

Phase I: Assembling evidence to support the attribution of pieces of yellow transferware on brown earthenware to specific Staffordshire manufacturers.

By Dr. Jewell Lorenz Dunn

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INTRODUCTION

In 2021, I purchased a Yellow Printed Brownware (YPB) jug with a Chinoiserie influence. That put me on a quest to find out more about its origins. A lot of information I found seemed to come from the same source, the 1907 Willaim Turner book on transfer printing. His information was replicated several times in other publications. This study will reveal an earlier source and more questions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I want to take this opportunity to thank the Gladys Richards Grant Program for selecting my topic of study. I want to thank the many people who contributed to my study but are too numerous to list! A special nod to Connie Roger for giving me her blessing before she passed to continue the research on YPB.

MY TWO THEORIES

My first theory is the Staffordshire region of England was a more prolific origin of Yellow Printed Brownware than originally thought. My second theory is that Williams Turner's 1907 book was not the first publication to incorrectly introduce YPB as *Portobello Ware*. I believe the tea bowl located in the British Museum, catalogued by Hobson in 1903 is the first notation of a *Portobello Ware* piece.

DISCUSSION OF THE THOMAS HARLEY MUG

To prove my theory, I first selected the infamous mug to write about for two reasons. This mug is one of the first pieces referred to as *Portobello Ware* found in a commonly used reference book. The second reason, it was attributed to Thomas Harley. Using the mug, I could build on my theory with related pieces. While also, showing the importance of precisely matching engraving with both colors.

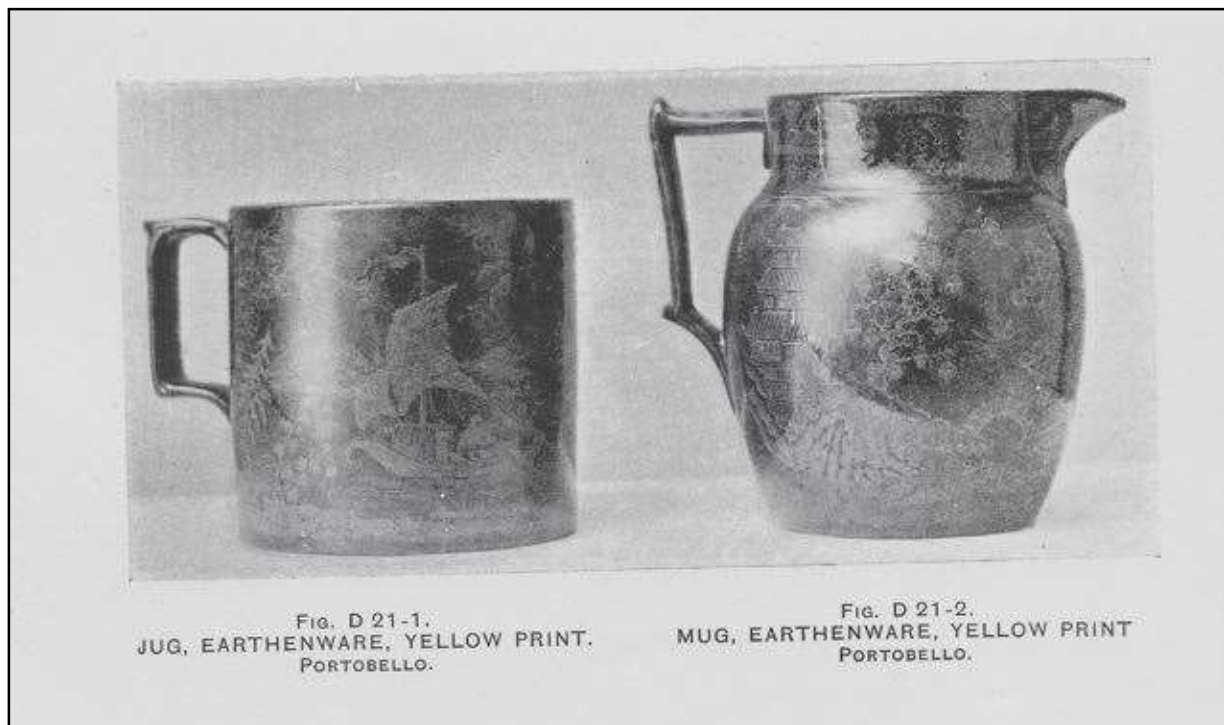


Figure 1 B & W mug photo from the 1907 Turner book attributed to Thomas Harley.

Figure 1 is the black and white photo of the mug from the 1907 book by William Turner.¹ The mug was from the Micah Salt Collection and its whereabouts to date is unknown. Efforts were made to contact a descendant, the William Salt Museum, a book dealer who specialized in Salt memorabilia, plus the Buxton Museum where he lived, but no lead turned up the mug. Wm. Turner had used multiple examples from the Salt collection for his book. Nowhere in Turner's book is there a real discussion on the YPB. Just a notation in the rear of the book found in the Illustrations (see appendix C). The fact that there was no discussion of *Portobello Ware* in his book troubled me. I wanted to know why Turner made the assumption. This revelation led to my

¹ William Turner. (1907). *Transfer Printing on Enamels, Porcelain and Pottery*. Photo, Figure D21-1, insert without page number.

discovery of the tea bowl from Hobson's 1903 reference book (see section on tea bowl).

