

KOVELS

ON ANTIQUES AND COLLECTIBLES

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THE NEWSLETTER FOR DEALERS, COLLECTORS AND INVESTORS

September 1987

Majolica

English majolica auctioned for prices well above estimate at Phillips, N.Y. Top lot was a three-tiered revolving oyster server by Minton, \$3,520, followed by a salmon dish and cover by George Jones, \$3,080. (See illustrations.)

Thanks to photo layouts in current decorating magazines and cookbooks, majolica is enjoying its greatest popularity since the 19th century. All kinds of colorful antique majolica, English, Continental, and American, are in demand and prices continue to rise. Pieces by George Jones are especially prized by collectors.

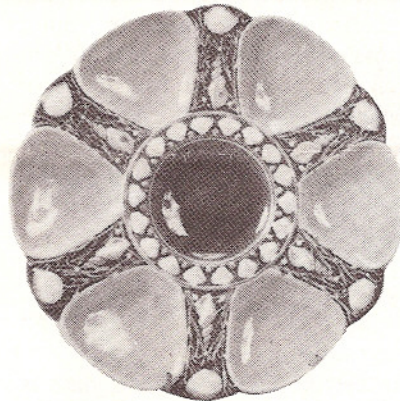
A condiment tray by Jones, in the form of a wood splat basket with serving dishes at each end, decorated with birds, strawberries, multicolored on brown ground, 8½ in. by 15 in., brought \$1,320 despite some restoration. A footed punch bowl by Samuel Lear, sunflower and classical urn pattern, with flowers, fans and ribbons, multicolor on cream ground, 12 in., was \$1,210.

Also sold: a Minton figural teapot, lid molded as head of a Chinese man, turquoise, yellow, rose, gray and black, 5½ in., \$1,980; a majolica-inset table by Sarreguemines, circular, molded multicolor roses on turquoise ground, coppered-bronze frame on tripod base in form of lion's heads and paw feet, 29½ in. by 28 in., \$1,760; a pair of Minton jardinières, with baby-satyr and lion head masks, draped garland, footed base, 10½ in., \$2,200; and a majolica lamp base, molded as a clump of bulrushes surrounded by three cranes, green, brown, gray, yellow, 22½ in. including shade, \$715.

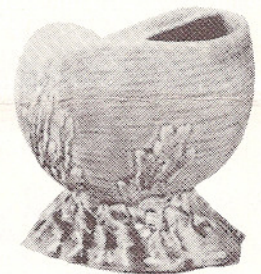
Helpful books: *Majolica Pottery* and *Majolica Pottery, Second Series*, both by Marianne Katz-Marks (Collector Books, Paducah, KY, c1983 and 1986); *American Majolica 1850-1900* by M. Charles Rebert (Wallace-Homestead, Lombard, IL, c1981); *Minton Majolica* by Victoria Cecil (Jeremy Cooper Ltd., 9 Galen Pl., Bury Place, London WC1A 2JR, England, c1982); and *Wedgwood Ceramics 1846-1959* by Maureen Batkin (Richard Dennis, 144 Kensington Church St., London W8, England, c1982).

Note: prices include 10% buyer's premium.

...continued on page 12.



One of a set of 12 oyster plates, Minton, Shell and Seaweed pattern, brown, turquoise, rose and cream, green center, impressed factory marks and registry mark, 9 in., set, \$1,980.

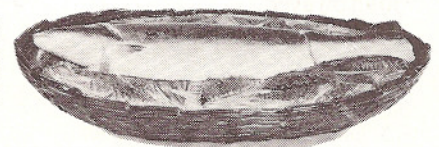


Spoon warmer, George Jones, conch shell molded with seaweed on rock base, green-turquoise, impressed factory marks, 5½ by 7 in., \$605.



Left: basket by Joseph Holdcroft, Longton, molded in relief with morning glories, royal blue exterior, turquoise interior, twig handle and base, 6½ by 8½ in., \$605; center: "Shrewbury" vase, Minton, molded with poppies and fleur de lis border motif, 4 looped handles, lid with pineapple finial, blue and rose, impressed factory marks, 11 in., \$880; footed syrup pitcher, Wedgwood, floral frieze around body and neck, pewter lid, glazed in green, ochre, cream, brown, rose on cobalt ground, impressed factory marks, 7½ in., \$605.

Salmon dish and cover, attributed to George Jones, dish in form of basket, cover molded with salmon in relief on leafy ground, glazed in gray, cream, green, yellow and brown, impressed registry mark, 24 in., \$3,080.



The annual investing issue of the English magazine *Antique Collecting* indicates trends that will influence the American market. Rising prices are expected for country furniture, top quality 18th-century oak pieces, attractive mahogany furniture, top quality 20th-century furniture, old master prints, 1860-1870s dresses, quilts, 18th-century sculpture, grandfather clocks, porcelain figurines, majolica, Regency glass candlesticks and chandeliers, colored Victorian glass, Victorian and Georgian silver, jewelry, tin toys, toy soldiers, and pedal cars. Fluctuating prices are seen for Art Deco bronze and ivory figurines, wristwatches, and British art pottery. Little activity or lower prices are predicted for oriental rugs and Wedgwood. American collectors are buying 18th-century pottery and English porcelains, and flat-back Staffordshire dogs, pushing up prices.

A new doll called the "bag lady" was introduced in April and some of the stores selling the doll were picketed by women who thought the dolls "trivialized poverty." The president of Sher Stuff, the company making the dolls, says the dolls are not intended to be insulting and are cute. They are part of a series that features caricature dolls of known types, such as doctors, maids, tourists, and scuba divers. No doubt the bag lady doll will become a collectible.

Fakes can fool even the most expert, including museums. The latest scandal is a series of fake Veracruz-style pre-Colombian sculptures discovered this year. They were made in Jalapa, Mexico, in the 1950s by an artist who is now the head restorer at the Veracruz archaeological museum. He made the figures, then others sold them as old examples. Major art museums in Dallas, St. Louis, and New York have already tested their collections and found fakes.

Calling cards have been collected since Victorian times. They sell today for a few cents and up. *Card Talk/Business Card Journal* writes about a few strange types: chocolate, expandable sponges, and--would you believe--imitation cow dung.

Inflation worries lead to investing in collectibles; but so far there is movement, not a stampede, according to *The Research Institute of America* newsletter. Buyers bought coins, antique furniture, etc. in the '70s. Some made real money on resale, but others saw little gain. The amateurs often bought in near the top. Pros suggest you buy it only if you like it, because you may have to live with it.

The original price of fine antique dolls and today's auction prices are compared in a recent article in *Dolls* magazine. In general, the more expensive when made, the more desirable now. The article concentrates on the French fashion dolls. We think other types do not hold to that rule. The homemade black folk dolls sell for higher prices than commercial dolls. Rarity and the "cuteness" factor influence many buyers.

Union Labels are a collectible we had never heard about. The labels are found on hats, cigar boxes, beer, and many other products. Interesting historical collection. (from a long article by Dr. Tony Hyman in *Antique Trader*)

Cufflinks are rising in price, especially hunting and equestrian links.

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Photos are not reproduced to scale; actual size of items pictured is given whenever possible.

MAJOLICA...continued from page 1.



Left and right: bisque cup and saucer, teapot, by George Jones, teapot molded and painted with leaves, berries, insects, spout formed from frog, stem handle, 6 in., cup molded with insects, \$1,850; center, three-tiered revolving oyster server, Minton, molded oyster shells with seaweed, handle formed of fish and eel, (restored), impressed factory marks, 10 by 12 in., \$3,520.

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