

# Restaurant Ware Collectors Network®



## Iconic Establishments

A series of articles about the china used by venues ranging from hotels and restaurants to burger joints and hospitals

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### PAUL MCCOBB - JACKSON CHINA 10 November 2019

Jackson China Co. made a quality product, but it had trouble competing for market share with the larger china companies, such as Syracuse and Shenango. To help increase sales Jackson hired Paul McCobb in the late 1950s. Paul McCobb (1917 - 1969) was an important mid-century Industrial Designer, who founded Paul McCobb Associates in 1945. He is probably best known for his mass-produced furniture designs made by a number of manufacturers. He also designed textiles, lighting fixtures, door hardware, radios, TVs, and office furnishings.

Industrial Designers are hired by companies to increase profits, mainly by increasing sales of their products. This is achieved by redesigning the outward appearance, and functionally of the product. Often this includes making production simpler and using less materials. The desired end result is always 'APPEARANCE that increases sales'.

In 1959 McCobb designed a new line of residential dinnerware and a new line of restaurant ware for Jackson. The "Contempri" line of dinnerware was produced in Japan, while the restaurant ware was made in Falls Creek, PA.

Paul McCobb's new shapes eliminated the flat rims that had been traditional features on restaurant ware. This resulted in a savings of raw material while updating the look of the shapes.

In my opinion the most distinctive items in the Paul McCobb design are the oval platter-like pieces with projecting tab handles. Based on the examples shown in WorthPoint these platters were made in five sizes, approximately 7 1/4" x 5 1/4", 8 1/2" x 5 1/2", 10 1/2" x 7 1/4", 11 3/4" x 8 1/2", and 13" x 9 1/2". This shape was copyrighted and the backstamps contain a replica of Paul McCobb's signature. This platter-like shape gave Jackson an attention-getting item that stood out from anything that the competitors had to offer and led to sales in the emerging casual dining market. In some cases, this shape was used in place of the traditional round plate for serving an entire entree. The tabs made it easier for servers to handle hot items.

The "Contempri" dinnerware included this shape, but it has an added upward angle at the rim that was not used on the restaurant ware, because it would chip in food service usage.

McCobb designed a number of borders for use on his new shapes, and the Jackson in-house designers probably added others, but I don't know who did what. Several of the patterns are shown in IDwiki. Some patterns contain only lines or solid color borders. In

some cases older traditional patterns were used as part of an order that included the older shapes.

A 1970 advertisement in Interiors magazine indicates that Paul McCobb had been replaced by Designer David T. Williams, who had just completed their "Premier Collection".

Next time we will explore how this platter shape was used with airbrushed artwork, and later see examples of custom crested pieces.

Information sources. RWCN IDwiki. Vintage Modern Maine, website. Paul McCobb Studios, website. Wikipedia. eBay. WorthPoint. AOL image search. Google image search.



*Paul McCobb*



Some of the shapes designed by Paul McCobb



Backstamp on "Carousel" pattern with Paul McCobb signature



1974 backstamp with indication that shape was copyrighted





“Contempri” dinnerware with angled rim edge not used on the restaurant ware



“Radiate” pattern border



Cups and saucers in “Radiate” pattern



“Carousel” pattern border





Border of triangle shapes



Another unidentified pattern



Unidentified pattern of radiating lines



Unidentified design incorporating blue circles





“Vendome” pattern in reverse on blue border



“Vendome” in pink



“Vendome” in mustard yellow



Single black line border





Two red lines border.



Black Greek Key border applied on coin gold for an upscale look





Solid green border with added dark lines at rim and verge



Stylized flower and vine border on more recent speckled china



Traditional hummingbird design used for order that included more traditional shape pieces



