

*[Green Case]*

## *Unearthed: Campus Changes Reveal Bits of Our Past*

*The bits and pieces in our two display cases were found during the remodeling of the campus roads and paths this past summer [in July & August of 2010]. The great majority of the artifacts were found in the area just above the Boiler House and behind the Locke/Insley hyphen. A few pieces were found on the side of the hill next to Ivy and in front of Timken Library. The inkwell was found while excavating the Clinton parking lot.*

*As is apparent, most of the artifacts are broken plates, platters, cups or pitchers and crocks. Some of the items show signs of being burned. Considering the location and the condition of some of the artifacts it is reasonable to assume that these things were in an old garbage dump. It was common practice to put a garbage dump behind the building with which it was associated.*

*Considering the age of the items we found that building would have been Blair Hall.*

*Blair Hall, erected in 1850, was the second major building built here for the school - Old Academy being the first. Blair Hall was sited where Insley stands today. It was a two story clapboard building that housed both faculty and*

*To your far right in this case are two Blair Catalogues. The lower one from 1858 has an engraving showing the first wood clapboard Blair Hall in the upper left. The second catalogue of 1882 has the rebuilt building that was eventually renamed "Insley".*

*students. In 1867 it burned to the ground. Blair Hall was rebuilt in limestone and in following years renamed “Insley”. There have been changes and improvements since then, but the essential structure is still here as you can see from the engravings.*

*We also found a sampling of glass items and one or two metal things. The glass is by and large bottles. Their age is apparent by the lack of threads on the top of the bottles. All of these had cork stoppers. One bottle shows the effects of an intense fire. Garbage was commonly burned on site as*

*a means of disposal -- and still is in some states. But it could also be a relic of the one of Blair’s three big fires: Blair Hall (1867), Clinton Hall (1922) and the Boiler House (1984).*

#### *Potters’ Marks*

*The potter’s mark is quite simply the signature of the maker of a piece of pottery, whether it is the trademark of a large scale manufacturer or the personal identification mark of a fine arts ceramicist. The mark can be printed or painted on in color or molded or imprinted into the clay. At its simplest, the mark tells you who made the piece. At its most complex, through a series of symbols, letters and numbers, it can tell when, where, and by whom a piece was designed, molded, decorated and sold.*

*The marks on these pieces are fairly straight-forward, including the manufacturer’s name and, in some cases, the name of the pattern.*

*Some of the pottery shards we found had their maker’s marks still legible and so we were able to date those pieces’ patterns and production times. The production dates and pattern names are noted by the shards. The majority of the pottery appears to be tableware. However there are a few large pieces that look to be parts of crocks or large jars that may have been used in the kitchen or science classroom.*

*[Black Case]*

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*All the broken pottery pieces in this case were found, along with the items in the case by the library entrance, during the destruction /construction of this past summer [the summer of 2010]. The pattern, manufacturer and years that that pattern was manufactured are noted above the pieces. This will give you a general idea of when that*

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*tableware was used here at Blair. Not all of the pieces we found were identifiable and so those pieces are clustered together in their own little group. We searched our archive for pictures of tableware but were only able to find a few images where the pattern on the plates is visible. But none of them matched the broken bits we found behind Insley. We did however find samples of the china seen in the two photos from about 1955. The china was stashed away beneath the kitchen in the labyrinthine cellars of Insley. All the whole china here came from the cellar and clearly matches the china seen in the photos.*

*You will also see a small pile of clam and oyster shells. Both clams and oysters were a common fare in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century.*