

**Where do Patterns come from?
or
Who decided Delaware looked like this?**

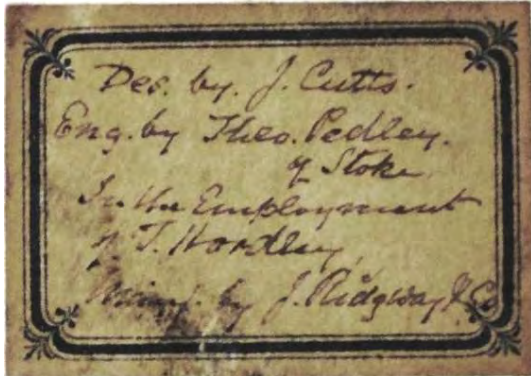


Delaware patterns by Ridgway, Harvey and unknown maker

Along with many TCC members, I have often speculated on how transfer printed patterns originated and how new patterns evolved. This paper, inspired by my reflections on the subject, is based on a group of plates in The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent, which give us a deeper understanding of this subject.

The plates were presented to the museum in the town of Hanley in 1904 by Ralph Hordley. It is admittedly a random assortment of printed pottery but it isn't what is on the front, but what is on the back of many of them, that provides some insight into the subject. Some of the plates have nothing but the accession number on the reverse, but in a number of cases, there is an additional paper label with more information. It is likely that they all had such a label at one time but it's not surprising that some of them became detached given the extensive packing, unpacking and movement of the collections during two world wars and their housing in three different museum buildings; perhaps the labels had even disappeared before the 1904 gift.

The donor, Ralph Hordley, was the son of Thomas Hordley who had an engraving company in the North Staffordshire Potteries in the 19th century. I believe the writing on the labels is Thomas Hordley's and that he has tried to record the men involved in producing these wares. Typically,



1. Label, handwritten by Thomas Hordley
Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

the most comprehensive notations identify the designer, the individual engraver of the design, the engraving company for whom he worked, and the pottery company that eventually produced the plate. Figure 1 shows a label which tells us that the plate was designed by J. Cutts, engraved by Theo. Pedley of Stoke in the Employment of T. Hordley, for J. Ridgway & Co. This level of detail is unique and gives us an unparalleled glimpse into the way in which transfer printed pottery patterns evolved in the 19th century.

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries a range of design sources were readily available, from Chinese and English porcelain to art works printed on paper but the designs from the later 1820s onwards the so-called Romantic Staffordshire have a different aesthetic. Where did the designs for these patterns come from? There was a sea-change, a significant shift in the way printed patterns evolved. For the first time, many of them came from original designs produced especially for the ceramic industry. The obvious questions are who designed them and how were they produced. Within this group of plates some of the labels answer these questions. We learn of patterns designed by J. Cutts, and of engravers Theo. Pedley and Thos. Hordley, but who are these men and for whom did they provide engraved patterns?



2. Wedgwood bone china plate decorated by John Cutts, 1812-16. © Victoria & Albert Museum

The first person in the process was the man listed as designer, J. Cutts. James Cutts was born in 1808 in Pinxton, Derbyshire, he was the 9th of 10 children and the youngest of five boys. His father, John Cutts, was a moderately gifted china painter, trained at the Derby porcelain works, who moved to become manager of the Pinxton porcelain factory. Sometime after 1803, John Cutts took over the Pinxton works after which date the factory may have concentrated on decorating¹. In 1813 the business closed and the Cutts family headed for North Staffordshire where John Cutts was employed by the Wedgwood company. In 1816 he left Wedgwood and started up his own business as an enameller.

James, as an engraver, took a different artistic path and where he trained is not known, and although the Davenport factory has been suggested, there is no supporting evidence. It seems likely that he had established himself by 1830 for in that year he married, and by 1834 he is documented in White's Directory of 1834². The section of the directory, titled *The Staffordshire Potteries*, is divided into numerous subsections based on the various townships of the district. It was the first time a Staffordshire Directory carried a listing for the occupation *Artist*. However, it only appears in the township of the combined

parishes of Hanley & Shelton where it seems the independent creative community was growing. While the Artists category does not appear in any other pottery town entries, a Miscellany of Inhabitants of Burslem lists Jas. Cutts designer, Waterloo Road. Jesse Hulme, listed in Hanley and Shelton Artists, also added (& designer) after his name. These are very significant entries, they are the earliest records of North Staffordshire tradesmen describing themselves as designers and one of them, James Cutts, specialized in transfer printed patterns

