

The Lackawanna Historical Society BULLETIN

Vol. 5, No. 7

Nov. - Dec. 1971

LAST BULLETIN FOR 1971

This is the last Bulletin for 1971 and should have been numbered Vol. VI, No. 2; but the last one was numbered Vol. V, No. 6, so this will have to be Vol. V, No. 7. Up until now, the Volumes were numbered according to the season when meetings were held, that is, from September through June but your editor goofed, so from now on, the volumes will run with the year and Vol. VI will start in January.

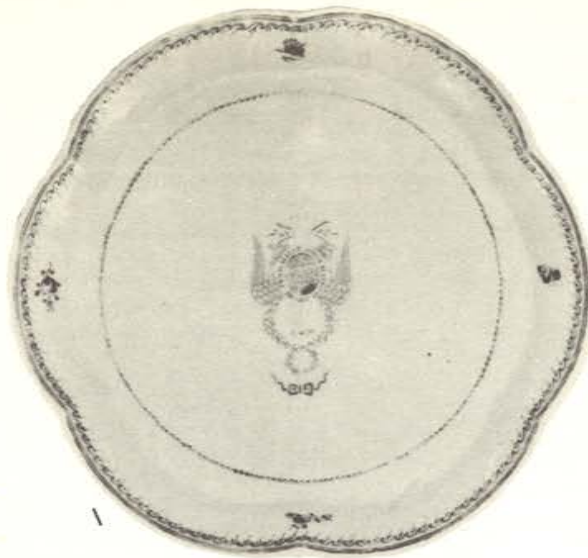
It isn't a big thing, but I want to clear it up in case some erudite and perfectionist successor wonders what went on with the numbering. Sorry.

Fellow member John Q. Feller, Ph.D., of the U. of S. faculty has contributed to this bulletin, a brief preview of the things he is going to talk about at our next meeting on November 18, at the clubhouse. It will serve to whet appetites for the meeting, which will include a display of what is commonly known as American export china. Dr. Feller is enthusiastic about his subject and is an avid collector, which should make for an interesting meeting.

The December meeting of the Society will be a Christmas meeting. It will be held at the Catlin Home on Tuesday, December 7, at 8 p.m. and will offer a musical program by Mr. and Mrs. John L. Hyer and a group from the "Music House."

Because of the usually inclement weather, there will be no meeting in January. The date of February's meeting has not yet been determined, but it is being arranged in connection with the centennial of the Third National Bank and may be held in their building.

It's a little early — but "Happy Holidays."



Small tray decorated with emblem of The Society of the Cincinnati (c. 1785).



Light-house coffee pot in the "Rose Canton" pattern (c. 1815) from the collection of Dr. John Quentin Feller.

CHINESE PORCELAIN for THE AMERICAN MARKET

by John Quentin Feller, Ph.D.

Interest among students of history and serious collectors of porcelain, made in 18th and 19th century China for export to the British North American colonies and later the United States, has never been greater than at the present time. Undoubtedly, this interest may be intensified still further by the prospects of a diplomatic detente in Sino-American relations during the 1970's.

Chinese export porcelain, mistakenly referred to by some antiquarians as "Lowestoft," came in small quantities to the British North American colonies prior to the Revolutionary War, in every instance via transshipment from Great Britain. The Ridgely family of Hampton House, Baltimore County, Maryland, possessed one of the few recorded examples of a complete dinner service with armorial decorations exported to a colony before the revolution. A few pieces of the more common blue-on-white Canton ware can be traced also to the colonial period.

The arrival of the "Empress of China" in New York harbor in May, 1785, marked the commencement of a spectacular era of trade between China and the newly independent United States of America, which reached a peak in the years 1817-1818 and continued sporadically thereafter until the end of the 19th century.

Numerous monographs and books have been written concerning Sino-American trade as it relates to porcelain. Some of the finest specimens of export porcelain are to be found in the collections of such premier museums as Winterthur and the Metropolitan. With rare exceptions, however, these examples (and the books and articles regarding them) are confined to the period between 1785 and 1820.

Although collectors may debate quality, much good porcelain came to the United States in the years after 1820. The popular Rose Medallion, Rose Canton, and Hundred Butterfly pattern china, although in some instances predating 1820, did not really come into vogue until after this date. Similarly, the ever popular blue-on-white Canton remained in high demand until the end of the 19th century.

Beginning in mid-October and extending through November, the Lackawanna Historical Society will sponsor a display of export porcelain in the Catlin House museum. Several examples of pre-1820 porcelain will be shown, including a rare, small tray decorated with the emblem of the Society of the Cincinnati (c. 1785-86). Most of these early specimens come from the Society's own important holdings. Other early pieces have been lent either by Miss Dorothea

Mattes or the author.

Of particular interest to the viewers of this display will be the numerous examples of porcelain in the Hundred Butterfly pattern, from the collection of the late Mrs. Charles P. Davidson and lent by her husband. Exquisite in detail and design-variations, this pattern is considered very rare, although it relates in many respects to the more common Rose Medallion and Rose Canton. Examples of both the latter patterns will be lent by the author. Specimens of the Society's blue-on-white Canton will complete this small but select display.

The Society's own collection is small but significant, thanks to the generosity of several donors over the years. Hopefully, this collection will continue to grow through the continuing interest and benefaction of the members and the community at large.



Covered sugar bowl in "Hundred Butterfly" pattern (c. 1840) from the collection of the late Mrs. Charles P. Davidson.

NEW MEMBERS ARE WANTED

At a recent meeting of the trustees, the future of the Society came under discussion. There was a consensus that an effort should be made to attract younger members into it. It is no secret that the average member of today is no longer young and it is evident that an infusion of youth is needed if the Society is to continue to carry on its work and maintain its position as a living force in the community.

Fortunately the club's treasury has been capably administered and there is no occasion for a membership drive in order to bolster finances to continue the maintenance of the Catlin Home and at the present time the club is living within its budget. There is no intention of raising the very modest dues at this point.

Still, there must be many younger people in the county who are interested in its history and who would enjoy membership. Membership has a great deal to offer to such people.

There is a feeling that many people who would like to become members are under the impression that membership is by invitation and that new members are sought out on some restricted basis. This is not the case and new members are welcomed.

Dues are not high. An individual membership costs \$5 a year; a family membership \$8 and a contributing membership \$15. There are provisions for sustaining and life membership which are somewhat higher, but all memberships are the same and are accorded similar privileges.

Members receiving this Bulletin are asked to pass this information on to those who they feel would be interested in joining the Society.

Recent additions to membership are as follows:

Dr. Vito G. DelVecchio	Dunmore
Ms. Alta Thompson	Scranton
Myron Wolkoff	Scranton
Ms. Rita Plotnichi	Scranton
Patrick J. Melvin	West Orange, N. J.
Mr. & Mrs. Ray Hartman	Scranton
Michael J. O'Malley	U. of S.
Ms. Helene P. Secor	Scranton
J. J. R. Wassel	Olyphant

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