A reprint of the same photo in figure 1 was used in G. Carroll Lindsay's 1962 periodical article on YPB.² Lindsay's use of the Turner book, along with two other early authors as his sources, perpetuated the use of the term *Portobello Ware* for describing YPB. G. Carroll Lindsey was a curator at the Smithsonian where he had access to the Miriam Frazee Belcher collection of YPB. Although there were just a few pieces of Scott Brothers in the Belcher collection, Lindsey's 1962 article made an incorrect assumption indicating the whole collection was made by the Scott Brothers. Thumbnail photos of the Belcher on-line Collection are seen in Appendix C.

The same photo of the mug in figure 1 was utilized again for the 1986 article by C. William-Woods.³ In his 1986 article William-Woods discounted the idea that the YPB was from *Portobello*. Although he had called out Lindsay for using the term *Portobello Ware*, since William-Woods's article was in a periodical, it was not seen by enough people. The periodical did not really inform the collecting community about what YPB really is/was. William Turner's book was still more well known and used as a major reference by collectors.

C. William-Woods referred to the infamous mug as the Sampan pattern and attributed it to Thomas Harley. The pattern is named Net Fishing, number 12023 in the Transferware Collectors Club Database. Figure 2 is of a blue and white mug of the Sampan/Net Fishing pattern from the collection of Dr. Jewell Lorenz Dunn. The photo was taken at approximately the same angle as the black and white image from figure 1. The mug's inside and outside border engraving of flowers and oval medallions are consistent with several other pieces which have been found in both colors.

² G. Carroll Lindsey, (1962). Scott Brothers Pottery of Portobello. *Antique magazine*, Vol. LXXXI (no. 5) pages 526-528.

³ C. William-Woods. (1986). Yellow Transfer Printed Brown-ware. *Antique Collecting magazine*, Vol. 20, Number 8, pages 31-35.



Figure 2 Mug Sampan/Setting Sail from the collection of Dr. Jewell Lorenz Dunn.



Figure 3 First view inside rim with medallion.

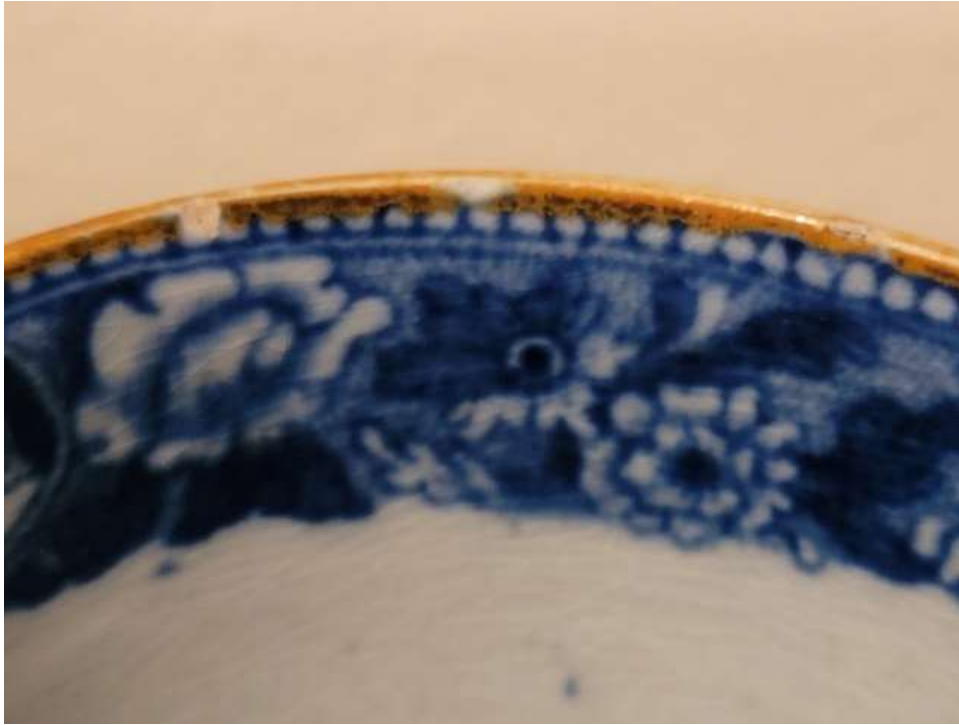


Figure 4 Second view inside rim of mug.



Figure 5 Sampan/Net Fishing Jug from the collection of Leslie Curnock.