James Cutts, set up shop in Waterloo Road Burslem, a fairly new area of property development. which formed the major thoroughfare connecting the new growing town of Hanley to the older town of Burslem. One of the nearby pottery factories was that of John Davenport, and maybe the idea that Cutts trained there derives from the 'Italian Verandah' series pattern in which a small cup and saucer printed in gold is inscribed on the reverse of the saucer *J. Cutts Des.* indicating that he was responsible for this design. (fig. 3) However, it is likely that Cutts supplied this design not as an employee of the factory but as an independent contractor. It is known that he did work for several potters. A dish produced by William Adams & Co. in the 20th century, carries a mark on the back which states *This pattern was arranged by J. Cutts Des. The well known artist & published by W. Adams & Sons in c. 1835*³. The wording suggests that even many years later in the 20th century Cutts was well respected and renowned enough to be a recognizable asset in marketing the product.



3. Davenport coffee cup and saucer printed in gold with Italian Verandah, the saucer with handwritten inscription "J. Cutts Des." private collection

Pigot's 1835⁴ Directory, does not divide the business entries into the individual townships of The Potteries, but lists them together under appropriate headings and James Cutts appears under *Artists*, still at Waterloo Road in Burslem. By 1841⁵ he had moved to what was to be his permanent address in Snow Hill Cottage at Snow Hill in Shelton. (fig.4) Evidence of his work can be seen in a number of archives including the Victoria & Albert Museum, London where a large scrapbook with more than 700 pen and ink designs and copper plate pulls includes his signed work. Most of the scrap book contents date to the mid-19th century and were collected by James Parr a late 19th-early 20th century independent designer and engraver in Burslem. It seems to have been standard practice for engravers to create an archive by collecting prints and drawings from earlier engraving companies.



4. From, *Old times in the Potteries* by William Scarratt, published Stoke-on-Trent 1906 (Reprinted S.&R. Publishers 1969)

One example in the James Parr collection is a pen and ink drawing signed at the bottom right in blue *Cutts*. (fig.5) It is typical of recorded work by James Cutts, and although the design is not recorded in transferware, it may yet be discovered. The scrapbook includes a few original drawings squared up ready for an engraver to transfer the design to a copper plate⁶, some also have matching border designs. One identifiable example is a design for pattern #03 from the Lasso series by John Goodwin of the Seacombe Pottery in Liverpool. (fig.6)



5. Pen and ink drawings by James Cutts
© Victoria & Albert Museum



6. Lasso pattern original artwork.
© Victoria & Albert Museum

Plate made by John Goodwin, Seacombe Pottery, Liverpool, 1852-64.
TCC database

Also in the collection are pen and ink drawings that are the original artwork for Penn's Treaty #02 and #07 made by Thomas Godwin of Burslem who was in business between 1834 and 54 (fig.7) Unfortunately, the drawings are unsigned.

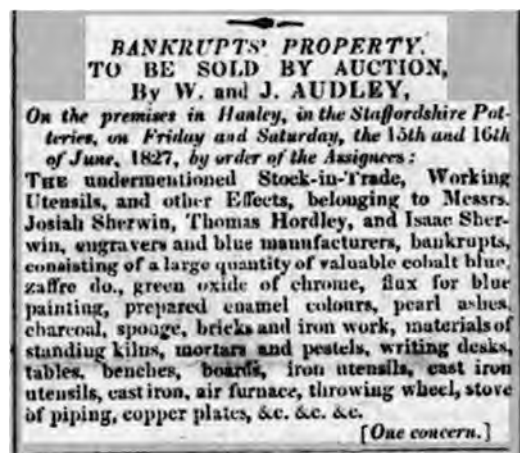


7. Left, two pen, ink, wash, and watercolor drawings from the Victoria & Albert Museum, London. © Victoria & Albert Museum.
Right, dish printed with W. Penn's Treaty #02 by Thomas Godwin, Burslem, 1834 – 1854. TCC database

