Lowry Brothers Pottery Broadside Discovered

By James L. Murphy

A rare broadside advertising a “Sanitary Assortment of ‘Earthen Cooking Vessels’” manufactured by Roseville’s Lowry Brothers Pottery Company has recently come to light and is of particular interest for showing just what the pottery’s cooking ware looked like. The folded broadside accompanied an invoice to the Bonebrake Hardware Company of El Reno, Oklahoma, marked “paid,” June 2, 1917.

The late Helen Kildow (Roseville Legend, Fall 1999) wrote a brief account of Lyman S. Lowry and the development of the Roseville cooking ware industry, which he began in 1881. From at least 1894 to 1898 Lyman S. Lowry advertised his “Excelsior” cooking ware on stationery bearing his name. The name was not changed to Lowry Brothers until after the turn of the century (1906 is the date usually given) when the firm was taken over by his sons, Curtis, Thede, Everett, and Howard. (Lyman Lowry died in 1914.) By 1918 the Lowry Brother’s pottery had become the C. W. Lowry Pottery and was later operated by Curtis’ daughter and son-in-law, Daisy and Charles W. Culp. It burned in the mid-1940s. (Lois Lehner mistakenly credits the Lowry Brothers’ cousin, Frederick S. Lowry, with taking over the Lowry Brother’s pottery, but F.S. Lowry operated the pottery of his father, W. B. Lowry until his death in 1916, when it was taken over by the Tycer Pottery.)

The Lowry Brother kettles, baking pans, meat roasters, and pie pans illustrated on this broadside are marked with a distinctive design of three interlocking diamonds, and these could undoubtedly be identified on any surviving examples. The bean pot also has a distinctive floral motif but the coffee pot looks remarkably like one produced by the Pace Brothers Pottery (see Roseville Legend, Spring 2001), a slight difference in the handle being the only noticeable distinction. It may take a marked example to determine whether these coffee pots can be distinguished.