Shown in figure 5 is an example of the Sampan/Net Fishing YPB jug. The engraving of the sampan boat, the split flag, and medallion on the two mugs and jug all match. The same jug is shown in lot 222 of the Battelle Collection, see appendix A. There is a tankard from the collection of Loren Zellar which matches the boat perfectly, but the outside border is a bit different.⁴ Other jugs in the Battelle and Belcher collection with the Eastern Tent, Eastern Garden Scene, Eastern Port, and Setting Sail patterns all have portions of the engraving which

⁴ Blue tankard, Sampan/Net Fishing from the collection of Loren Zellar on his web site; <https://zellercollecion.com>, mug section, number J112.

matched precisely.⁵ Please note, I believe there were several makers of the Eastern Port besides Thomas Harley.⁶ The jug in figure 6 is the Setting Sail TCC pattern number 12692 matches the middle jug in lot 231 of the Battelle Sale. The matching borders of these jugs are a strong indicator that Thomas Harley could be a candidate as the potter. There are two unmarked mugs shown in Volume II of the Blue and White Dictionary with the same matching border.⁷ More in-depth article on Thomas Harley will follow.



Figure 6 Setting Sail Jug from the collection of S. Jester matching jug in lot 231 of Battelle Collection.

⁵ Coysh and Henrywood. (1989) Dictionary Vol. 2, page 225, Mugs; the engraving of the inside rim and outside border match the mug exactly.

⁶ Connie Rogers. (2012). From Eastern Port to Eastern Garden Scene-the long way around: Or, It takes a village! Bulletin Issue: 2012 Vol. XIII, No. 1.

⁷ Coysh, A.W. and Henrywood, R.K. (1989) The Dictionary of Blue and White Printed Pottery 1780 -1880 Volume II, mugs, page 225.

DISSCUSSION OF TEA BOWL IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

The importance of the Carnation pattern tea bowl was twofold. It gives an earlier documentation of the term *Portobello Ware* used for YPB than Turner, and the tea bowl also has a very distinct characteristic of a possible Bovey Tracey origin. The on-line description came from the 1903 catalog by Robert Lockhart Hobson. Hobson's revelation of it being *Portobello Ware*. This revelation would predate the William Turner book by 3 or 4 years. Could this be where Turner got his information about the origins of *Portobello Ware*? Turner did list the Hobson catalog in his bibliography. But again, there is no discussion in Turner's book about *Portobello Ware* except one page in Appendix D.

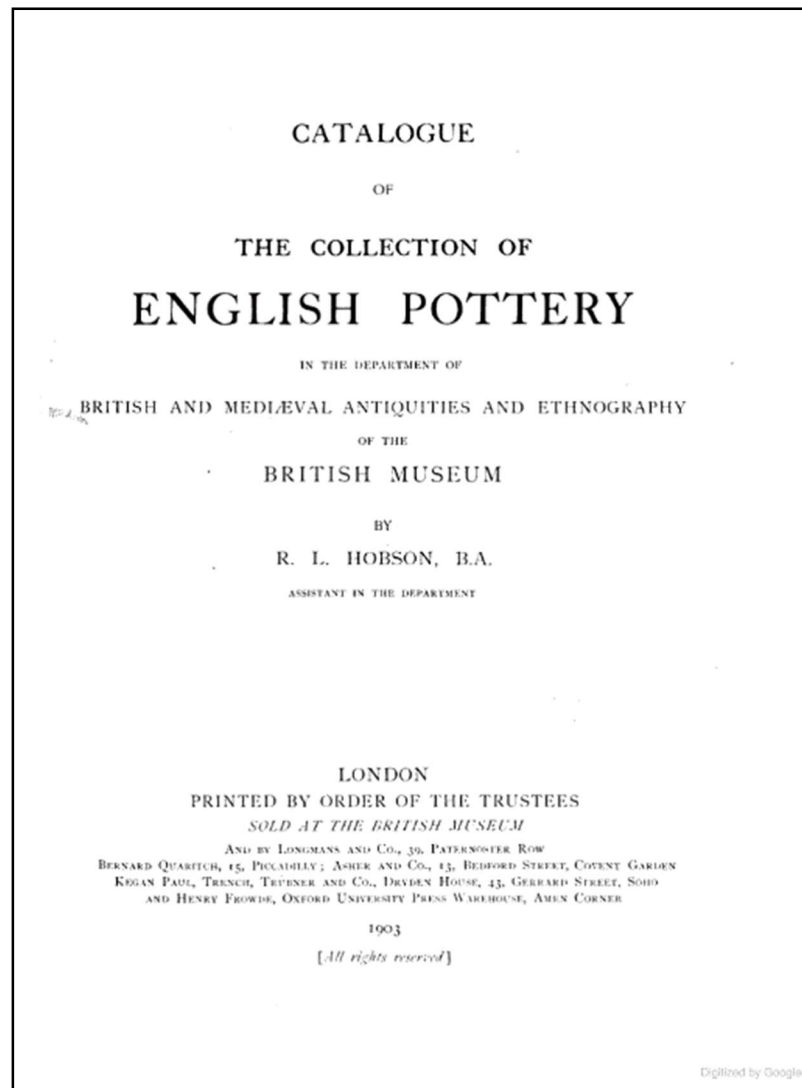


Figure 7 Catalogue of the collection of English Potter in the Department of British and Medieval and Ethnography of the British Museum by R.L. Hobson dated 1903.

