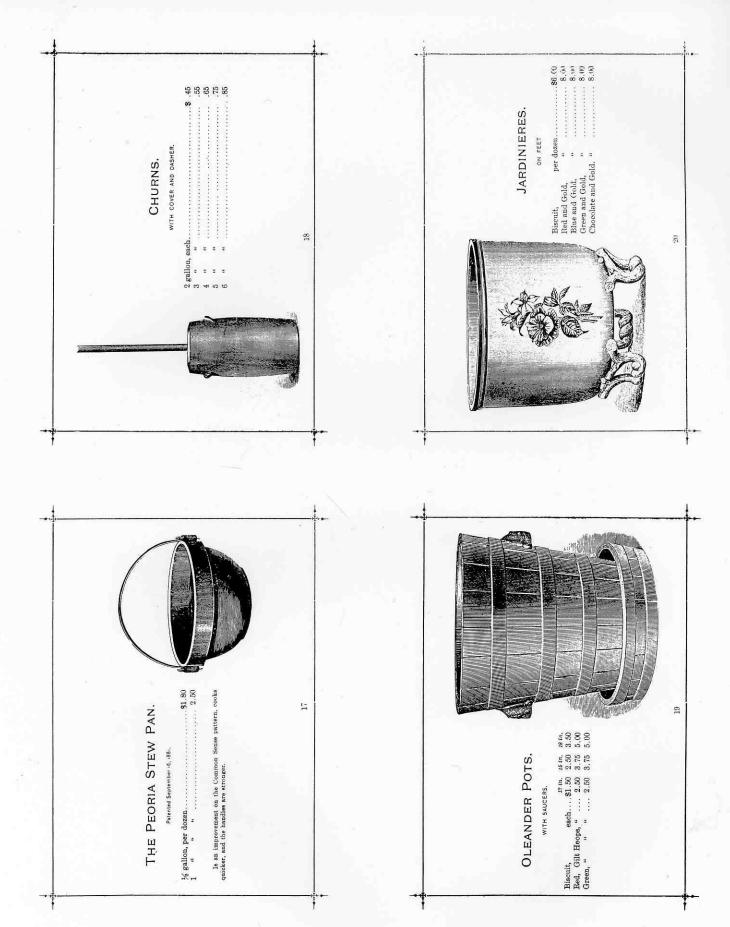


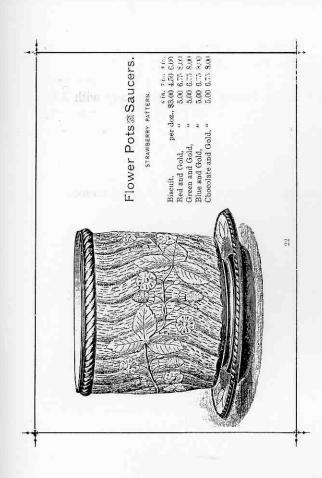


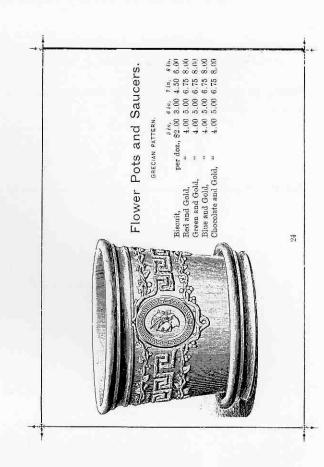


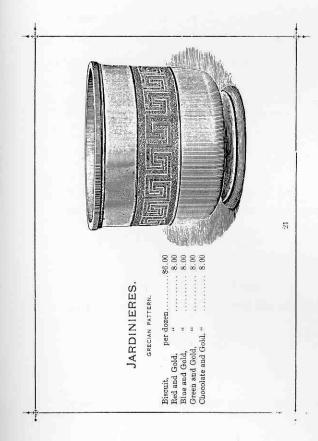


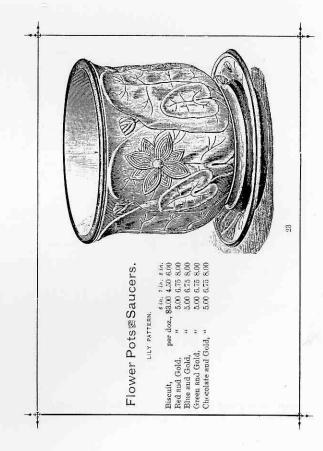


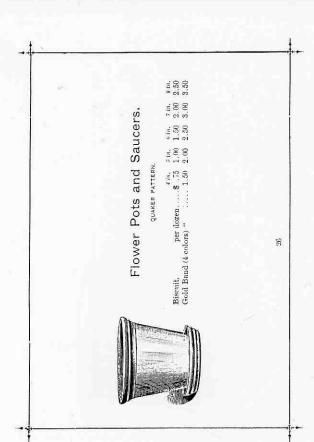


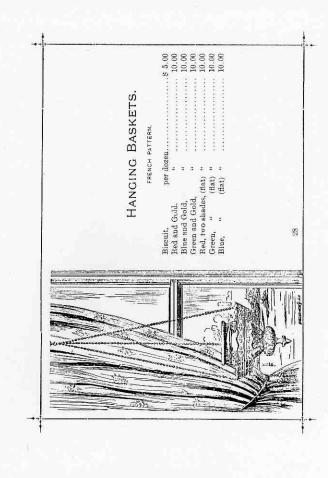


