

# patterns of beauty

Rare ceramics reflect the romance of 19th-century England

BY KATHLEEN N. WEBBER  
PHOTOS BY GEORGE ROSS

**COLLECTORS:** Mari Ann and Michael Maher of West Orange

**WHAT THEY COLLECT:** Antique brown-and-white transferware: ceramics decorated with images first engraved on copper plates, then transferred to paper and then to the surface of the item.

**ORIGINS:** First manufactured in England in the 1750s, transferware was produced by a variety of companies including Staffordshire and Wedgwood.

**YEARS COLLECTING:** 10

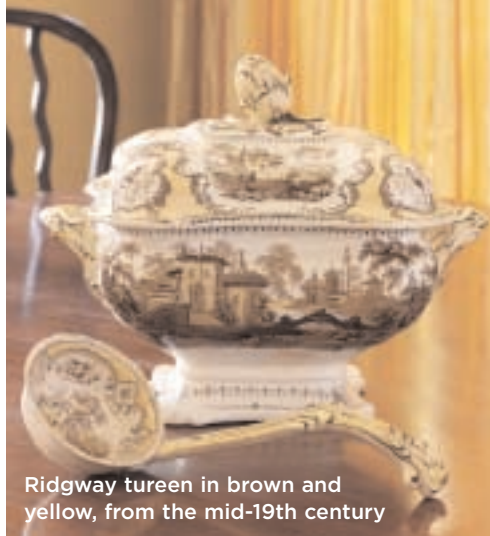
**NUMBER OF PIECES:** "I'd be embarrassed to say," Mari Ann confesses.

**ONE REASON THEY LIKE COLLECTING TRANSFERWARE:** The challenge. The brown-and-white pattern is hard to find.

**ANOTHER THING THAT APPEALS TO THEM:** "I use it all the time," Mari Ann says. "We have 35 platters hanging on the kitchen wall, and I don't hesitate to take them down for dinner parties."

**FAVORITE FIND:** A brown-and-yellow soup tureen (top left). "Amazingly, it has the original ladle," Michael says. "We use many of our pieces, but not this one."

**SOME OF THE ODDEST PLACES THEY'VE FOUND ITEMS:** "Once I actually stumbled upon a piece in a client's bathroom," says Mari Ann, a designer. "I've found things at tag sales and the worst antique shops in the world. I even discovered two pieces in a back-alley shop in Mumbai, India. I carried them through five other cities home to the U.S. because I didn't want to ship them."



Ridgway tureen in brown and yellow, from the mid-19th century



Oblong teapot with dotted handle



Creamer in trailing roses pattern



Pitcher in Greek pattern with roses, circa 1850



Serving bowl, circa 1840