DOLL

And

PLAYTHINGS

MARKS

The following are the backstamps of dolls and toys as recorded in NIPPON: Dolls & Playthings by Joan F. Van Patten & Linda Lau, published in 2001 by Collector Books. It is an excellent book and everyone should have it in their collection.

All-Bisque Doll Marks

This listing of marks provides those marks that to date we have been able to document. There are likely all-bisque Nippon dolls that have different marks and mold numbers on them which we just have not documented yet. The majority of the marks on Nippon all-bisque dolls provide only the country of origin or a mold number. There is often some variation in the way the marks are incised, but in general they fall within the types of marks listed below. The marks on Nippon all-bisque dolls usually do not have any indication as to the maker or importer. The exception to this is the Louis Wolf & Company marks. Please note that some of these marks are hand-drawn and may differ slightly from the actual mark. At the end of the listing of marks we have provided pictures of the stickers found to date on Nippon dolls. A few of these stickers identify Morimura Brothers as the maker of the doll.

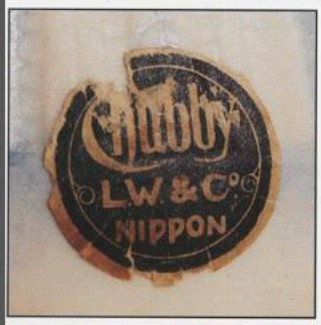
Marks: (AB = All-Bisque)

AB-1	**NIPPON**	incised on back or ink stamped on back or feet; ink colors usually purple, black, or blue
AB-2	**MADE IN NIPPON**	incised
AB-3	NIPPON	incised; N's are backwards
AB-4	NIPPON	incised; slightly curved
AB-5	**N I P P O N**	incised vertically down the back
AB-6	Nippon	incised in script
AB-7	Nippon	incised in script

AB-8	**PATENT** **NIPPON**	incised
AB-9	L W & CO. **NIPPON**	incised on Louis Wolf & Co. dolls
AB-10	L.W. CO **NIPPON**	incised on Louis Wolf & Co. dolls
AB-11	 **NIPPON**	incised on Louis Wolf & Co. dolls
AB-12	**BABY BUD** Nippon	incised; notice that "NIPPON" is in script going down the back of the shirt
AB-13	**NIPPON** **D**	incised
AB-14	**NIPPON** **84**	incised
AB-15	**NIPPON** **87**	incised
AB-16	**93** **NIPPON**	incised
AB-16	**NIPPON** **96**	incised
AB-18	**97** **NIPPON**	incised
AB-19	**98** **NIPPON**	incised
AB-20	**NIPPON**	incised

AB-21	**102** **NIPPON**	incised	AB-25	**144** **NIPPON**	incised
AB-22	**103** **NIPPON**	incised	AB-26	**221** **NIPPON**	incised
AB-23	**NIPPON** **113**	incised	AB-27	**222** **NIPPON**	incised
AB-24	**NIPPON** **122**	incised			

Stickers



Sticker found on the feet of Nippon Kewpies.

KEWPIE
REG. U.S.
PAT OFF.

CUTIE
NIP PON

MB
BABY
DARLING

MB
BABY
BELLE

SUNNY

CHO-CHO SAN
MB

THURSDAY'S
CHILD.
MB

FRIDAY'S
CHILD.

FIRST PRIZE

Bisque-Head Doll Marks with No Symbols

This listing provides those marks that to date we have been able to document. There are likely Nippon dolls that have different marks and mold numbers on them; we just have not documented them yet. All of these marks provide the country of origin and some provide a mold number. None of the marks have any indication as to the maker or importer.

Letters and/or numbers are often used to indicate the mold type or the size. Many times it is hard to decipher the exact letter or number on the doll because the mark is so worn or because of the way the letters or numbers were formed. For example, a B is sometimes confused with an 8. Given that, we have attempted to be as correct as possible.