An experienced designer would usually take less than one hour to produce a pattern hand drawn in pen, ink, watercolor and wash. From this draft, a skilled engraver would produce a sample 10 inch plate. This would include engraving the copper, and printing and firing a trial plate, and if necessary reworking the engraving to achieve the required strength of color.⁷ A pottery with a small engraving shop would no doubt be able to keep their men busy with regular work such as mending coppers, strengthening old designs etc. and might be glad to go out to an independent specialist engraver to get the sample plate of a new design completed. Once approved, the pattern would need to be worked up into the required number of coppers to produce a range of shapes and services. These could be provided by in-house craftsmen or by an independent specialist company, such as Thomas Hordley. Hordley might provide both the design and the full set of engraved coppers. He often used the very competent artist and designer, James Cutts, and while Thomas Hordley was himself a very skilled engraver, his labels suggest that he also valued the skills of Theo Pedley. There are so few instances of an engraver being named, it suggests that Pedley must have been an exceptional craftsman.

Theophilus Pedley was born in 1818 in Hanley in the Staffordshire Potteries. His father George, and his Uncle James, were both engravers. It is difficult to find any evidence as to whether Theophilus or any member of the Pedley family were ever independent engravers, none are listed in any of the relevant trade directories. Perhaps they were always in someone's employ maybe working for Thomas Hordley either as journeymen or as regular sub-contractors. The system of employment for ancillary workers in the ceramics industry is not fully understood and little has been written about those trades which were a separate but essential part of pottery production. Some of the labels on the plates have dates on them so that we know Theo. Pedley was in the employ of Thomas Hordley around 1844, at which time he was in his mid-twenties.

Thomas Hordley is the most senior of the men listed on the plate labels. He was baptized 21 June, 1795 at the parish church of St. John the Evangelist in Hanley in the North Staffordshire Potteries. By the 1820s he had entered a partnership with Josiah and Isaac Sherwin to supply engravings to the pottery trade. In April of 1827 the partnership was declared bankrupt and auction sales of their property were advertised. The sale of their household furniture and "other valuable effects" was followed by the sale of their 'Stock in Trade, and Working Utensils'. (fig.8) Their premises were in Charles street, Hanley and it sounds like they lost everything, but within a year Thomas Hordley was back in business. The Sherwins having moved elsewhere in the town, Hordley was in the Charles Street premises where he lived and worked for the rest of his life. From the 1830s onward Hordley appears to have enjoyed a great deal of success. He remained in business for more than 40 years and in 1865 he was recognized at a celebratory dinner given in his honor. He was still working in 1871 at the age of 75 but by 1881 he had retired and in 1888 he died, at the grand old age of 92.



8. *Staffordshire Advertiser* 9 June 1827

Researching the plates in the Hordley gift has meant searching the available printed publications, scouring the internet, and especially making many visits to the Transferware Collectors Club pattern and source print database (TCC database) looking at thousands of entries, to see if there are other examples of pottery printed with the designs seen in this collection. Some of the patterns are recorded but others have not been found, however, there are regular additions to the TCC database and these may yet reveal new comparative pieces.

Two plates in the group have identical printed designs both have labels with a small amount of information indicating the pattern was engraved by Hordley & Sherwin and one label has the added detail of a pattern name Alfred in the Danish Camp. (fig.9) The central figure group derives from an engraving by Anker Smith after a drawing by Robert Smirke. The source image was widely published over many years and used to illustrate history books from at least 1792, an example in the British Museum was published in 'The Imperial History of England' and is dated April 4, 1812.⁸ The acorn and oak leaf border is quite similar to borders produced by other manufacturers but they tend to be confined within a band and on a blue printed ground whereas the inner part of this design had no defined edge and leaves hang freely over the white ground. The label says that it was engraved by Hordley & Sherwin and therefore it must have been engraved in the 1820s during the brief Hordley and Sherwin partnership which ended in bankruptcy in 1827. The two plates in this collection are the only recorded examples of this printed design.



9. Plate printed with 'Alfred in the Danish Camp' with label inscribed 'Alfred in the Danish Camp. Eng. by Hordley & Sherwin Hanley'.

Alfred in the Danish Camp is the only pattern with a hand-written label attributing the engraving to the early partnership of Hordley & Sherwin. But other examples must also date from that period and although they have no labels, their inclusion in the group strongly suggest that Hordley had a hand in their engraving.

