



# Heartland Science

Ohio's Legacy of Discovery & Innovation



## Materials

From Pottery to Plastics

### Pottery Capital of America

John Bennett (1840-1907), a potter from Staffordshire, England, recognized that rich deposits of potters' clay existed in the East Liverpool, Ohio, area. In 1840, he built the first kiln in the area, launching Ohio's great ceramics industry. East Liverpool became "The Pottery Capital of America," and in the 19th Century produced and sold the majority of America's crockery.



By 1890, East Liverpool had eighteen potteries that employed 2,200 workers. The Knowles, Taylor & Knowles Pottery had more than 600 employees and was one of the largest in the world.

Though Bennett had trained in the Staffordshire pottery tradition, he also developed his own individual style. He taught pottery decoration classes in his studio, and also demonstrated underglaze china painting techniques at the Society of Decorative Art in New York City.



Antique Dakota Vase  
by Knowles, Taylor, & Knowles

### The Museum of Ceramics

The Museum of Ceramics is managed by the Ohio Historical Society and is located in East Liverpool, Ohio. Its exhibits depict East Liverpool and its ceramic industry from 1840 to 1930, a period when the area's potteries accounted for about half of the ceramics manufactured in the United States. It is said that ceramic manufacturing was more important in East Liverpool during the late 1800's than is steel production in Pittsburgh or automobile manufacturing in Detroit today.

### Find out more...

- "Decorative Pottery Of Cincinnati," 1881, Harper's New Monthly Magazine ([www.oldsold.com/articles02/article1003.shtml](http://www.oldsold.com/articles02/article1003.shtml))
- The Museum of Ceramics, East Liverpool, OH ([www.themuseumofceramics.org/pottery.html](http://www.themuseumofceramics.org/pottery.html))
- The Ohio Ceramics Center ([www.ohiohistory.org/places/ohceram](http://www.ohiohistory.org/places/ohceram))
- American Ceramics Society ([www.ceramics.org](http://www.ceramics.org))