MARKED EXAMPLES

291

R 38. BOWL, of dark red ware with transparent yellow lead glaze ; printed under the glaze in white with floral ornament ; oriental border.

Fig. 131.

H. 3.3 in. D. 2.1 in. Given by Miss Richards, 1887.

Made at Portobello.

R 39. PLATE, of fine white ware ; printed with classical design reserved on a black ground, two male figures with clubs, one offering the other a tally ; honeysuckle border on rim ; the whole coated with a light liver-coloured glaze.

D. 10.4 in.

Made at Portobello.



FIG. 131 (R 38).

Figure 8 Page 291 of Hobson catalog dated 1903, current on-line photo of tea bowl in next example.

Hobson worked at the British Museum from 1897 to 1938. Miss Richard donated the tea bowl by 1887. It is hard to speculate if the museum, or Miss Richards, determined the origin of the tea bowl. The museum was contacted, but they had no other background on the tea bowl.

Figure 9 and 10 screen shots taken from the British Museum web site below, show the tea bowl cataloged as *Portobello Ware*.⁸ The engraving both inside and out of the tea bowl match perfectly to two cups and saucers shown in figure 11 from the author's collection. The greenish black color is unique to shards found in Bovey Tracey. During archaeological digs at the sites in 1992-1993 show examples of the different color shards in the reference by Adams and Thomas.⁹ This evidence would make a strong argument to attribute the tea bowl to Bovey Tracey. The museum tea bowl uncovered another possible connection between the Bovey Tracey pottery and the Staffordshire area. There are two known creamers with the carnation pattern, including a matching Bovey Tracey border, but impressed stamp of Rogers.¹⁰ There has been speculation they could have been made by Joseph Rogers. The Adams and Thomas book stated that Joseph Rogers served as an apprenticeship in Staffordshire with John Harrison prior to his arrival at

⁸ Museum number 1887,1018.1, factory Scott, 18th C, Factory in Portobello Scotland, earthenware, 2.10 inches by 3.30 high. Catalogue of the collection of English Pottery in the department of British and Medieval Antiquities and Ethnography of the British Museum R38. Donated by Miss Richard 1887.

⁹ Adams, Brian and Thomas, Anthony. (1996). *A Potwork in Devonshire, the History and Products of the Bovey Tracey potteries 1795-1836*.

¹⁰ FOB Bulletin 115, page 11, 2002 by Trevor Kentish.

Bovey Tracey.¹¹ Joseph Rogers was only employed as a potter in the Bovey Tracey area for 2-3 years before he left the partnership in 1807 under strange circumstances.¹²

Previous articles in Friends of Blue bulletins shared research on the Rogers and the Bovey Tracey connection.¹³ Did Joseph Rogers bring the pattern with him and introduce a similar one at Bovey Tracey? Did Rogers take the key border with him after his departure from Bovey Tracey?

