

J. B. Owens Illustrated Catalogue—Part II

By James L. Murphy

This time we will explore other examples of pottery from what may be the only known J. B. Owens's Pottery catalogue published while the company was still in Roseville. (See Winter 2006 *Roseville Legend* for Part I). First we will take a look at six different hanging baskets, shapes 86 through 91. No examples of any of these are known today, though because of their very nature hanging baskets do not tend to be long-lived. The catalog indicates that the "Shell Hanging Basket" has been on the market for a long time, and this style was produced by other potteries, for a sherd with matching scallop pattern was discovered in a Mogadore, Ohio pottery waster dump. Perhaps the most unusual shape is the "Pine Apple Hanging Basket," which was "finished in colors that imitate the pineapple." Others were finished in "bright colors" or "elaborately finished."

Even more remarkable is a series of six flower pots shaped like various ancient buildings, all with "granite finish." There is the "Square Castle Vase" and the "Granite Church Vase." Another represents an ancient British court building. There is a round Roman "Tower Castle" and the "Central Castle." The unusual vases measured about 6 or 7 inches in diameter and 6-7 inches high. No existing examples are known.

Shape number 97, the Dolphin vase, suggests some of the more elaborate forms taken by Owens' later jardinières and pedestals, but the remainder of the catalogue illustrates more pedestrian forms such as cuspidors, a stone-ware coffee pot, oblong pudding pan, bean baker, the "Superior Fruit Jar," stew pan, pitcher, and chamber pot. Perhaps most unusual are three versions of a black-glazed kerosene finger lamp, which might be recognizable if one turns up today. Since J. B. Owens's Roseville wares were for the most part unmarked, we have only the illustrations in this catalogue to provide some idea of the types of product he manufactured more than 120 years ago. ♦



Above, catalogue sheets from what may be the only surviving catalogue from the J. B. Owens Pottery when it was in operation in Roseville from 1885-1891. The J. B. Owens Pottery was located in the vicinity of the Friendship Pottery building. [Catalogue sheets courtesy of James L. Murphy.]