Marks: (BH = Bisque Head, no symbol)

BH-1	**NIPPON**	incised on the back of the head or shoulderplate
BH-2	*Nippon*	incised on back of shoulderplate
BH-3	**PATENT NO. 30441 NIPPON**	incised on back of shoulderplate
BH-4	Ⓗ **NIPPON**	incised
BH-5	**2 NIPPON**	incised
BH-6	**3 NIPPON**	incised; found on two different dolls
BH-7	**NIPPON 20**	incised
BH-8	**NIPPON 21**	incised
BH-9	**NIPPON 22**	incised
BH-10	**NIPPON 23**	incised
BH-11	**NIPPON 24**	incised
BH-12	**No. 32 NIPPON**	incised

Bisque-Head Dolls

BH-13	**NIPPON 50**	incised
BH-14	**NIPPON 77**	incised
BH-15	**NIPPON 80**	incised
BH-16	**NIPPON 81**	incised
BH-17	**NIPPON 82**	incised
BH-18	**NIPPON 86**	incised
BH-19	**NIPPON 88**	incised
BH-20	**NIPPON 89**	incised
BH-21	**A 3 NIPPON**	incised
BH-22	**A 13 NIPPON**	incised
BH-23	**NIPPON B1**	incised
BH-24	**NIPPON B5**	incised; found on two different dolls
BH-25	**NIPPON B10**	incised
BH-26	**NIPPON B11**	incised
BH-27	**C 02 NIPPON**	incised
BH-28	**X NIPPON**	incised
BH-29	**NIPPON 0**	incised

Sticker:

Deciphering Nippon Bisque-Head Doll Marks

Most Nippon doll manufacturers used some type of letters or numbers to designate the particular doll type (socket head or shoulderplate), mold (breather, pouty, dolly-face, etc.), and size of the doll. Unfortunately, none of this is documented anywhere, and it's only when a large collection of dolls is gathered that it's possible to make some sense of these marks. Even then, there are inconsistencies and variations that make it difficult to provide collectors with a completely accurate listing of the marks. Sometimes there are just not enough dolls found with a particular mark to understand the meaning of the mark; sometimes the mark on the doll is so light that we can't fully recognize the marking. We have provided as much information as we currently have on the marks. No doubt there are other marks yet to be discovered, and other information about the marks to be found. This listing is merely a starting point for collectors as to the marks that were used on Nippon bisque-head dolls.

The marks are normally found on the back of the head (sometimes on the neck) or the back of the shoulderplate. The marks are often not uniform even for those used by the same maker or distributor for identical dolls. As you go through this listing, you will see that there are instances where two different dolls have the same mark.

Letters and/or numbers are often used to indicate the size and/or mold type. Many times it is hard to decipher the exact letter or number on the doll because the mark is so worn or because of the way the letters or numbers were formed. For example, a 1 is sometimes confused with a 7 or a 6 is confused with a 0. Small sizes are often indicated by a fraction with a zero denominator such as ⅜ or ⅘. The higher the numerator, the smaller the doll. Therefore, ⅘ is a smaller doll than ⅜. Morimura Brothers used this type of size identification on several of their molds.

The symbols may represent the manufacturer, importer, or even the owner of the mold. For bisque-head dolls there were two types of molds — the master mold and the pouring mold. The master mold often belonged to either the importer or buyer of the doll head. For example, it's likely that Horsman owned the molds for their line of bisque-head dolls. When they contracted with a Japanese firm to make the heads, it was the Horsman mark that went on the head. The pouring mold was made from the master mold. The first heads out of the mold were more sharply defined than the later heads, which is why some of the marks are very clear and others are almost obliterated. The pouring mold could be used about 50 times and then a new one had to be made.

Marks: (BHS = Bisque Head with Symbol)

Note: For each mark we have included an example of only one size. In the narrative we provide information as to the different production sizes of the dolls. Also, these marks are hand-drawn and may differ slightly from the actual mark.

MORIMURA BROTHERS

Because Morimura Brothers produced a lot of dolls, it is a little easier to decipher some of their marks. They normally used their spider symbol on their dolls that makes it easier for collectors to identify them. The top number is always the mold number, and the bottom number is always the size number. They marked their dolls "JAPAN" instead of "NIPPON" even though their dolls were all made during the Nippon era.

BHS-1

Mold number 1 is for Morimura Brothers Full Jointed Doll, a dolly-faced child doll on composition body. It comes in 16 sizes — ⅘, ⅗, ⅖, ⅕, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11. ⅘ is the smallest and 11 is the largest. It is a commonly found mold.

BHS-2

Mold number 2 is for Morimura Brothers Baby Ella doll, a character baby on a composition body. It was produced in sizes ⅘ through 12 for the glass eye version. There is a painted eye version that was not made in as many sizes. It is a commonly found mold.