“Blue Willow” goes pink in border originally designed for traditional platters



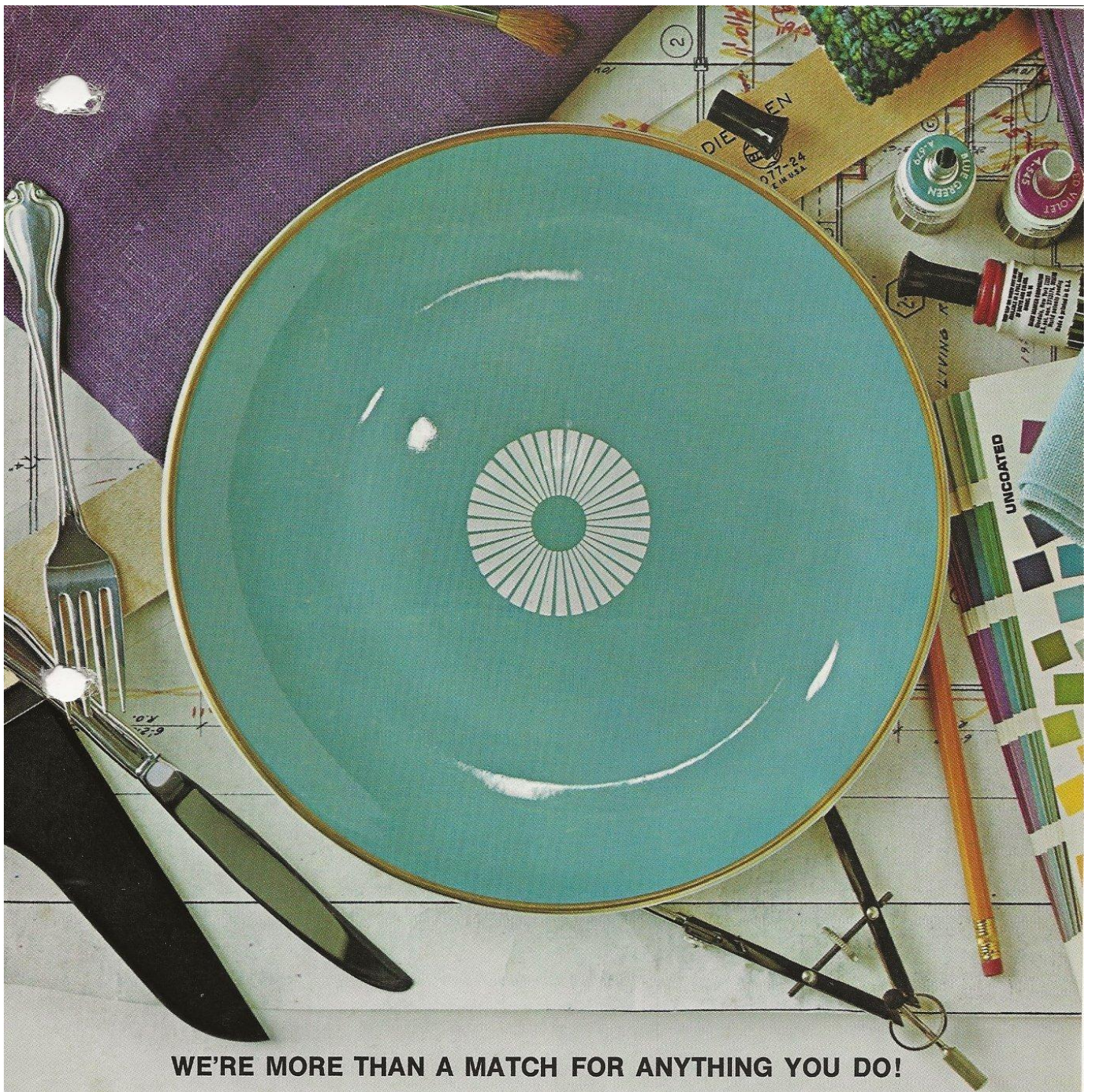


12 3/4" platter with traditional red scroll transfer design

Illustration on following page:

1970 full page Jackson China advertisement from ***Interiors*** magazine





## WE'RE MORE THAN A MATCH FOR ANYTHING YOU DO!

You design the space, you decide on the colors. You select the materials.

You carefully choose the carpeting, the draperies, the tables, the chairs, the tablecloths, napkins, silverware.

You devote yourself...your taste and skills towards one goal.

You design a restaurant, hotel or club with an eye to the total design effect.

We're here to help. Jackson China.

We're here because we have the china to mix, to match, to blend, to coordinate with your total design...your creation.

Towards that end we commissioned Paul McCobb and now David T. Williams to design for Jackson with the interior decorator in mind.

The 1970 Williams Premier Collection of 15 patterns incorporates the designer's "environmental" or "total" design philosophy. The 7 crisp, clear colors plus black "marry" easily with each other. To achieve varying effects, colors can be freely interchanged.

There are probably many patterns in the Jackson line that will suit your unique

needs. However, if you require a particular pattern such as crest, crown, a coat-of-arms or anything out of your imagination, we'll make it for you.

When you need quality and craftsmanship plus unique design harmony, come to Jackson.

We'll more than match anything you do.

For information and free color catalogue write or call Jackson China Company, 212 Fifth Avenue, N.Y., N.Y. 10010. (212) OR 9-5678.

**Jackson**  
CHINA

1970



The following are the responses to this posting

**Lisa Hutton**

Thanks for this, Larry - I didn't know what the differences were between the residential and commercial versions of these designs. That helps a lot! Do you know if the backstamp on the residential wares said Japan?

**Rob Kenney**

**Lisa Hutton** they do indeed

**Susan Phillips**

Fantastic write up, Larry! Another shape that's also very distinctive to McCobb is the sugar bowl. Here's an example on eBay now: <https://www.ebay.com/itm/PAUL-McCOBB-Mid-Century-Modern-COVERED-SUGAR-BOWL-w-LID-Blue-Band-Jackson-China/133151455026?hash...>

**[eBay link now dead]**

**Roland S. Burritt**

I like the McCobb platters but unfortunately only ever seem to find them in plain beige 🙄

**Tom Wills**

I don't seem to have problems finding the platters in my area but the sugar bowls are seldom found and lids often missing

**Tom Wills**

Thanks for the great write up on Jackson China this Jackson designer

**Terri Thompson**

There is someone in the mod century group. Who is writing a book on Jackson and McCobb designs specifically. Not for Jackson and Not for McCobb only.

**Terri Thompson**

Silverstein, J.

**Jesse James Schroeder**

Found one of the smallest plates yesterday and posted to group



**Jesse James Schroeder**