The first of these is a plate attributed to the manufacturer Robert Hamilton of Stoke. (fig. 10) The pattern, although rare, can be found in various shapes suggesting moderate if not extensive production. The pattern is known to collectors as *Fishermen with Nets*, and as Hamilton was in business from about 1811 to 1826, the design can only have been engraved during the Hordley & Sherwin partnership.



10. Above, plate with 'Fishermen and nets', pattern, made by Robert Hamilton c.1820-26 and likely engraved during the Hordley & Sherwin period.

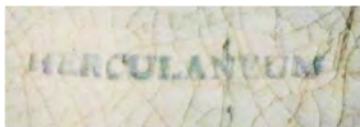


11. Right, plate with *Flowers & Leaves* pattern, made by Henshall & Co. 1824 and engraved during the Hordley & Sherwin period. Reverse with impressed mark.



The pattern *Flowers and Leaves* (fig. 11) is attributed in the TCC database to Henshall & Co. who are believed to have used small fractional numbers indicating both maker and date. In this case the plate, which is impressed 24 over 2 would have been made in February 1824. The design is a sheet pattern, that is an all-over pattern with no centre, therefore the print needs no alignment and can be placed anywhere on the pottery object, making it simple to apply, but presumably there was quite a bit of wastage as excess printed tissue would need to be trimmed away. Sheet patterns are rarely found in the early 19th century, this dark blue plate is a rare example.

A third plate from the Hordley & Sherwin period (fig. 12) is illustrated by Peter Hyland in his book on Herculaneum Pottery.⁹ He comments that this is the only example he has seen, and that the impressed mark is one found on wares from 1805 to the late 1820s. The pattern derives from George Morland's "The Weary Sportsman" and the subsequent print engraved by William Bond, published April 1st. 1805. It's possible that this design was never put into production, we wait to hear if other examples appear. And finally, a plate from the group has a central pattern identified by a titled example in the TCC database where a blue printed backstamp is a garter with the words *Game Keeper*. (fig. 13) Although the center may be recognized, the border is not the one generally seen, suggesting that this is a sample plate in which the prospective client potter accepted only the central design; perhaps he already had a border design he liked, or perhaps he asked Hordley to make another variation. For whatever reason the final production pieces have a floral border, rather than the cherubic scrolling design seen in figure 13. There appears to be two versions of the main *Game Keeper* pattern with one marked example being recorded.¹⁰ It is unclear if the maker of the version shown here is known but the plates are generally accepted to date from circa 1825, placing the engraving firmly in the period of Hordley & Sherwin's partnership.



12. Plate with design of 'The Weary Sportsman' engraved by Hordley & Sherwin. Base impressed mark HERCULANEUM for the Herculaneum Pottery, Liverpool, c. 1820-25



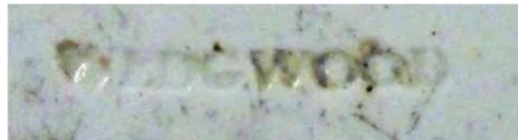
13. Plate with center design of 'Game Keeper' engraved by Hordley & Sherwin.

It may seem surprising that even some of the larger pottery firms went to outside sources such as Hordley for their patterns. But perhaps employing a full-time designer specializing in transfer-printed patterns and even the employment of an exceptional engraver to work up a range of

potential designs may not have been commercially viable; outsourcing made sense especially for the risky business of investing in the creation of suitable new patterns.



One of the large pottery firms which Hordley supplied was Josiah Wedgwood & Sons. There are four designs for this company among the Hordley gift. The Chinese style birds in a landscape known as *Crane* pattern is among the earliest, and is not uncommon, suggesting that it was commercially successful. (fig.14) The design is said to date from 1826, so may also have been a Hordley & Sherwin engraving, but the other designs for Wedgwood are later and date after Thomas Hordley began business in his own right.



14. Plate printed with 'Crane' pattern, engraved by Hordley & Sherwin for Josiah Wedgwood & sons, c.1826, reverse impressed WEDGWOOD.

