

Art on pottery: Canadian landscape graces the dinner table

Art on a platter, on a teacup, a pitcher or a soup tureen was very much a part of Canadian life 100 years ago.

In an exhibition entitled *The Potters' View of Canada*, twentieth-century visitors to Montreal's McCord Museum can see how the vogue for collecting earthenware decorated with scenes of the Canadian landscape quite literally brought the countryside to the nineteenth-century dinner table.

Although the scenes all came from Canada — Montmorency Falls, Niagara Falls, Montreal and Toronto were the favourites — the earthenware itself was produced in the potteries of England and Scotland. The merchants knew these earthenware items were popular: a few occasionally bartered dinner services for livestock.

Elizabeth Collard, guest curator of



Plate (1830s) shows popular "Montreal" pattern designed by Davenport.



Sugar bowl (mid-nineteenth century). "Lake" pattern is printed with Canadian artist W.H. Bartlett's view "Village of Cedars, River St. Lawrence".

the exhibition, is also author of the book *The Potters' View of Canada*, published by McGill-Queen's University Press. Her selection of items for display illustrates well the breadth of sources for the decoration of earthenware and the wide variety in colour and quality of the pottery itself.

Working with the designer, Luc Matter, she has managed to convey a sense of the times, of how "parlour art" in the form of watercolours and engravings was charmingly domesticated and given a much wider audience. The exhibition runs until October 1984.



Soup tureen and ladle (1880s) with the "Maple" pattern. Canadian motifs and scenes were popular decorations for nineteenth-century earthenware.

Authors honoured

Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* and John Sawatsky's *For Services Rendered* were named the best English-language paperback books of the year at the seventh annual Author's Awards dinner held recently.

The awards are sponsored by Periodical Distributors of Canada, the national association of book and magazine distributors, through its Foundation for the Advancement of Canadian Letters.

Obasan, which deals with the internment of Japanese Canadians in the Second World War, is the most-honoured Canadian novel in recent years, winning the 1981 Books in Canada First Novel Award and the 1982 Canadian Author's Association Book of the Year award. It was also the first Canadian entry to receive an American Book Award this year.

For Services Rendered, the non-fiction winner, is an exposé of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Timothy Findley's novel *Famous Last Words* won second prize in the fiction category, and Mr. Findley won the Author of the Year award. Allan Fotheringham's *Malice in Blunderland* won second prize in the non-fiction category, and Margaret Atwood's *Bodily Harm* won the Book of the Year award, denoting a work of special importance in critical acclaim and paperback sales.

Arts briefs

France Morin has been appointed the new director of the 49th Parallel, the federal government's exhibition space in New York. Miss Morin was co-founder and co-director of the magazine *Parachute* from 1975 to 1980 and was a member of the Canada Council Advisory Board. She is currently a professor at Montreal's Concordia University, and since 1980 has directed the Galerie France Morin. Miss Morin succeeds Guy Plamondon, the first director of the gallery. The 49th Parallel, which is an agency of the Department of External Affairs, was established in 1981 as a showcase for Canadian contemporary art.

A National Film Board production *Massabielle* directed by Jacques Savoie of Edmundston, New Brunswick, took top honours at the Atlantic Film and Video Festival held recently. *Massabielle*, Mr. Savoie's first film, won prizes for best over-all entry, best drama, best direction, best editing and best cinematography.