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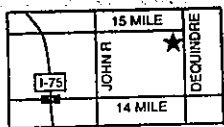
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treasure search

Pottery pieces from popular firm

BY NANCY AND FRANK BOOS
Special Writers

Dear Nancy and Frank:
I have two vases and a turtle/frog figurine. The names "Weller" and "Suard" are written on the vases. I would be most happy to hear what you can find out about them.

Linda,
Westland

Dear Linda:

You have a form of American art pottery called "Weller."

Samuel A. Weller, around 1872 or 1873, fired the first kiln in a 21-square foot log cabin that was the beginning of the Weller art pottery factory. He made flower pots, jardinières, umbrella stands, hanging baskets and other wares, decorated them with house paint and sold them door to door.

His pottery became so popular that by 1906 he had the largest art pottery company in the world in Zanesville, Ohio, with floor space of more than 300,000 square feet and hundreds of workmen running kilns 24 hours around the clock.

There are many, many different lines of Weller pottery that were created by numerous art directors and artisan ceramists. There were so many that it is believed a complete list doesn't exist even today.

You misread the name on your pieces. The artisan's name was Jacques Sicard, not Suard.

Sicard joined Weller in 1901 and was responsible for his own beautiful line of wares called "Sicardo." It has a wonderful metallic luster in tones of flame, blue, green, rose, bronze, purple and red, which diffused into one another in an almost opalescent effect. "Sicardo"

pieces also have lovely form, as they were made by hand with clay thrown on a potter's wheel rather than by the newer commercial method of pressing the clay in molds.

When Jacques Sicard joined Weller, he was aware that Weller had a propensity for learning the secrets of his directors' and designers' glazing techniques.

Sicard knew that Weller had learned the glazing secrets of one of Sicard's predecessors, William Long, who made a line called "Lonhuda," which has a metallic luster. "Lonhuda" was followed upon Long's leaving in 1895 with a very similar line Weller called "Louwelsa," which came from a combination of his daughter Louise's name, the first syllable of his last name and his first two initials.

Legend has it that Sicard worked in a secret room in an effort to keep Weller from learning his methods. Sicard left Weller in 1907 and took his glazing secrets with him.

You indicate that one of your vases is chipped. However, not knowing which, we will give you retail values on all as though they were in good condition. Each vase would retail between \$400 and \$500 and the frog box would retail between \$600 and \$700.

Nancy and Frank Boos are with the Frank H. Boos Gallery, an appraisal firm and auction house at 420 Enterprise Court in Bloomfield Hills that has been in the auction business for more than 30 years. Do you have an item you would like to know about? Send in a good photo of it, along with its description (including size, working parts, etc.) and any known provenance (history) to Treasure Search/At Home, The Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham 48009. Include your name, community and phone number.



Art pottery: Artisan Jacques Sicard made a beautiful line of wares for the Weller pottery company - samples of which are shown here - at the beginning of this century.