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PREMIER ISSUE

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our 12-month collector's calendar:
where to shop around the country



2005
U.S. \$3.95/Canada & Foreign \$5.99
Display until November 21, 2005

pots of gold

Yellowware takes all sorts of shapes besides the mixing bowl by Allison Kyle Leopold



AS PALE AS CUSTARD or as dark as marmalade, and in just about every shade of butterscotch, biscuit, yam, and pumpkin, yellowware was the Tupperware of the 19th century: colorful, attractive, durable, mass-produced, and affordable. Recently, however, soaring prices for this now-coveted pottery have made avid collectors see green.

Invented in late-18th-century England, and then manufactured in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, sturdy

yellowware (or yellow ware, for the tone of its buff-colored clay after firing) began to replace its brittle predecessor, russet-hued redware, as early as 1810. During yellowware's golden age, from the mid-19th century through the 1940s, when a homemaker wanted to mix cake batter, she invariably reached for a yellowware bowl.

Thousands, or even millions, of pieces found their way into American cupboards. Today, as in the past, bowls

icon | yellowware

and pie plates—another kitchen staple—remain the most widely available forms, although pitchers, cooking molds, and canisters are fairly plentiful, too.

Collectors with a taste for more unusual examples seek out rolling pins and foot-warmers, as well as teapots, inkwells, and animal-figure coin banks. Graceful, utilitarian simplicity accounts for a good measure of yellowware's lasting appeal (some classic designs are still in production). As always, though, says Illinois antiques dealer Makala Munday, whose finds we photographed, "People are drawn to the warmth of those yellows. Looking at them just brightens your day." ■

Before plastic emerged, yellowware ruled the kitchen



Victorian advances in ceramic molding led to decorative forms like these basketweave teapots (*above*), c. 1880, from Philadelphia's Jeffords Pottery Co. Such pieces now sell for \$1,200 to \$1,800. Value depends on size, ornamentation, condition, and color; deep yellows fetch higher prices than pale tones. For mixing bowls, expect to pay \$145 to \$550; pie plates, \$175 to \$245; mugs, \$400 to \$550. "A rare pitcher with mocha decoration can go for \$1,000 and up," says John Gallo, an antiques dealer in Otego, N.Y.



HOW OLD IS IT?

Although the basic shapes of yellowware have barely changed over the past two centuries, early bowls tend to be simple, with rolled or round-lipped rims. Square or wide-collared rims, incised decoration, and embossed or molded designs typify pieces made after 1880.

Because reproductions abound, check for signs of wear, which indicate a vintage piece. For example, spouted batter bowls (*above*, with a cat's-head coin bank) usually display wear on the base and marks inside, where stirring has scuffed the surface. Irregular striping (a result of early hand decoration) and crackling or crazing may also signal age, although modern "crackle" glazes produce similar effects.

(collector's tip)

Because American potters seldom signed their work, hoping it would be mistaken for more prestigious British imports, dating and origins are often hard to determine. **BELOW LEFT:** An English maker's mark impressed into clay. **RIGHT:** A typical American mark, printed with a stamp or transfer technique before glazing.



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did you know?
Narrow white bands
are the oldest form of
yellowware decoration.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD

Covered butter pots, canisters, and crocks with white slip bands (\$450–\$850) date from the 1860s through the 1890s. Yellowware was considered a vast improvement over late-18th-century redware (made from reddish clay), which was heavier and broke more easily. Firing at higher temperatures (2,000 degrees Fahrenheit or more) accounted for the new pottery's durability. After firing, a transparent glaze was applied, deepening the clay's natural yellow.

YELLOWWARE VARIATIONS

MOCHAWARE: Yellowware with blue, white, or brown bands or adorned with a seaweed pattern (usually blue or green).

ROCKINGHAM: A brown glaze containing manganese that creates a tortoiseshell effect (often mistakenly called "Bennington," after the Vermont town where much of it was made).

SPONGEWARE: Surfaces that have been daubed with a color-dipped sponge.

PUMPKIN GLAZE: Orange-tinted; produced by Ohio potteries during the early 1900s.

GREEN GLAZE: Mainly from Ohio; early 20th century through the '30s.

COLLECT IT

WRITTEN BY
RACHEL DESCHEPPER

PHOTOGRAPHED BY
JASON WALSMITH

Thrill of the hunt.

A few raindrops didn't stop antiques dealer Makala Munday from filling her SUV with treasures from Illinois' Sandwich Antiques Market.



9:00 A.M.

