

Industrial Seating

The three stools illustrated in Fig 1 are from a large number which came on the market in the Midlands in 1963. Associated with them were a number of turntables of the type used by decorators in the potteries, and the fact that these are from a pottery is confirmed by a brand on one, T F & S Ltd (Fig 2).

According to Jewitt, writing in 1883, 'In 1877 Thomas Forrester commenced business at a small manufactory in High Street and, his business rapidly increasing, took other additional premises in Church Street. These he shortly afterwards pulled down, and built upon their site a new manufactory which he completed by 1879.' The site was in Longton, Staffordshire. In 1883 Thomas Forrester took his



Fig 1. Three stools from Thomas Forrester's pottery at Longton.

two sons into partnership and the firm became Forrester & Sons. Jewitt records at that time that 'upwards of 400 hands are employed.'¹ The pottery was originally known as Church Street Maiolica Works but by the time of its closure in 1959 it was known as the Phoenix Pottery. Marks on existing wares indicate that the style T F & S Ltd was adopted after 1891.

The stools themselves, of which more than 200 survived, nearly all had the same seat shape as shown, the overall width being 13½in and thickness 1½in. The legs are rectangular in section, 1½in by 1¼in. Apart from some repairs the timber is ash. The splay of the legs varied, as did the height. The majority were between 18in and 21in, the tallest recorded being 25½in. A small number were much lower.

These seats with shared characteristics not seen on other three-legged stools must have been made after about 1880. It would be interesting to know if the pattern corresponds with other examples from the potteries.

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¹ Llewellyn Jewitt, *The Ceramic Art of Great Britain*, second ed., London, 1883.



Fig 2. Detail showing the stamp, T F & S Ltd.