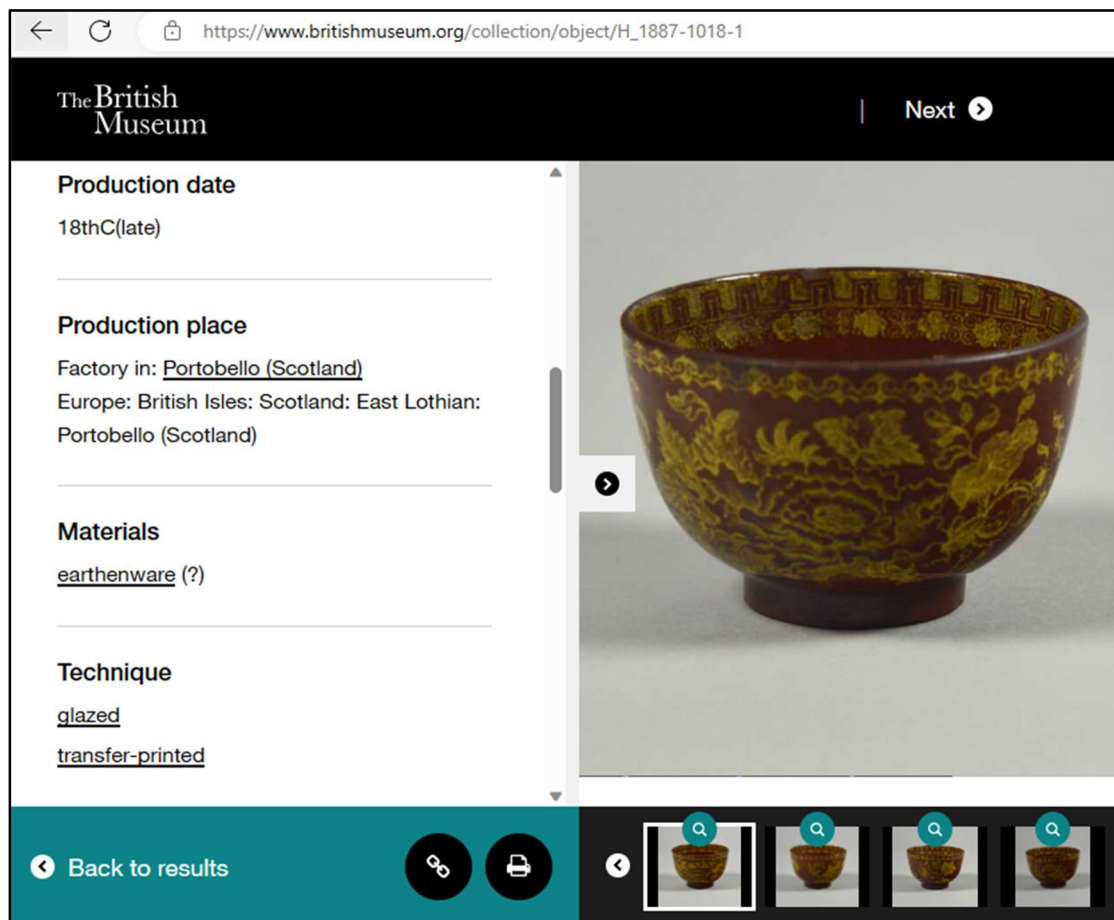


Figure 9 British Museum bowl cataloged as Portobello Ware.

¹¹ Friends of Blue (FOB) Bulletin 81, page 2 by Doreen Otto, FOB Bulletin 115, page 11, 2002 by Trevor Kentish, and FOB Bulletin 121, page 7, 2003 by Howard Mumford.

¹²Adams and Thomas. (1996). A Potwork in Devonshire, the History and Products of the Bovey Tracey potteries 1795-1836.

¹³ Friends of Blue (FOB) Bulletin 81, page 2 by Doreen Otto, FOB Bulletin 115, page 11, 2002 by Trevor Kentish, and FOB Bulletin 121, page 7, 2003 by Howard Mumford.

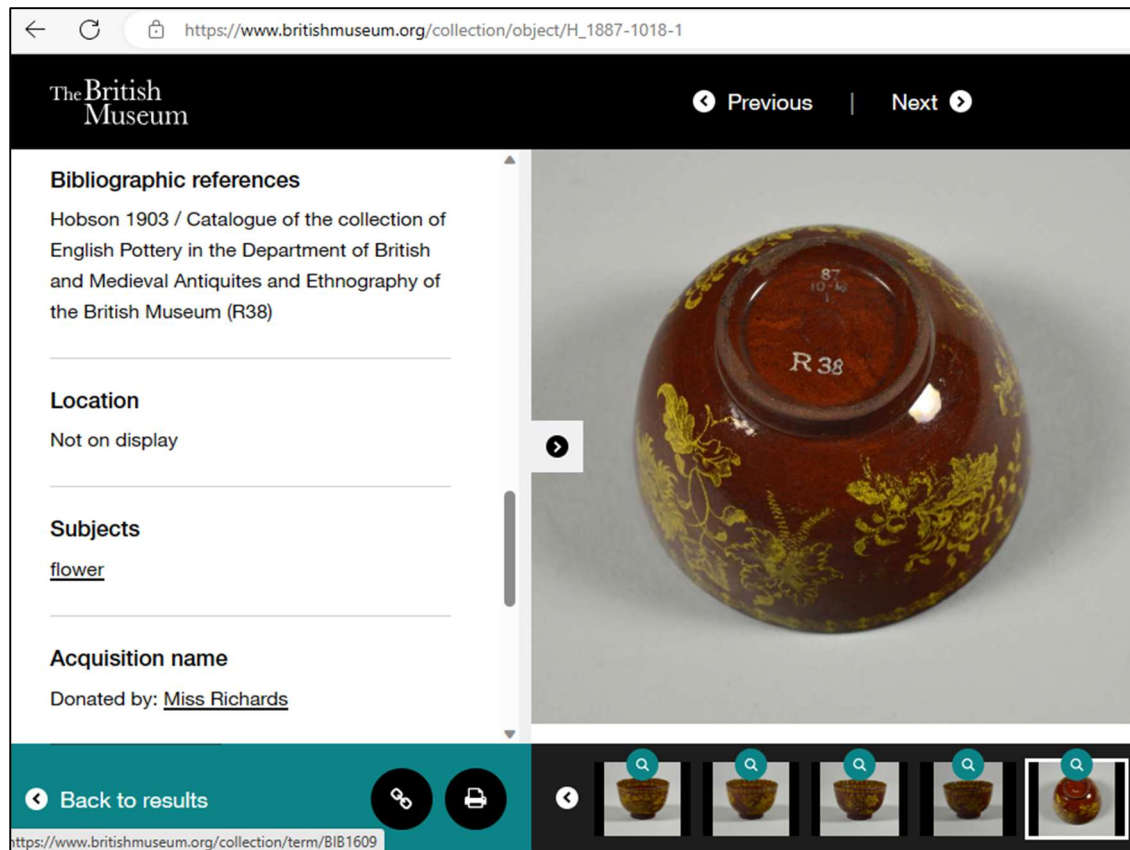


Figure 10 Photo of tea bowl from British Museum with reference by R. L. Hobson.



