

RACCOON FORKS TRADING CO. NEWSLETTER: JAN. 2017



ANTIQUES, FURNITURE, PRINTS AND PRIMITIVES

Located in the NE corner of the East Village
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RFTC's historic facade rehab project: slideshow

Our historic facade rehab project at Raccoon Forks Trading Co. is moving right along. Work is nearly complete on the building's upper story, and the storefronts are up next. Click the image below to watch a short slideshow of our progress to date.



Newsletter subscriber discount of the month: 20% off select upholstered furniture



Raccoon Forks Trading Company is offering newsletter subscribers 20% off select upholstered furniture. To receive the discount, please show the cashier a copy of the newsletter (printed or e-version) or use the name of the Trading Company's founder ("Emile Dobby") as the password. The offer is valid until Feb.

15, 2017.

Wapello Jim's pick of the month: Flow Blue

Wapello Jim ("The Agent"), a direct descendant of the Indian Agent Joseph Street, who traded with the Winnebago Indians of Wapello County, specializes in select

"smalls" glassware, pottery and china. Each month, Wapello Jim highlights an intriguing item in Raccoon Forks Trading Company's carefully curated inventory.

Flow Blue is a type of antique blue-and-white china called transferware that is quite popular among collectors. Some say the coloring agent in Flow Blue was diffused by accident, as the cobalt oxide bled outside of the lines of the design during production. Others say the diffusion was used intentionally to soften the edges of the pattern. Perhaps it was an accident at first, and the result was so pretty the practice became more regular.



In the late 18th century, Chinese porcelain was highly sought after in England. The rich blue patterns, hand-painted on a bright white background, were very expensive. To make the Chinese porcelain more widely attainable, English potters created a technique for imprinting a design on china called transferware, which involved applying cobalt oxide to an engraved copper plate.

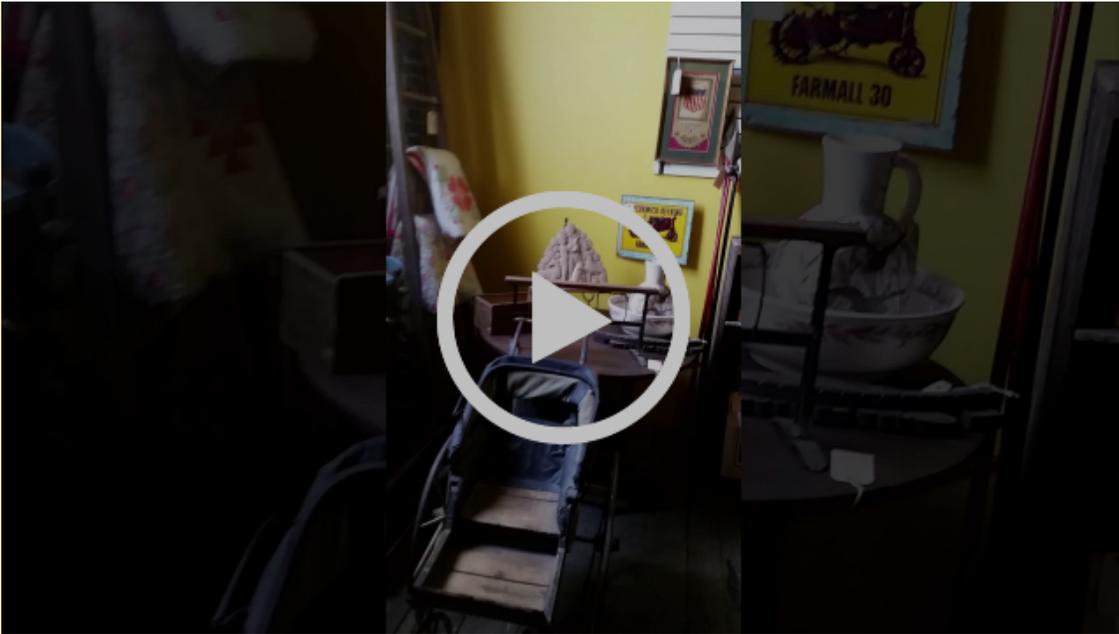
Transferware offered a product that was less expensive than imported, hand-painted Chinese porcelain and very attractive to the surging Victorian middle class. At first, transferware patterns incorporated Oriental designs and motifs, such as temples and pagodas. Later, the demand arose for a romantic Victorian sensibility of floral and pastoral patterns highlighting English culture.