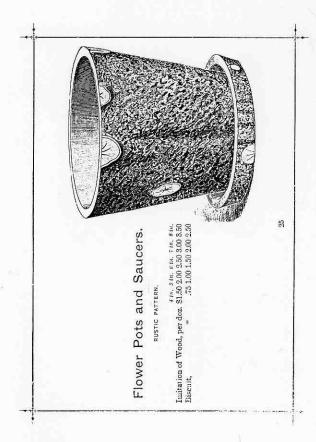


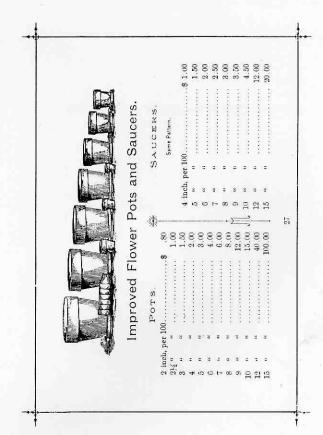


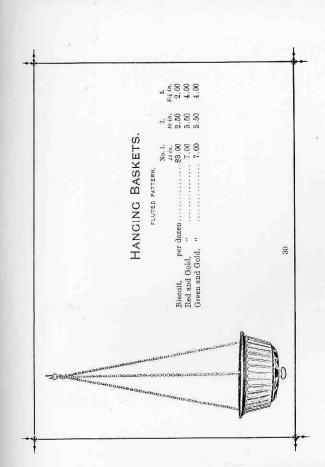


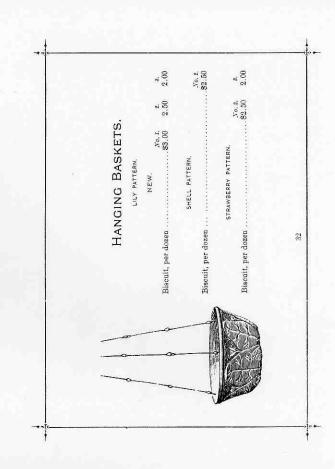


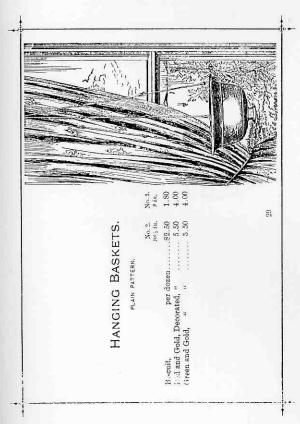


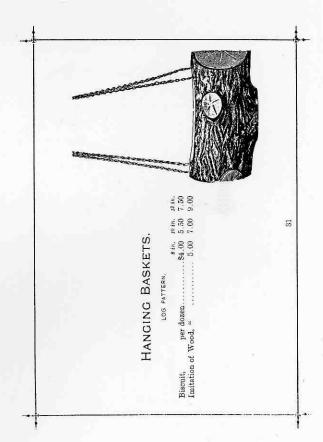


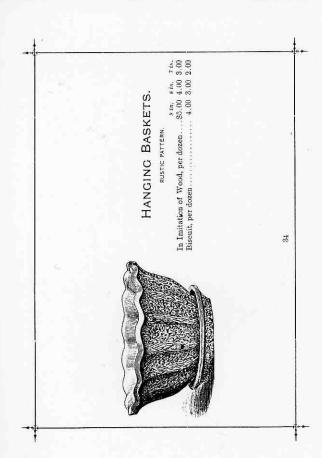