Makala knew immediately where this Victorian paisley fabric (\$100, left) would live in her home. "I have a white wingback that doesn't do much for me, and I could drape this over it to spice it up a bit," she says. She'll leave the 60x84-inch bolt unaltered and unhemmed so she has options. "Paisley also works well as a tablecloth."



10:00 A.M.

"I never shop anything special. If I have a plan, I get it," Makala says. Case in point: wheels (\$50/pair) will become wheels (\$50/pair).



10:30 A.M.

"I'll use this plant stand (\$165, left) all year—for Halloween pumpkins, holiday poinsettias, and summer plants," Makala says.

11:00 A.M.

After buying a hat rack earlier in the day, Makala and her sister, Tara, went inside one of the four buildings to find vintage hats (below).



12:00 P.M.

Makala thought of her kitchen when she saw this tin oil painting (\$20, above). "My kitchen is red, so I like earth tones on the walls," she says.



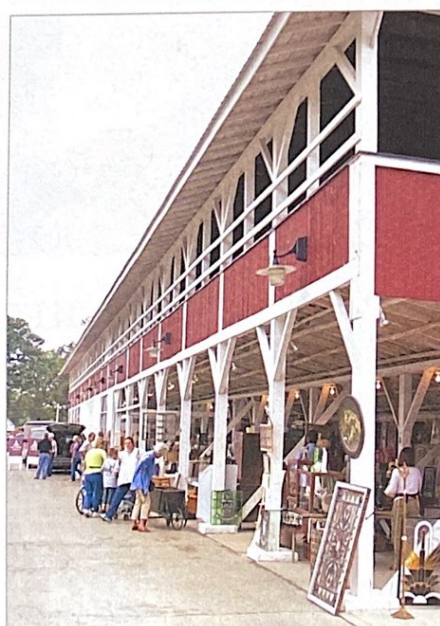
1:00 P.M.

Makala saves for last because she takes the most time. Her finds: the rhinestone brooch (\$40, below) to denim jackets.



12:30 P.M.

The market's 500 dealers sell a wide range of reasonably priced 19th- and 20th-century items (left); nothing less than 20 years old is allowed.



OUR 25TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

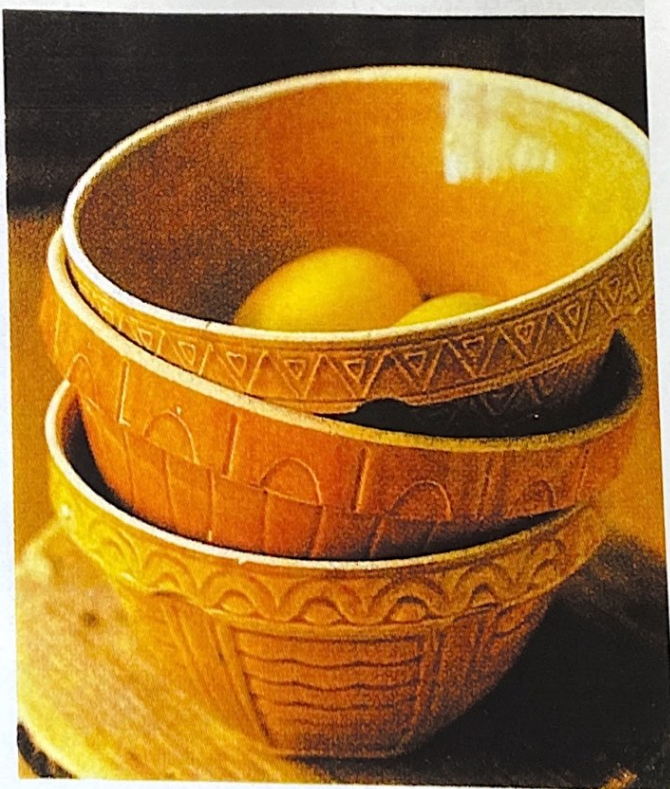
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did you know?

These utilitarian ceramic vessels are known to pottery enthusiasts as **pumpkin-glazed yellowware**. Produced for just five years during the early 1900s by Ohio potteries, these pitchers, pie plates, and mixing bowls (*right*)



were made of light-yellow clay, embellished with molded patterns, and finished in a buttery pumpkin-color glaze. Pieces are now hard to find. Prices for a simple bowl can range from \$135 to \$195, says glazed pottery dealer Makala Munday, owner of Munday & Munday Antiques in Benton, Ill. For details, call Munday at (618) 406-4657.

OCTOBER



paint & fabric makeover