

National Museums
of Canada

National Museum
of Man

Ottawa 1970

Publications
in History, No. 1

**Two Centuries
of Ceramics in the
Richelieu Valley**

by **Helen H. Lambart**

Publications
d'histoire, n° 1

FACSIMILE EDITION
1972

NATIONAL MUSEUMS
OF CANADA

MUSÉES NATIONAUX
DU CANADA

NATIONAL MUSEUM
OF MAN

MUSÉE NATIONAL
DE L'HOMME

National Museum of Man
Publications in History, No. 1

Published by the
National Museums of Canada

Staff editor
Merle Storey

Publication supported by
The Margaret Hess
Canadian Studies Fund
of the National Museum of Man

Musée national de l'Homme
Publications d'histoire, n^o 1

Publié par les
Musées nationaux du Canada

Graphiste
Georges Beaupré

Ouvrage subventionné par
Le Fonds Margaret Hess
d'Études canadiennes
du Musée national de l'Homme

**Two Centuries
of Ceramics in the
Richelieu Valley**

A documentary history

Helen H. Lambart

Edited by Jennifer Arcand

© Crown Copyrights reserved

Available by mail
from the
National Museums of Canada

Ottawa 4

Catalogue No. NM95-11/1

The National Museums of Canada
Ottawa, Canada
1970

P 098765432
Y 798765432
Litho in Canada

Contents

Résumé	vi
Summary	vi
Biographical Note	vi
The Individual Potters of St-Denis	1
The Farrars of St. Johns (St-Jean) and Iberville	4
Local Industry Focuses on White Earthenware	13
Transition and Survival	20
Appendix: The Fifteen Pottery Sites	27
Notes	29

Résumé

L'industrie de la poterie vit le jour dans la vallée du Richelieu au dix-huitième siècle, avec les vases de terre cuite des artisans de St-Denis. Elle se développa et prit beaucoup d'ampleur à St-Jean, sous la direction des Farrar. Depuis longtemps, cette famille avait fabriqué le grès au Vermont, avant de s'installer au Québec en 1840. Durant la seconde moitié du dix-neuvième siècle, soucoupes et tasses, plats, cruches, assiettes, théières, crachoirs, vases de nuit et autres articles de terre cuite blanche sortirent des ateliers de St. Johns Stone Chinaware Company et des autres fabriques de la région de St-Jean-Iberville. La concurrence des articles importés se révéla désastreuse. À la fin du siècle, l'industrie de la céramique de la vallée du Richelieu dut se contenter de fabriquer des vases hygiéniques, le seul produit qui demeurerait rentable et qui lui permit de survivre après deux siècles de mutations successives.

Summary

Pottery-making began in the Richelieu valley in the eighteenth century with the earthenware vessels of the individual Saint-Denis potters. The craft developed into an important industry in St. Johns with the Farrar family leading the way. They were skilled stoneware manufacturers in Vermont before coming to Quebec in 1840. Bowls, jugs, plates, cups and saucers, teapots, spittoons, chambers and other white earthenware objects were produced by the St. Johns Stone Chinaware Company and other factories in the St. Johns-Iberville area in the latter part of the nineteenth century. But the competition of imported ware proved too strong. By the end of the century the ceramics industry of the Richelieu valley was forced to narrow its focus and confine itself to the production of sanitary ware, the one product with which it could compete successfully and survive after two centuries of transmutation.

Biographical Note

Miss Helen H. Lambart, a graduate of McGill in Political Science and Economics, lives in Grenville, Quebec in an old house that she has had restored. The early potters of Quebec first attracted her a number of years ago and she has written on the subject for the National and Historic Parks Branch as well as the Museum of Man. Miss Lambart is a pioneer in the extensive use of Quebec judicial records for research into the material culture of the province. Mrs. Jennifer Arcand who edited the manuscript is a graduate in English of McMaster University and the University of New Brunswick and has taught English at the latter.