The pattern called *Jeddo*, (fig.15) has a label on which Hordley first wrote the wrong manufacturer and then corrected himself and records show that the design was registered by Wedgwood on 10 December, 1859. Hordley supplied the design to Wedgwood, in underglaze blue, however in production overglaze enamel, luster and gilding are added to create a colorful palette. It was produced in large numbers and was re-issued in the 1970s by the Adams factory as part of the Wedgwood group. These are the ones you mostly see in an internet search.



15. Plate printed with 'Jeddo' pattern engraved by Thomas Hordley's workshop for Josiah Wedgwood and registered December 10, 1859. For a full color version see TCC database. Together with label on reverse.

ROSE and
JESSAMINE
pattern
(fig.16) is
typical of



the 1850s and carries a comprehensive label reading *Des. by J. Cutts of Shelton Engraved by Thos. Hordley Hanley for J. Wedgwood & Sons Etruria*. It also has the printed pattern name and impressed mark *Wedgwood Pearl Y*. This is the first piece discussed in this paper that is labelled as engraved specifically by Thomas Hordley. There are several other examples which appear later in the article. The pattern does not appear in the TCC database although there are lots of examples to be found on the internet. Perhaps the TCC editors thought it verged on the flow blue side of transferware, some examples definitely have more flow than others. The dark blue print can also be found with overglaze painted enamel colors and in a pale grey print enhanced with gilding.



16. 'ROSE and JESSAMINE' pattern plate, Designed by James Cutts of Shelton, engraved by Thomas Hordley, Hanley, for J. Wedgwood & Sons, Etruria, together with handwritten label on the reverse, printed pattern name and impressed marks.



The final pattern from the Wedgwood company is an unrecorded pattern of a floral centre with a lily of the valley border. (fig.17) It's part of the Hordley group but has no remaining paper label. I think it reasonable to assume it came from Hordley's workshop, we just don't know the designer and individual engraver.



17. Plate with floral pattern print and impressed mark WEDGWOOD N on the reverse



Evidenced by the labels found with the next designs, Thomas Hordley engraved two well-known patterns produced by James & Ralph Clews. The first is from a series titled in the mark on the reverse *Zoological Gardens*. The print depicts a composite scene of the zoological gardens in London which opened to members in 1828. The pattern combines from the left, the tunnel linking the north and south parts of the zoo which opened in 1830, the three-arched monkey house and to the right, the aviary. There are two plates in the Hordley gift, with this the central design which is known to collectors as Aviary or Bird House, designated #01 in the series *Zoological Gardens*. On the reverse, one has the standard Clews mark for the pattern and a paper label which reads, *Eng. by Thos. Hordley of Hanley*. (fig.18) Neither of the two plates has the standard border pattern, and despite how well they both look, it seems that a third option was the one chosen which is the one readily found in the market place today.



18. Plate printed with *ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS* pattern and with trial border; Reverse with, printed mark of R & J CLEWS and label inscribed 'Eng. By Thos. Hordley of Hanley'.



19. Unlabeled and unmarked second version of 'Zoological Gardens' pattern.

Note: neither of the plates in figs. 18 or 19 has the standard border for this center design, both must have been sample plates.





The second well-known pattern is found on a plate with a label that reads *Eng. by Thos. Hordley of Hanley for J & R Clews Cobridge*. (fig.20) The center is pattern #01 from the Moral Maxims series. The TCC database shows four patterns from the series, and while the border of the Hordley example superficially looks the same as the standard production design, on closer inspection it can be seen to be a variation. Instead of a single pattern covering the whole rim, it comprises three repeats of a shorter panel illustrating Industry followed by the maxims *Frugality with Temperance is a fortune/ & Industry a good estate / There are no gains without pains*, repeated three times.



20. Plate printed with Moral Maxims pattern engraved by Thomas Hordley: and with label on the reverse

The Clews brothers went bankrupt in late 1834 and were obliged to sell all their assets including their factory contents. In the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, published December 20, 1834 an auction was announced for January 1835 and the advertised fixtures and fittings of the Clews manufactory included *valuable sets of copper-plate engravings...many of which are quite new, and the production of some of the most approved artists in the trade*.

