

Antique or Junque: Bloom's not off '60s 'Desert Rose' dinnerware

by Anne McCollam

Q: Enclosed is a photo of part of my dinnerware set. The set is a service for 12 and includes some serving pieces. Each dish is marked with a rectangle with the words "Gladding McBean & Co. - Made in U.S.A. - Franciscan Earthenware" and the letters "C - R." The pattern is "Desert Rose."

DINNER FOR 12 - Gladding McBean and Co., founded in 1875 in Los Angeles, made this dinnerware around 1961. It would probably be worth \$800 to \$1,200. CNS Photo. FRANZ ANTON MEHLEM MARK - The Franz Anton Mehlem Earthenware Factory has made porcelain and earthenware in Bonn, Germany, from 1836 to 1920. CNS Illustration. Could you please tell me when my dishes were made and what they are worth?

A: Gladding McBean and Co. was founded in 1875 in Los Angeles. In 1979 the company was sold to Wedgwood in England and all U.S. production ceased in 1981. "Desert Rose" was introduced in 1941. The pattern is in relief and hand-painted. Because of the shape of the mark you described, it is called Gladding McBean's "TV Screen" mark. The letter "C" represents "Copyright" and "R" represents "Registered."

Your dinnerware was made around 1961 and it would probably be worth \$800 to \$1,200.

Q: This mark is on the bottom of a porcelain vase that I inherited. The vase stands approximately 8 inches tall and is an ovoid shape with a short narrow cylinder neck. It is decorated with hand painted open yellow roses, buds, and green leaves against a soft green background.

Anything you can tell me about my vase will be appreciated.

A: You have a lovely example of Royal Bonn that was made by Franz Anton Mehlem Earthenware Factory around 1900. They made porcelain and earthenware in Bonn, Rhineland, Germany, from 1836 to 1920.

The value of your vase would probably be \$325 to \$425.

Q: I am very curious about a four-piece place setting of porcelain dishes that I have. The set also includes a teapot and cream pitcher. They all are decorated with geisha girls in orange and cream against a white background. When the teacups are held up to the light a geisha girl appears on the bottom. I bought the set from a friend who told me her mother purchased them in the 1920s somewhere in Germany.

The dishes are quite unique and lovely. I wondered if you would have any idea what their value might be?

A: You have a set of Geisha Girl porcelain. The Japanese produced this popular ware in the early 1900s and exported it to the West. The hand-painted scenes illustrated the daily life of kimono-clad women. They were often featured serving tea in garden settings with indigenous flora and fauna, and with mountains in the background. The image that can be seen when held up to the light is called a lithopane. During the height of production of Geisha Girls items, in an effort to take advantage of the demand, Czechoslovakia factories began making their own versions. They can be distinguished by the decal images rather than the hand painted examples from Japan.

The value of your set would probably be \$125 to \$150.

BOOK REVIEW

"Sell, Keep or Toss? How to Downsize a Home, Settle an Estate and Appraise Personal Property" by Harry L. Rinker contains some of the best advice possible for some of the hardest decisions. Readers will find Rinker has provided practical and down-to-earth suggestions on dispersing possessions. Passing mementos to the next

generation, how to recognize a valuable collection, finding reputable appraisers and auctioneers, getting tax benefits from donating pieces, and maximizing profits are just some of the important subjects discussed.

This handy little guide provides answers to big dilemmas!

"Sell, Keep or Toss" is published by House of Collectibles. It is available in bookstores at \$17.

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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