BHS-3

3 - 4/0

through

3 - 12

This mark shows an inconsistency in the way Morimura Brothers marked their dolls as this mark does not have their symbol on it. We have been able to determine this mark because we have a doll with its original Morimura Brothers tag that bears this mark. We know that Morimura Brothers was producing a solid dome head character baby as early as 1917 and they continued to advertise this doll up through 1921 yet none has turned up with the Morimura Brothers mark on them.

The mold number 3 is for their My Darling doll, a solid dome head character baby. The 3 is followed by a dash which is then followed by the size number. It probably came in sizes 4/0 through 12 and was made with either glass or painted eyes.

With no manufacturer's symbol on it, these dolls are often misidentified as German dolls which speaks volumes for their quality. However, it is possible that German companies used this same type of marking on their dolls.

Bisque-Head Dolls

BHS-4

Mold number 4 is a character baby on a composition body. It may have been made in sizes 1 through 12 but not all have been documented. This is one of the harder Morimura Brothers mold numbers to find.

BHS-5

Mold number 5 is for Morimura Brothers shoulderplate dolly-faced doll on an imitation kid (kidaline) body. The doll is a lot like their Full Jointed Doll, and they usually advertised this doll with the Full Jointed Doll. This shoulderplate doll does not come in as many sizes as the Full Jointed Doll, but it is a commonly found mold.

BHS-6

Mold number 6 is for a character baby with Asian features. It is on a composition body. This is a rare mold number, and we have only been able to document the size 1 in this doll.

BHS-7

Mold number 8 is for a character baby on a composition body. It is a hard to find mold number. The probable sizes are 1 through 12, but we have not been able document all of them.

BHS-8

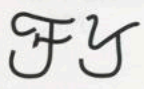
Mold number 22 is for a character baby on a composition body. This mark shows up frequently on Morimura Brothers dolls and appears to have been made in the same sizes as mold number 2 (⅝ through 12). Like mold number 2, it also was produced in both a glass eye and painted eye version.

BHS-9

Mold number 32 is for a character baby on a composition body. This is a hard to find mold number, and only the size 3 has been documented.

FY

BHS-10



The FY mark is often attributed to Yamato Importing, and we have no information to either validate or dispute that. We do know that Foulds and Freure was importing these dolls as early as 1917. There is sometimes a period after the F and the Y. The mold number identifies both the type of doll and the size. For instance, 401 is the smallest size of the dolly-faced child doll; 400 identifies it as the dolly-faced doll and 1 is the size. The FY with no mold number has been found on a 13" character baby with a 5-piece composition baby body.

BHS-11

The 100 series is found on a solid dome head "breather" character baby. It was probably made in six sizes, 101 through 106.

BHS-12

The 200 series is found on a character baby. It was probably made in six sizes, 201 through 206.

BHS-13

The 300 series is the much sought after "pouty"/character baby. It is a rare doll, probably made in six sizes, 301 through 306.

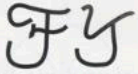
BHS-14

The 400 series is a dolly-faced child doll on a composition body. This is a commonly found mold number and was made in six sizes, 401 through 406.

BHS-15

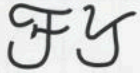
The 500 series is a solid dome head character baby. It is a commonly found mold number and was probably made in six sizes 501 through 506.

BHS-16



The 600 series is a character baby. It was probably made in sizes 601 through 606.

BHS-17



The 1600 series is for a shoulderplate child doll on a cloth body. We have been able to document four sizes, 1601 through 1604.

SCROLLED FY

BHS-18

The Scrolled FY mark has also been attributed to Yamato Importing and, again, we have no information to verify or dispute that. We do know that the Scrolled FY mark can be found on some of the same molds as the FY mark, so there was definitely some relationship between the two marks.

For some reason the Scrolled FY mark is followed by a 5-digit number, usually No. 76018. We don't know what that number is meant to identify, maybe a patent number or some type of importer's number.

The Scrolled FY with no mold number has been found on a 10" dolly-faced child doll on a toddler body.

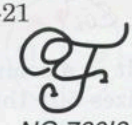
BHS-19

This mold number has been found on a 15" character baby.

BHS-20

This mold number has been found on a 19½" character baby.

BHS-21



This mold number has been found on a 15" character baby.

BHS-22

NO 760I8
NIPPON
20/0

This mold number has been found on an 11" solid domehead breather character baby. It is the same mold as the FY 100 series.

