



Red Wing Dinnerware & the End of the Line

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Five years and more than 17,000 words since the first article in this series appeared in the December 2009 issue of the Red Wing Collectors Society Newsletter, the Introduction to Dinnerware Series comes to an end. A big "thank you" goes to the authors, RWCS Hall of Fame Members Larry Roschen and Terry Moe, for sharing their immense passion and vast knowledge of Red Wing dinnerware with fellow Red Wing collectors.

THE END of Red Wing Dinnerware Production

A fair amount of greenware (unfired pottery) remained in the Red Wing Potteries plant after workers left in mid-1967. The remaining staff applied whatever glazes were on hand to the greenware. Beige fleck, the background color for Bob White and other patterns, is the glaze most commonly found on these end-of-production items. Unfinished pieces that should have been glazed with multiple colors but received only the base glaze were fired as-is. These odd-colored items were sold to the public at the Red Wing Pottery Salesroom, a business that originally sold Red Wing's seconds and surplus stock before morphing into a store that continues to sell wares from a variety of vendors. Today a collector can find a variety of authentic Red Wing dinnerware in non-standard colors. The values for these items vary considerably. Some are worth very little, while one-of-a-kind items can have significant value. As with all collectibles, the value is in the eye of the beholder.



Above: 1 quart Futura pitcher in beige fleck (left) and True China teapot in beige fleck. **Below:** All brown 10-inch Ceramastone dinner plates (left) and orange 10-inch Ceramastone dinner plates missing brown rim.



Left: 7-inch green Ceramastone salad plate black rim. **Above:** Duo Tone beige fleck gravy base with Pepe cover. **Right:** Buffet Royale salt & pepper in beige fleck.



Tidbit trays have long been a source of controversy among collectors. They were made by drilling a hole in the center of a plate or bowl, then placing a metal handle through the hole. Similar hardware was used to connect two or three pieces together into a multi-tiered tray. Some consider these to be an integral part of a dinnerware set, while others consider them to be dinnerware pieces ruined by the hole. Red Wing offered tidbit trays during the late 1950s and 1960s in various "Novelty and Gift" brochures. These brochures also depicted other dinnerware-like items that weren't a part of any dinnerware pattern. One brochure offered tidbit trays in two-tiered and single-tiered configurations in "assorted patterns". In other words, the buyer couldn't order a tray in a specific pattern. This was because tidbit trays were made from whatever surplus stock was on hand at the time. Tidbit trays continued to be assembled and sold at the Red Wing Pottery Salesroom long after production ceased.



Above: 2-tier Chuckwagon tidbit (left) and 2-tier Flight tidbit with bowl. **Below:** A grouping of Lotus tidbit trays.



Left: 1-tier Rose sauce bowl tidbit. **Right:** 2-tier Mediterranean tidbit (top) and a 3-tier Crazy Rhythm tidbit.

