

Moorcroft quality remained high

ATTIC Treasures

BY ROB REID



A warm and sunny May to all. Here we have a colourful vase made by Moorcroft Potteries of Burslem, England. Moorcroft has been producing excellent pottery since 1897, and is one of the most recognized and important names in 20th century British art pottery.

The technique that they use was first developed by William Moorcroft and involves a raised slip style of decoration that soon became distinctive to the Moorcroft name. With the death of William in 1945, the company was taken over by his son Walter, who retired in 1987, with his son John continuing the family business.

With such a long history of making pottery it is surprisingly easy to date and identify Moorcroft pieces with the proper references. As the signatures, labels and impressed marks on the base, combined with the pattern of the piece, changed throughout the history of the company, this generally gives one enough information to arrive at an accurate date of production. The quality of pottery produced has been consistently excellent over its history and can be readily appreciated when looking at, and handling, a piece.

William Moorcroft received a Royal Warrant in 1928 from Queen Mary for his work and, after his death the skill of his son, Walter, allowed the company to maintain the use of that Warrant until 1978 (Royal Warrants ordinarily expire 25 years after the death of the Monarch). The company survived the Second World War mainly because of its export trade and, as a result, there are many fine examples to be found in North America. However, with the rise in popularity and price, many of these pieces are going back to collectors in the European market.

In Canada it was fairly common from the 1930s to the mid-1950s to find Moorcroft pottery in your small town jewellery

and gift stores. It was often given as a wedding gift as it was moderately priced and quite in fashion. The vase pictured here is a great example of a grape and leaf design and is approximately 6.5 inches tall. This design was originally produced from 1928 to 1935, and while not as popular or as scarce as some of the other patterns, this vase would still be worth about \$350 to \$450 in today's market.

I welcome inquiries about any objects and look forward to seeing and perhaps writing about them. Please forward a photo and a description to me through Whitchurch-Stouffville Living, or drop them off at Reid's Antiques, 6397 Main St. Stouffville during regular business hours or via my website at reidsantiques.com.



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