BHS-23

NO 760I8
103
NIPPON

The 100 series is a solid dome head breather character baby; it is the same mold as the FY 100 series and was probably made in six sizes, 101 through 106.

BHS-24

NO 760I8
NIPPON
301

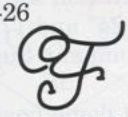
The 300 series is a character face doll on a composition body. We have not documented any other dolls with this mark.

BHS-25

NO 760I8
NIPPON
405

The 400 series is a dolly-faced child doll on a composition body. This is a commonly found mold number and was probably made in six sizes, 401 through 406. This is the same mold as the FY 400 series. Note: It is possible to find this mark on two different dolly-faced dolls, indicating that sometime during its production they changed the sculpture of the mold.

BHS-26



NO 760I8
NIPPON
502

The 500 series is a solid dome head character baby. It is a commonly found mold number and was probably made in six sizes, 501 through 506. It is the same mold as the FY 500 series.

BHS-27

NO 760I8
NIPPON
60I

The 600 series is for a character baby. It was probably made in six sizes, 601 through 606. It is the same mold as the FY 600 series.

BHS-28

This 900 series is for a character baby. it was probably made in six sizes 901 through 906. It is a scarce mold.

BHS-29

The 2000 series is for a dolly-face child doll on a composition body. It is a harder to find mold number than the 400 series. It was probably made in 4 sizes, 2001 through 2004.

BHS-30

BHS-31

BHS-32

RE IN A DIAMOND
BE IN A DIAMOND

The RE in a Diamond mark usually uses a letter to denote the type of doll and a number to denote the size. The mark can be found with either NIPPON or MADE IN NIPPON. This country designation does not seem to make any difference in the appearance, quality, or mold of the doll. Sometimes there are lines through the RE or there is a mark with the RE but no diamond. It is not clear if this variation makes any difference in the mold or quality of the doll.

Also found are dolls bearing a BE in a Diamond mark. These appear to be the same molds as the RE in a Diamond dolls. It is not known why some are marked RE and some are marked BE, but the BE mark is scarce.

The RE in a Diamond with no mold number is found on several different dolls:

1) a shoulderplate dolly-faced child doll on an imitation kid body. This doll has been found in several sizes including 24" and 17" tall; the 17" doll has been found with a Louis Wolf & Company Superba sticker on it.

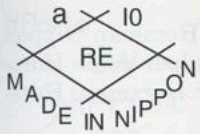
2) a 12" solid dome head character baby. This solid dome head is a different mold than the M series solid dome head.

3) an 8" dolly-faced child doll on toddler body.

4) a 30" show doll in the B series (Hilda look alike) mold.

BHS-33

The A series is the mold letter for a character baby on a composition body. It was probably made in 10 sizes with size 1 being the smallest and size 10 being the largest. Occasionally the A has a period behind it or the A is lower case. This is one of the more commonly found RE in a Diamond molds.

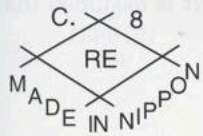


In some sizes this mold appears to be a copy of the Kammer and Reinhardt 126 mold. It can be found with either the RE or BE in a Diamond mark.

BHS-34

The B series is the mold letter for a character baby on a composition body. It was probably made in 10 sizes with size 1 being the smallest and size 10 being the largest. This mold is considered to be the Nippon version of the Kestner Hilda. It was a popular doll and even today is fairly easy to find. It can be found with either the RE or BE in a Diamond mark.

BHS-35

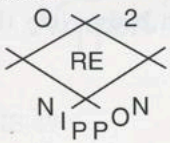


The C series is the mold letter for a character baby on a composition body. It was probably made in multiple sizes but not enough of them have been found to document this. It is a hard to find mold.

BHS-36

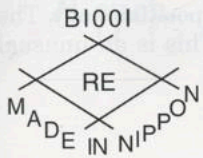
The M series is the mold letter for a solid dome head character baby on a composition body. The number denotes the total height of the doll in inches. Therefore, a 16 indicates the doll is 16" tall. It was made in at least 4 sizes — 16", 18", 20", and 22".

BHS-37



The O series is the mold letter for a dolly-faced child doll on a composition body. It was probably made in five sizes with 1 being the smallest and 5 being the largest.

BHS-38



This mark is found on three different RE in a Diamond dolls:

1) a 15" character baby on a 5-piece composition body.
2) a 24" dolly-faced child doll on a composition body.
3) a 15" dolly-faced shoulderplate doll an on imitation kid body.