But challenges in the production process had blue overflowing into the white more than usual and blurred the pattern lines, leading to large quantities of rejects. The low cost yet beautiful rejects happened to appeal to middle and working classes in the U.S., who became a primary market for the factory seconds.

Flow Blue's popularity surged from 1840 to 1870 and reached its heyday in the late 19th and early 20th century. A resurgence in popularity among collectors interested in that era occurred in the late 1960s. Flow Blue remains very collectible today, with the pattern and who made it determining the value.

Video tour of Tama Bill's trading room

Raccoon Forks Trading Company trader Tama Bill, recruited from the Iowa River Valley, traffics in Civil War era and pre-Civil War era antiques, primitives, advertising items, folk art, quilts, crocs, and other rare items and artifacts. Click on the photo below to go along on a brief video tour of his trading room.



New inventory: public telephone signs, antique scale, Lionel model trains



Public Telephone Signs — Porcelain telephone signs, usually blue and white with the Bell System logo, or a red shield for independent companies, became common in the late 1800s. These signs can often be found with the name of the local phone company and mention of its connection with long distance. Porcelain telephone signs are highly collectible, depending on rarity, condition and attractiveness.



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Metal-cased WM Ainsworth & Sons antique balance/scale with weights — Founded by William Ainsworth in 1880 in Denver, Colo., the company was renamed WM Ainsworth & Sons in 1905. As a young man, Ainsworth became a master watchmaker at the Elgin



Watch Company in Illinois. After relocating to Colorado, he used those skills to repair English-made precision balances used for mine assaying, and started manufacturing his own balances in 1879.

Around 1910, Ainsworth shifted to production of analytical balances and later micro-balances before the company began diversifying widely (gunsights, auto and plumbing parts, etc.) from 1918 to the 1930s. By 1934, Ainsworth stopped making wooden-cased balances in favor of metal-cased ones. This Ainsworth scale includes a set of original fractional balancing weights.



Lionel model trains — For much of the 20th century, Lionel trains were the kings of toys. Lionel's pre-WWII trains are particularly prized, while post-war models are also appreciated, from Depression-era Mickey Mouse handcars to TrainMaster Command system trains (partly funded by Lionel train buff Neil Young).



When Joshua Lionel Cowen founded Lionel in 1900, railroads were America's economic lifeblood and a cultural icon symbolizing U.S. technological advancement and sophistication. Cowen's Lionel model trains stoked America's

imagination with the romance of the rails. Raccoon Forks Trading Company has the New York Central and Union Pacific models (pictured) in stock.

Founded in 1812 by Emile Dobby (a French Canadian-Scots Irish fur trader) at the forks of the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers, our mission for over 200 years has been to bring choice goods in from the wilderness to trade with the local population for whatever valuables they possess (including cash, checks, and credit/debit cards).

Emile immigrated to the U.S. in the early 1800s after being driven out of Scotland

for his rogue and wile ways, which had led to charges that included horse thievery. After spending many years fur trapping in the American West, he started the original RFTC near our current location, at 621 Des Moines Street (in the northeast corner of the East Village).

In our present incarnation we pledge to provide our loyal customers with high quality, carefully researched and curated antique and vintage furniture, furnishings, art, prints, etc., etc., etc.



Raccoon Forks Trading Co. is an Optimaē LifeServices small business. Optimaē creates jobs for individuals with disabilities and mental illness by developing and operating small businesses that provide high quality goods, services and economic benefits to communities. For more information, please click here:

<http://www.optimaelifeservices.com/our-services/raccoon-forks-businesses/>



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Forward

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