Staffordshire Advertiser 20 December, 1834

In the ensuing month of January, on the premises, at the very extensive Manufactory, at COBRIDGE, in the Staffordshire Potteries, late in the occupation of Messrs. R. and J. Clews:

All the POTTERS' FIXTURES, UTENSILS, and STOCK of MATERIALS, consisting of block and working moulds of the most approved shapes and patterns, adapted for the home trade, and the American markets, with most extensive and valuable sets of copper-plate engravings, in table, dessert, toilet, jug, and tea services, many of which are quite new, and the production of some of the most approved artists in the trade.

The Clews' nephews, Job & John Jackson, appear to have purchased some of the copper plate engravings. This was unlikely to be popular with the uncles who had trained the Jackson boys until they went off on their own with a list of Clews customers who they tried to lure away from their uncles. One of the patterns they purchased was Moral Maxims, they used Clews' pattern and then obliterated the Clews name with dots and added their own underneath. Their marked pieces can

only have been made in the year 1835 as the Jacksons themselves went into bankruptcy in August of that year and although they continued at their factory trying to make some money to pay creditors for a few months, by December 1835 they appear to have ceased trading, moving to New York and establishing an extremely successful china dealing business.

During the 1840s Thomas Hordley seems to have begun a particularly active business relationship with John Ridgway & Co. The next group of plates reflect that connection including examples engraved by Thomas Hordley and by Theo. Pedley who was employed by Hordley. Whether all the designs were put into production is not yet confirmed, but evidence suggests that the majority probably were.

One of the most unusual plates has a mark telling us it was made by *John Ridgway & Co., Cauldon Place, Staffordshire Potteries* and a paper label indicating that it was engraved by Thomas Hordley of Hanley. (fig. 21) The center depicts the SS Great Britain. She was designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel for the Great Western Steamship Company's transatlantic service between Bristol and New York. Launched in 1843, she was the first iron steam ship to cross the Atlantic which she did in 1845 in the time of 14 days and for almost a decade she was the longest passenger ship in the world. The scene depicts this historic voyage as the ship ploughs through the ocean, the rim has very fine engravings with the British Royal Arms at the top facing The Great seal of the United States. The scene and the border designs were taken from a lithograph by Joseph Walter in which the British and American Arms flank the title. It is a fine piece of potting with exceptional engravings celebrating a major historical event.



21. Plate with central printed design of SS Great Britain. Shown with details of the small engravings found on the rim at the top and bottom of the plate, the printed mark on reverse of the plate which reads 'J. RIDGWAY & Co, Cauldon Place Stafford Potteries' and label inscribed 'Eng. By Thos. Hordley'

Figures 22 and 23 illustrate two plates of a distinctive octagonal shape printed with patterns engraved by Thomas Hordley. On the left printed in brown, the design has a center that looks like a depiction of a British stately home with the obligatory river view and deer park. On the right the scene has basically the same structure with animals in the foreground, a bridge over water leading the eye to distant buildings, however, the overall impression is of a classical or European subject rather than a British one. Both plates have border patterns that emphasise their shape, comprising



22. Plate printed in brown, the reverse with label inscribed 'Eng. By Thos. Hordley of Hanley for J. Ridgway & Co'



23. Plate printed in a grey-blue, the reverse with label inscribed 'Des by J Cutts of Shelton Eng. By Thos. Hordley of Hanley'

eight panels incorporating floral sprays alternating with more conventional devices each repeated four times around the rim. From the labels, we learn that figure 23 was designed by James Cutts, that figure 22 was designed for John Ridgway & Co. and that both patterns were engraved by Thomas Hordley. What we have yet to learn, is the name of either scene and whether either pattern or border was put into production.



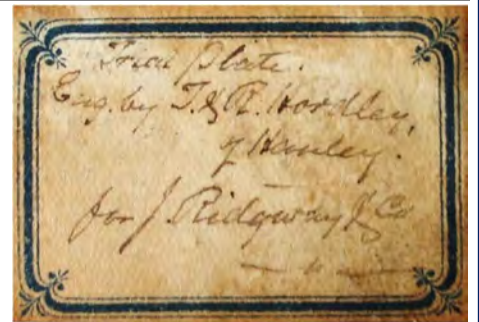
24. Plate printed in pink, on the reverse is the printed Royal Arms mark with the initials 'JR' used by John Ridgway & Co. and with a hand-written label inscribed 'Eng. By Thos. Hordley of Hanley for J. Ridgway'