Figure 11 Unmarked cup and saucer sets from collection of Dr. Jewell Lorenz Dunn.

Note there are jugs with a variation of the Carnation pattern made by many other potters. Shown in figure 11 is an unmarked carnation jug attributed to Swansea from the collection of Jonathan Gray. A more in-depth discussion of other matching Bovey Tracy pieces will follow in a TCC article.



Figure 12 Carnation pattern attributed to Swansea, jug from the collection of Jonathan Gray.

DISCUSSION OF THE HUNT SCENE JUG AND THE HOUSE

The primary reason for highlighting the hunt scene jug as it is a non-chinoiserie pattern. It also matches a cup and saucer with the same house. This cup and saucer were previously owned by Trevor Kentish who indicated John Carey of Lane End as a possible potter.¹⁴ This helps support the idea there were more potters in Staffordshire who made YPB.

The YPB hunt jug figure 12 is from the Miriam Frazee Belcher Collection. The jug was not used in the 1962 article by G. Carroll Lindsay or the 1986 article by Williams-Wood. There are almost 40 pieces of YPB in the Belcher collection, some which are un-recorded in the TCC database. See appendix C for a link to the Belcher collection found in the Smithsonian Online display.¹⁵



*Figure 13 Brown and yellow Hunt Jug Miriam Frazee Belcher collection CE*395183.*

¹⁴ A cup and saucer were from the previous collection of Trevor Kentish. Kentish hand written "Carey with a ?", no other information as why he implied attributing to Carey. Both the cup and saucer have a house which matches the engraving of the houses on the brown & yellow and blue & white jugs shown here.

¹⁵ Smithsonian on-line collection, National Museum of American History, Miriam Frazee Belcher Collection #232450, individual number CE*395183.



Figure 14 Hunt jug from collection of Dr. Jewell Lorenz Dunn.



Figure 15 Hunt jug from the Belcher Collection.



Figure 16 Hunt jug 4 3/4 inches collection of Dr. Jewell Lorenz Dunn.

The house engraving on the jug in figure 11, figure 12, and the cup and saucer in figure 15 match precisely. This study has led to the discovery of a creamer, tankard, and sugar bowl all with a matching house and trees which will be shared in a future article.



Figure 17 Cup and saucer previously from Trevor Kentish Collection.

DISCUSSION OF THATCHED COTTAGE

The YPB example of the Thatched Cottage pattern was chosen from lot number 221 of the Battelle Collection. This TCC pattern 17232 is known to be made by Thomas Harley. One of the first marked pieces of the Thatched Cottage is shown in Friends of Blue (FOB) bulletin 63 shared by Jennifer Moody. Jennifer's teapot was impressed HARLEY.¹⁶ A later discussion by Geoffory Godden in FOB bulletin 64 dated the Moody teapot ca 1801-1808 or possibly to 1812.¹⁷ FOB Bulletin 64 shows an example of the Thatched Cottage pattern which matches the engraving of the saucer in figure 18 perfectly.¹⁸



Figure 18 YPB Thatched Cottage lot 221 of Battelle Collection.

¹⁶ FOB Bulletin 63, page 8, Spring 1989, Teapot marked Harley by Jennifer Moody. The teapot was from an earlier NCS bulletin.

¹⁷ FOB Bulletin 64, page 11, Summer 1989, Notes from Geoffrey Godden, he dated the teapot to be from the 1802-1808, or possibly 1812.

¹⁸ FOB Bulletin 64, page 3, Summer 1989, the same cup & saucer were shown in NCS newsletter No. 72.

DISSCUSSION OF SHORTHOSE CHINOISERIE

The one-man rocket or insect pattern by Shorthose is documented in the Blue and White Dictionary Volume one.¹⁹ Geoffrey Godden notes in his marks book the specific dates 1817-1822 for Shorthose & Co.²⁰ There is an Argyll gravy pot with the matching pattern attributed to Shorthose in FOB bulletin 99.²¹ The YPB creamer, cup and saucer are from the authors' collection (figure 20 & 22). Both the creamer and the tea bowl have a white slip on the inside. The matching blue and white cup and saucer are from the collection of Christina Sharpe.



Figure 19 Shorthose Chinoiserie collection of Dr. Jewell Lorenz Dunn.

¹⁹ A. W. Coish and R. K. Henrywood. (1982). The Dictionary of Blue and White Printed Pottery 1780 to 1880, page 337 called one-man rocket or insect willow type pattern.

