1928

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Recommended Citation
Gerling, Mabel (1928) "Pottery From Iowa Clay," The Iowa Homemaker: Vol. 8 : No. 3 , Article 3.
Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol8/iss3/3

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Pottery From Iowa Clay

By Mabel Gerling

THE names of Wedgwood, Rookwood, Paul Revere, Mrs. Stratton and Old Dutch delft bring to mind as many different kinds of pottery, each excellent in its own way.

Pottery is distinct from porcelain, although unfortunately for the collector, the term "old china" is commonly used to embrace the whole field of artistic ceramics. Pottery is always opaque, while porcelain is always translucent. If one breaks a pottery object, he will see that it is formed of a baked clay body glazed or enamelled over with a substance which has given it a vitreous coating. Break a porcelain object and it will be seen that all the way through it appears of a translucent substance. Popularly speaking, the phase of pottery making is the one generally associated with the term ceramics.

Travelers, including Marco Polo, brought specimens of porcelain into Europe from China by land and ships, so we can see it is not a new art.

Porcelain was so named in a peculiar way. In the Mediterranean there is a white translucent shell which the people had called porcella, a word which, if translated freely, means "a little pig." The Italians being familiar with the shell, compared the Chinese pottery, white and translucent, to it, so they called the new ware porcelain. In Europe, hard or Chinese porcelain was first made by the Germans. An alchemist, Boege, discovered the process.

Women have always influenced the making of fine pottery. The famous Sèvres works in France originated through the caprice of Madame de Pompadour. In the United States the products of Mrs. Alsop Robineau have become famous. Her porcelain pieces have been recognized abroad for they are comparable in quality with the European. She worked on one vase steadily for a year. When it was exhibited it was insured for ten thousand dollars.

Pottery may serve many purposes in the home. It is not necessary to use a bowl or vase as a container. If it is a thing of beauty, no additional adornment is needed. A lovely bit of pottery is as much a piece of art as an etching or a painting and should be so considered. A bowl, good in design and color, when placed on a table, may make an otherwise commonplace wall interesting. A piece of pottery containing one or more of the colors in a picture or tapestry, placed near it, enhances the beauty of both.

If one wishes to bring cheer to a dark corner, an enamel glazed bowl is the best choice, while a dull or matt finish is better for a brighter place.

In choosing the size, shape and color of a vase, the surroundings in which it is to be placed must be carefully considered. It should always fit the space where it is placed. A low bowl should be set on a low table, where one can see it easily. The colors must fit into the color scheme of the room where it is used.

There are many shapes, any number

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of which might be good. In general, the art principles which apply to other works of art apply to pottery also. The simple, less contorted shapes are to be preferred in small homes of simple furnishings, but in a large room elaborately furnished, large pieces more highly decorated might be used with equally good taste.

Shapes must be suited to the medium of which the article is made. Greek forms, though of good design in themselves, are not good for glazed clay. The Greek pottery was varnished, therefore not burned to a high enough heat to destroy the shape. Chinese shapes are more workable for the medium in which the are executed.

Good pottery is necessarily expensive for the same reason that an original painting is. The designer is as truly an artist as the person who paints a picture. Her picture is merely made on clay instead of on paper. In the superior shops all the designs are made by hand and represent the work of the designer for many hours. That is the type of work which is being done by the Ceramics Department of Iowa State College. It hopes to produce for Iowa clays a pottery whose style and decoration will come to be recognized as distinctively Iowan" and whose merits will make a name for Ames.

Book Review

"The Healthy Girl," by Mrs. Joseph Cunning, M. D., and A. Campbell, B. A., is an attempt to help the girl who is leaving school and learning to face life, to understand the most important circumstance she is likely to encounter, herself.

Mrs. Cunning is an honorary medical director to the open-air school in the London Botanical Gardens. A. Campbell is a lecturer in biology and hygiene in the Technical Institute of Swindon. Both are well qualified by their wide experiences for writing a book on this subject.

The chapter subjects deal particularly with the problems coming to young women. The diction is smooth and the type easily read. Many illustrations add to the clarity of the book.

"Economy," we heard a man say the other evening, "is a way of spending money without getting any fun out of it."—Boston Transcript.

"A House That Books Built"

The librarians at Iowa State College have proved that, by the use of books, something besides knowledge can result. They have constructed a house of books, complete in every detail, which is now on display in the main lobby of the College Library.

The gay roof of the house is made up of covers of books which are familiar to all. A lattice on each side of the house has a clinging vine much different from most vines, in that interesting as well as beautiful books are the blossoms.

The shutters are covers of books and the window boxes have flowers that never fade. They are books on the subject of flowers opened to beautiful, colorful illustrations.

The house was constructed to emphasize the importance of many appropriate books in the home for enjoyment and education. Present day educators are agreed that books should be used early in the lives of children to get the habit firmly fixed.

"Education consists in the ability to educate yourself rather than to have the facts pounded into you by college professors. You may be a college graduate, but you are not really educated unless you know how to use books and use them throughout your life," says Charles H. Brown, Iowa State College librarian.

Mr. Brown continued by saying that there are statistics to prove the fact that people who come to college with the ability to read easily do better than those who do not have this ability.

For this reason educators are trying to train parents to buy more books for their children.

Phi Upsilon Omicron Conclave

The Omicron chapter at Iowa State College of Phi Upsilon Omicron, professional home economics honorary, was the hostess of approximately one hundred delegates and guests who attended the biennial conclave held here June 21 to 23. Meetings were held in the Catherine MacKay auditorium. The delegates were housed at Oak Lodge.

Saturday evening an informal banquet was held at the Maples Tearoom. A color scheme of yellow and white was carried out in the decorations and the menu. Favors in the form of lovely old fashioned bouquets were presented to everyone. Guests of honor, the old President, the new National Officers, Miss Isabelle Bevier and Miss Anna E. Richardson, former dean of Home Economics were presented with beautiful corsages.

One of the surprise features of the Conclave was the initiation of Miss Genevieve Fisher, dean of Home Economics, and Miss Regina Fraint, associate professor of Vocational Education. Virginia Buck, Des Moines, an alumna of the local chapter was in charge of the initiation.

The National Council of Phi Upsilon Omicron and the honor visitors of the Conclave were the guests of Omicron chapter at a dinner at the Sheldon-Munn Hotel Sunday at one o'clock. This marked the close of a successful conclave.

Miss Iva Brandt, Miss Frances Sims and Mrs. Marie Ringle of the Home Economics faculty made up the hospitality committee. Frances Jones, Home Economics, '28, was in charge of general arrangements for the Conclave.

Summer time is picnic time and picnics surely call for sandwiches. Eva Greene Fuller has recognized this fact and has prepared a book entitled, "400 Ways to Make a Sandwich."

Mrs. Fuller says that the first requisite in the preparation of good sandwiches is to have perfect bread in suitable condition. This is only the first of her many hints.

The types of sandwiches are grouped under the following heads: fish, egg, salad, meat, cheese, nut, sweet and canapes.