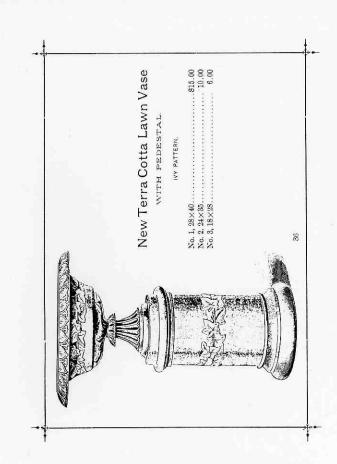


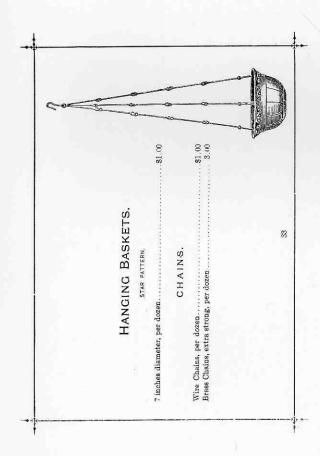


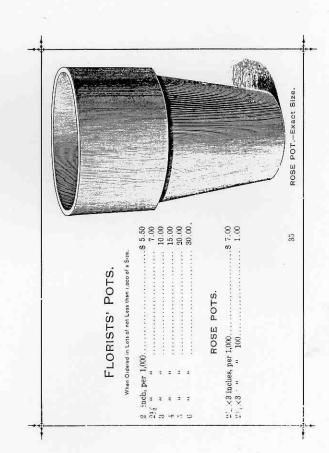




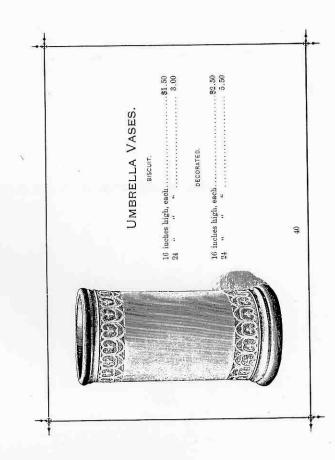


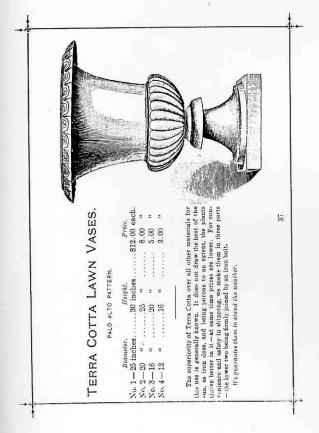


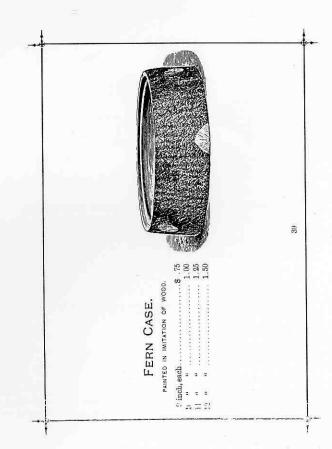


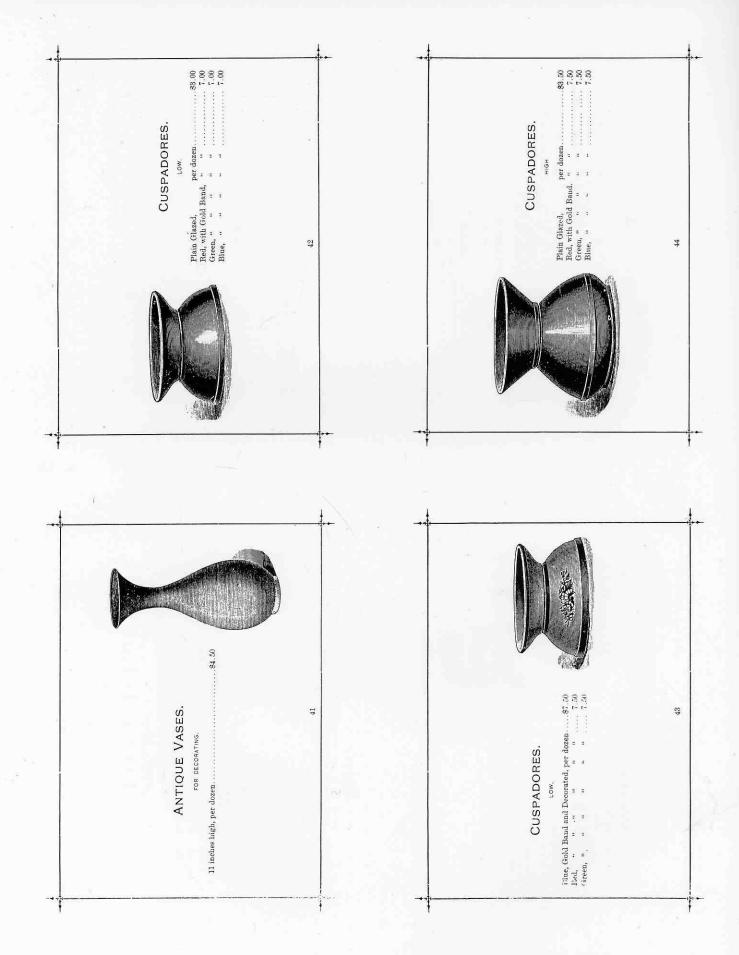