Since this mold number is completely different from the other RE in a Diamond marks, we are not sure why this mark was used. It could have been used for a particular line of dolls or for a particular store.

HORSMAN

There are several different marks used on the Horsman Nippon dolls. This mark is similar to the one used on the Fulper-made Horsman dolls. We do not know who made these dolls for Horsman. Horsman Nippon dolls are scarce.

BHS-39

1) No. 1 through No. 4 is for a character baby on a composition body. No. 1 is the smallest in the series and No. 4 is the largest.

BHS-40

2) B.9 is for a character baby on a composition body. It is assumed that other sizes were made.

BHS-41

3) No. 11 is a dolly-faced child doll on a composition body. It is assumed that various sizes were made.

BHS-42

This mark is for a character baby on a composition body. Note that "NIPPON" is misspelled.

BHS-43

This mark is found on a character head doll on a composition body. The top number or letters of the mark are unreadable. This is an unusual Horsman mark. Note that the "N" is backwards.

JW

BHS-44

JW
NIPPON
603

The JW mark is found on character head dolls with composition bodies. The only documented mold number is the 600 series with 601 being the smallest and 606 being the largest. It is a scarce mold mark.

H IN A DIAMOND

BHS-45

The H in a Diamond mark is found on a character head doll with a toddler body. It is assumed that the 14 indicates the size and B is the mold. However, no other examples of this doll have been documented. It is a rare mark. It is not known what the P.4 stands for.

HS IN AN OVAL

The HS in an Oval mark is sometimes attributed to Herman Steiner, a German doll maker, because it is very similar to a mark used by his firm. This may not be the case though, since most doll references put his firm as being in business from 1921 – 1925. It could be that the Japanese were copying the SH from the Simon & Halbig trademark. Notice how the word "NIPPON" is done in script.

BHS-46

The A series is a character baby on a composition body. The number indicates the height of the doll in inches. This mold was probably made in five sizes, 10", 12", 14", 16", and 18".

BHS-47

The C series is a character baby on a composition body. The number indicates the height of the doll in inches. We did not have enough dolls to know the sizes it was made in. It is harder to find than the A series.

It is likely there was also a B series but we have no documentation on this.

KKS IN A STAR

The KKS in a Star mark is done in a similar manner to the HS in an Oval mark. Notice that both marks have the word "NIPPON" in script. This star is the same as the star in the Kammer & Reinhardt, and it may be that the Japanese copied their mark. This is a rare mark.

BHS-48

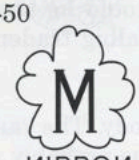
The 3000 series is a character baby on a composition body. It is assumed that the 3 indicates the size but not enough dolls have been found to verify this. It is not known what the P.47 stands for.

BHS-49

The 4000 series is a character baby on a composition body. It is assumed that the 3 indicates the size but not enough dolls have been found to verify this. It is not known what the P.53 stands for.

M IN A BLOSSOM

BHS-50



The M in the Blossom mark has been attributed to Morimura Brothers since they used a similar mark on their porcelain products. We have not been able to verify this. Note that the "N" is backwards.

The M in the Blossom mark with no mold number is found on a solid domehead character doll with closed smiling mouth, googly eyes, and a toddler composition body. It is a rare mold.

BHS-51

This M in the Blossom mark with a number below the word "NIPPON" has been found on several sizes of dolly-faced child dolls. Two of the numbers found on this mark are 12 and 18. The number appears to be an indication of the size, but it does not correlate to the overall height of the doll in inches. It may be the height of the doll's composition body.

BHS-52

This M in the Blossom mark is found on a dolly-faced doll with a composition body. It is not clear what the number stands for.

BHS-53

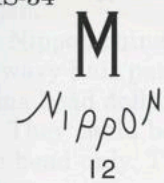
This M in the Blossom mark with a letter and/or number below the trademark is found on two completely different types of dolls:

1) a dolly-faced child doll with a composition body. It is not clear what the letter and number stand for.

2) a solid dome head character doll with a closed smiling mouth; the 12 may stand for the height of the doll. It is a rare mold.

M

BHS-54



The M mark may be related to the M in the Blossom mark. Both M's are done in the same style. Only one doll has been documented with the mark, a character doll on a composition body. The 12 stands for the height of the doll. Doll has been found in two sizes — 10" and 12."