²⁰ Godden, Geoffrey. (1964/1991). Encyclopaedia of British Potter and Porcelain Marks, Shorthose page 575-576.

²¹ FOB Bulletin 99, page 10, Spring 1998, Argyll shaped gravy pot attributed to Shorthose.



Figure 20 Single man with a rocket -insect Shorthose & Co. collection of Christina Sharpe.



Figure 21 YPB attributed to Shorthose collection of Dr. Jewell Lorenz Dunn.

DISCUSSION OF CHINOISERIE BY CHETHAM AND WOOLLEY

These pieces were used due to the early dating, and rarity of the impressed mark on the undertray. Both pieces are from the collection of Dr. Jewell Lorenz Dunn. The jug was formerly from the Kenneth Battelle Collection, see lot 226. The YPB jug is unmarked, and the undertray has impressed marked Chetham & Woolley (figure 27). The pattern is a variation of the Long Bridge made by numerous makers. However, the engraving of the figures on the bridge are different from any other willow pattern example found in British Willow Ware by Connie Rogers. The one figure to the left has a pole leaning off the shoulder with two circles hanging down (figure 24). No other willow pattern found in Connie's book has this same figure. The engraving also precisely matches in the border of both pieces, the butterflies, the half sun, and the other geometric shapes (figures 25 & 26). Geoffrey Godden places Chetham and Woolly partnership in Lane End about 1796 to 1810.²²



Figure 22 Unmarked Jug formerly from the Kenneth Battelle Collection, and undertray is impressed Chetham and Woolley.

²² Godden, Geoffrey A. (1964/1991). *Encyclopaedia of British Pottery and Porcelain Marks*, page 144.



Figure 23 Blown up view of bridge portion of pattern.



Figure 24 Border of YPB Jug from the former Kenneth Battelle Collection, see lot 226.



Figure 25 Border from marked undertray by Chetham and Woolley dated prior to 1810.



Figure 26 Chetham and Wooley, Lane End, Staffordshire 1796 to 1810.

CONCLUSION

While conducting the study I realized just like the blue and white pieces we collect, there are differences of opinions on who potted Yellow Printed Brownware. Many of the pieces I purchased came with varied ideas of who the potters were. The word *attributing* itself is dangerous with regards to these early pieces.

I think the most important take away from this study is the number of potters who actually made YPB far exceeded my original idea. And people do not want to give up the term *Portobello Ware* to describe YPB no matter what proof you put before them.

APPENDIX A

The Kenneth Battelle collection of YPB was sold June 2015 by Stair Gallery in New York. The following are the lots including approximately 199 pieces in the sale. There were multiples of some patterns, several pieces believed not to be recognized or not recorded in the Transferware Collectors Club database. It is unclear if some of Battelle's, or if some pieces were sold off before the 2015 auction. An article appeared in Architect Digest showcasing the Battelle's New York mansion including his collection of YPB in several rooms.²³ It is important to note, this is one of the largest collections of YPB collectively uncovered. Kenneth Battelle was a famous hairdresser in New York. Kenneth was renowned as being the hairdresser to many famous women such as Jackie Kennedy Onassis, and Marilyn Monroe. Note the following photos are under copyright and used here with permission of Stair Galleries.

LOT 220



²³ Aronson 2004. Architectural digest Vol. 61.