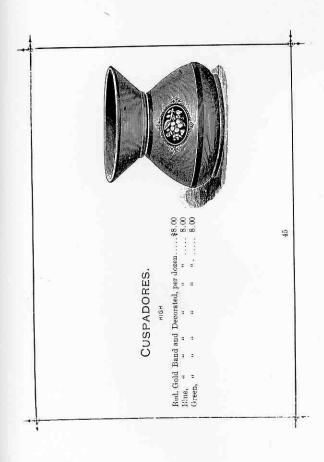




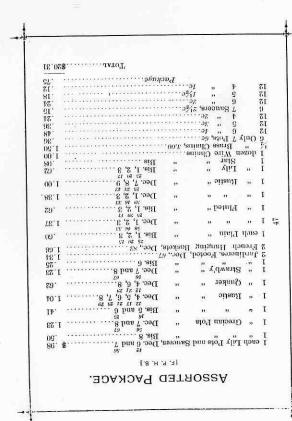


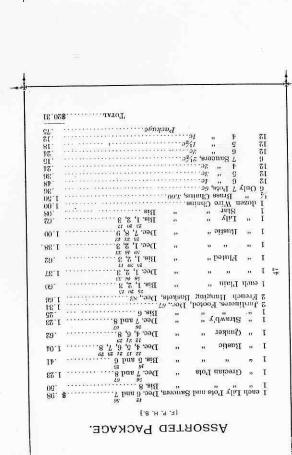






PRESSED CUSPADORES.





FIRE BRICK, CUPOLA BRICK

₩ WE ALSO MAKE A FIRST-CLASS

ALL ODD SIZES AND SHAPES TO ORDER.

⇒ BOILER TILE ☀

⇒ CRUSHED FIRE CLAY AND FIRE SAND, ←