Antique or Junque: Jug is pitcher-perfect

by Anne McCollam

Q: I have been searching for quite a few years for the history of the pitcher seen in this photo. It has a translucent quality and the glaze appears to have been thickly applied. The figures and flowers are outlined in white and it is decorated with blue, green and white dots. There no identifying marks or numbers that I could find and it is in excellent condition. It was given to my great-aunt as a wedding gift in 1899 and has been in our family ever since.

SATSUMA PITCHER - Satsuma ware has been made in Satsuma, Japan, since around 1600. This late Meiji period pitcher was produced between1868 to 1912 and would probably be worth $250 to $350. CNS Photo. RETSCH & CO. MARK - Retsch and Co. of Germany has produced porcelain since 1884. CNS Illustration. I hope you can tell us anything about its origin and value.

A: You have a Satsuma pitcher that is decorated with raised enamels. Satsuma ware has been made in Satsuma, Japan, since around 1600. The blue, green, and white dots are called moriage. Judging from your photo and information, it was made sometime in the Meiji period that lasted from 1868 to 1912.

Your late Meiji-period pitcher would probably be worth $250 to $350.

Q: This mark is on a set of porcelain dishes that my father bought when he was stationed with the Army in Germany. My mother only used the dishes for special occasions and they are in perfect condition. It is a service for eight and includes serving pieces. All the dishes are decorated with sprigs of pastel flowers on the borders against a white background.

What can you tell us about the maker, age and value of our dishes?

A: Retsch and Co. made your dinnerware. They have produced porcelain in Wunsiedel, Bavaria, Germany,

since 1884. The mark you provided was used in the 1950s.

Your set would probably be worth $425 to $625.

Q: I have a small dessert plate and a cream pitcher that were made by Homer Laughlin. Both are marked with the name "Virginia Rose" and are in excellent condition. The plate is marked "C 50 N 8" and "K 54 N 8" is on the cream pitcher. I was given the plate 25 years ago and the cream pitcher I bought for $3 at a thrift store.

Could you please tell me how old they are and what their value is, if any?

A: "Virginia Rose" was the name of a shape of dishes that was made by Homer Laughlin China Co. The Virginia Rose shape was made from 1929 to the early 1970s. There were at least a dozen decal designs that were used to decorate the popular shape. The plate was made in March 1950, at plant 8 and the cream pitcher was made in November 1954, also at the same plant.

The value of the two pieces would probably be $25 to $35.

Q: We have a porcelain bowl and matching candlesticks that were given to my husband's grandparents on their 50th wedding anniversary in 1918. The bowl is approximately 10 inches in diameter and the candlesticks are over 9 inches tall. They are marked "Hand Painted - W. A. Pickard China."

We intend to keep the set in the family and pass it on to one of our children. What information can you give us?

A: Wilder A. Pickard founded Pickard China Co. in 1898 in Chicago. In the early years, they used china blanks that were made by other companies. It wasn't until the 1930s that they began producing their own porcelain. They are still in business.

Your set would probably be worth $525 to $725.

Address your questions to Anne McCollam, P.O. Box 247, Notre Dame, IN 46556. Items of a general interest will be answered in this column. Due to the volume of inquiries, she cannot answer individual letters.

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