LOT 221



LOT 222



LOT 223



LOT 224



LOT 225



LOT 226



LOT 227



LOT 228



LOT 229



LOT 231

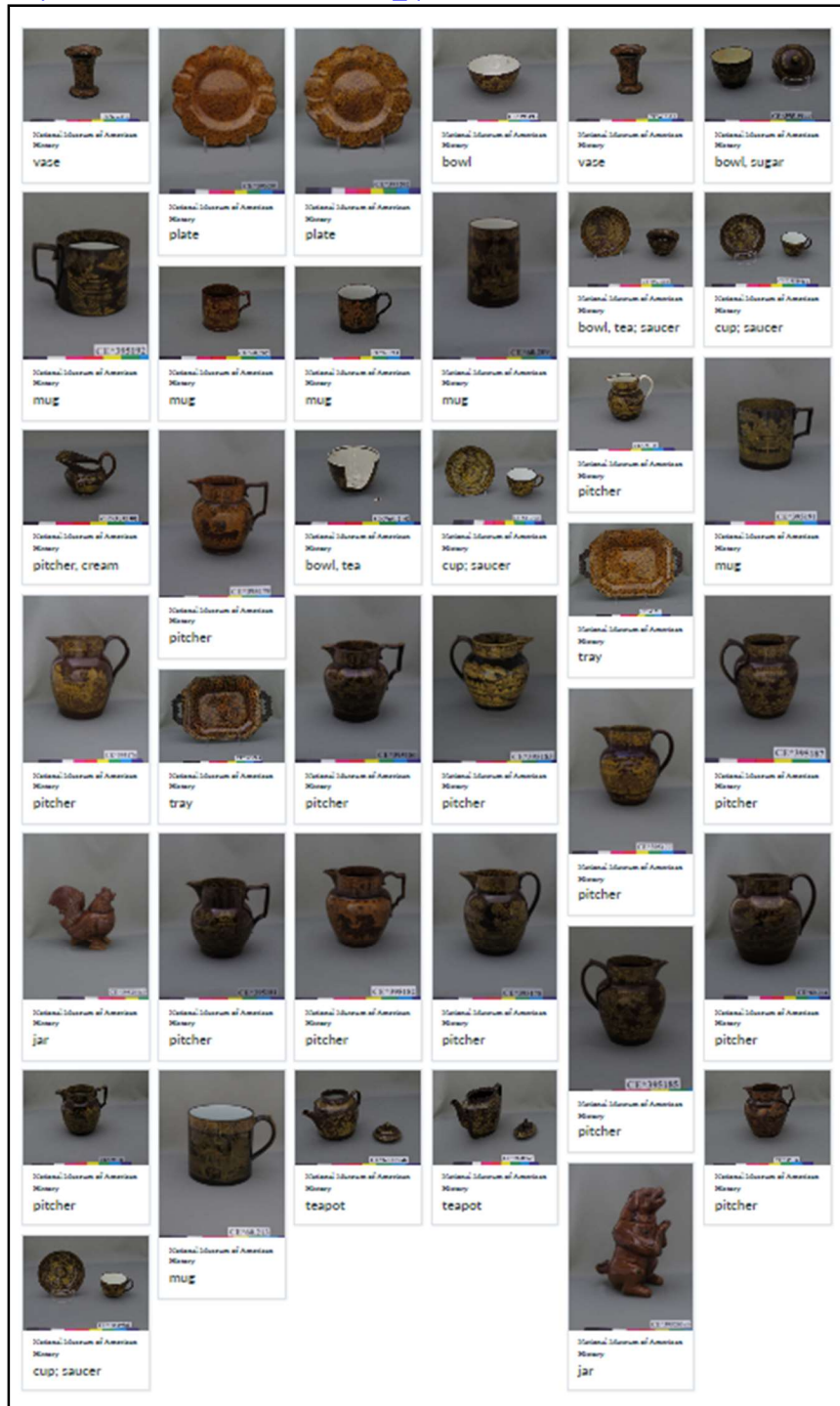


APPENDIX B

Smithsonian On-line collection, Museum of American History

Miriam Frazee Belcher Collection #232450

https://www.si.edu/search?edan_q=232450&



APPENDIX C

Illustration index title page 145, Illustrations marked D, Part IV from William Turner's 1907 book.

TRANSFER PRINTING

on Enamels, Porcelain and Pottery.

ILLUSTRATIONS MARKED "D."

PART IV.

MISCELLANEOUS pieces as illustrations. It is not an exhaustive list by any means. It only touches the fringe of the field, so to speak. The notes will explain the meaning of each piece, and are simply given to confirm the other sections and add to their interest and information.

ILLUSTRATIONS MARKED "D."—continued.					
No.	Factory and Ware.	Description	Mark and Size.	Collection.	Remarks.
D 20.	Liverpool cream ware.	Jug, with black transfer print of a female resting on anchor viewing ship in full sail, outward bound—a wreath below with the Liver bird on top enclosing the words: "A trifle from Liverpool." Probably overglaze with a glossy aspect owing to soft glaze.	Mary and Robert Crampton. 1792. 8 in. high.	Dr. Sidebotham, Bowdon.	Circa., 1792. On reverse are the words:—"My love is fired I cannot range, I like my choice too well to change. Long in this house may health be found, And oft in mirth this jug go round."
D 21-1.	Portobello (Scott Bros.) E. ware.	Jug of dark brown body, and yellow overglaze transfer print of Oriental scenes. Inside of rim brown transfer band $\frac{3}{4}$ in. wide, rest white pipe-clay wash and glazed. A peculiar specimen of the Potter's work.	None. Height, $5\frac{1}{4}$ in.	Micah Salt, Buxton.	Circa., end of 18th century. Mugs are rare on this ware, but there is no mistaking it, once seen. It must not be confused with the so-called Astbury "Portobello" jugs. That was a different thing entirely. Astbury called his ware after Admiral Vernon's victory at Portobello.
D 21-2.	Ditto. E. ware.	Mug of ditto. ditto. Same kind of transfer, etc. Portobello is situated a few miles from Edinburgh.	None. Height, 4 in.	Idem.	Curiously enough, when the Admiral retired, he went to live at a villa near Edinburgh, and called it "Portobello." Hence the rise of the town and this factory.
D 22.	South-wick, Sunderland (Moore & Co.) pearl ware.	Plate: underglaze transfer print in dark blue of castellated building and landscape.	Moore & Co., impressed. $5\frac{1}{4}$ in. diameter.	Dr. Sidebotham, Bowdon.	Circa., 1803.

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Stair Gallery Auction Catalog, Kenneth Battelle Collection June 2014

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