M IN A CIRCLE

The M in the Circle mark is similar in design to the Horsman marks.

BHS-56

The E24 is for a dolly-faced child doll on a composition body. The 24 does not correlate to the height of the doll as this mark is found on dolls 28 inches in height. This doll was made in other sizes. It is a rare mold.

BHS-57

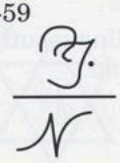
The W10 is for a 10" character baby on a composition baby body. The 10 appears to be the height of the doll in inches. It is not known if other sizes were made. It is a rare mold.

BHS-58

OTHER

This mark does not include the name of the country that made the doll, but it is generally thought to be made in Japan. The country of origin designation must have been on a tag or sticker attached to the doll. This mark usually has a mold number under it.

BHS-59



This mark does not include the name of the country that made the doll, but the symbol is similar to the Scrolled FY. The N may stand for Nippon.

Celluloid Doll and Toy Marks

The marks found on the back of Nippon celluloid dolls and toys are varied and many. This listing is only those marks we have been able to document. No doubt there are many other marks that were used on Nippon celluloid dolls and toys that we have not yet documented. Where possible, we have identified the company that the mark belongs to but in most cases this information is just not available. Please note that many of these marks are hand-drawn and may differ slightly from the actual mark. At the end of this listing we have provided a picture of the stickers that have been documented to date on Nippon celluloid dolls and toys.

Marks: (CL = Celluloid)

CL-1 **NIPPON** — molded on the back or in ink on the back

CL-2 **MADE IN NIPPON** or **MADE IN NIPPON** — molded on back

CL-3

found on Morimura Brothers Dolly on bottom of feet

CL-4

molded; often found on Kewpies

CL-5

molded

CL-6

molded

CL-7

molded

CL-8

molded; mark of Yoshino Sangyo

CL-9

molded

CL-10

molded; mark of Ando Togoro, Tokyo, Japan

CL-11

molded

CL-12

molded

CL-13

molded

CL-14

molded

CL-15

molded; found on Haber Brothers Best Baby

CL-16

molded; mark of Sekiguchi Co. Ltd., Tokyo, Japan

CL-17

molded

CL-18

molded; mark of Aiba Kintoro, Marugane, Tokyo, Japan

CL-19

molded

CL-20

molded

CL-21

molded

CL-22

molded

CL-23

molded

CL-24

molded

Porcelain Backstamps

This listing provides those backstamps that, to date, we have been able to document on Nippon children's porcelain items. Because of the number of porcelain backstamps used during the Nippon era, there are likely children's porcelain items that have other backstamps that we have not yet documented. Please note that some of these backstamps were hand-drawn and may differ slightly from the actual backstamp.

(POR = Porcelain)

POR-1 **NIPPON** Stamped on items; found primarily in black but also blue and red.

POR-2

Crown (pointed), hand painted Nippon; found in green and blue.

POR-3

Crown (square), hand painted Nippon; found in green and green with red.

POR-4

M-in-wreath, hand-painted Nippon; M stands for the importer, Morimura Bros.; found in green, blue, magenta, and gold; used since 1911; it is a backstamp of the Noritake Company.

POR-5

Maple leaf Nippon; found in green, blue, and magenta; dates back to 1891; used by Morimura Brothers, forerunner to the Noritake Co.

Porcelain Backstamps

POR-6

Noritake M-in-wreath Nippon; M stands for the importer, Morimura Bros.; found in green, blue, and magenta; used since 1912; it is a backstamp of the Noritake Co.

POR-7

Pagoda hand-painted Nippon.

POR-8

Rising Sun Nippon; used since 1911; it is a backstamp of the Noritake Co.

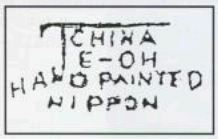
POR-9

Torii hand-painted Nippon.

POR-10

Elite hand-painted Nippon.

POR-11



China E-OH hand-painted Nippon; found in blue and green.

POR-12

Cherry blossom hand-painted Nippon; found in blue, green, and magenta.

POR-13

RC Noritake Nippon hand painted; found in green and blue; RC stands for Royal Crockery (fine china). This mark has been in existence since 1911.

POR-14

Noritake Nippon, found in green, blue, and magenta. Mark dates from 1911; used on blank pieces (undecorated) of Nippon.