25. Plate printed in green, on the reverse is the printed Royal Arms mark with the initials 'JR' used by John Ridgway & Co. and with a hand-written label inscribed 'Eng. By Thos. Hordley Hanley for John Ridgway & Co'

The plate shown in figure 24 is a fairly complex pattern, the center featuring a Napoleonic-like figure pointing something out to his lady companions. Like many landscape designs the scene includes a river, in this case running the left-hand side, leading to a mansion in the background. The border is alternating panels of roses. In figure 25 we have a much simpler design, a modest floral bouquet with a repeating border. Perhaps it was less costly to engrave, however we know from price lists that the agreed selling price for printed patterns was the same whatever the design, except for willow which was slightly cheaper, so while the simpler design might be less expensive to source, it would benefit the potter but would not be cheaper for the consumer. Both plates have Ridgway printed marks which include the initials JR and may have been used during both the John Ridgway period 1830-41 and the subsequent John Ridgway & Co period 1841-55. Both plates are of a shape registered by John Ridgway & Co on October 2 1847, although neither carry the impressed diamond registration mark for the shape. It can be seen on other pieces in this collection (fig. 28) and it is one of the most common forms made by John Ridgway & Co.



26. Plate with label inscribed 'Trial Plate, Des. By J. Cutts, Shelton Eng. by Thos. Hordley Hanley'



27. Plate with label inscribed 'Trial Plate, Eng. By T. & R. Hordley of Hanley for J. Ridgway & Co'.

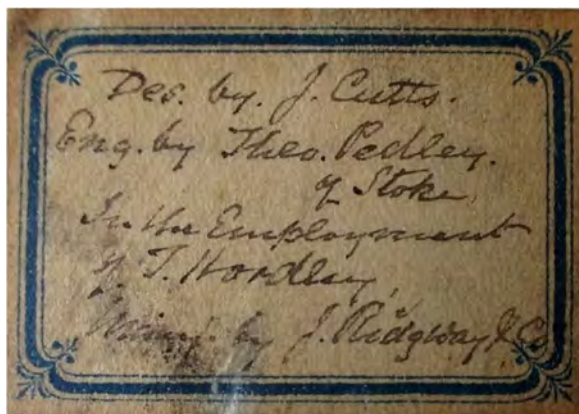


28. Impressed registration mark on plate in figure 26

The plates seen in figures 26 and 27 are the same shape as the previous two plates and both carry the impressed design registration mark. Often, impressions of this mark are difficult to read. In figure 28 you see an example which is fairly clearly impressed, the code for the registration is F=1847, B= October, 2= 2nd, and 5 is the parcel number. The paper label on both plates says *Trial Plates* presumably referring to the printed patterns. The design of figure 26 is a design by James Cutts, engraved by Thomas Hordley. Cutts may have also designed the plate in figure 27 but we have no evidence to support that suggestion. Both designs have small central roundels with imagery reflected in four border vignettes, figure 26 is based on a group of cupids, figure 27 has a large fountain in a landscape. Interestingly the label on figure 27 tells us that it was engraved by T. & R. Hordley of Hanley for John Ridgway & Co. This is the sole record of a company called T. & R. Hordley, but in one document Thomas's son Ralph, who donated the plates, describes himself as an engraver although from 1856 until his retirement his occupation was the prominent public position of Secretary of the North Staffordshire Royal Infirmary. The label on this plate is the only evidence that Ralph Hordley may have been in the engraving business with his father.

In addition to patterns engraved for John Ridgway by Thomas Hordley himself, there are a group of plates with labels identifying examples of work by Theo. Pedley, an engraver in Hordley's employ. Instances in which an individual engraver is identified are so rare we can only conclude that they were appreciated as particularly skilled craftsmen. In this case, we are introduced to Theophilus Pedley, born in 1818 in Hanley in the Staffordshire Potteries, his father George, and uncle James, were both engravers. It is difficult to find any evidence as to whether Theophilus or any member of the Pedley family were ever independent engravers, none are listed in any of the relevant trade directories. Perhaps they were always in someone's employ maybe working for Thomas Hordley either as journeymen or as regular sub-contractors. Some of the labels on the plates have dates on them so that we know Theo. Pedley was in the employ of Thomas Hordley in the 1840s. He would have been in his early 20s and by this time he was married and living in Shelton, within walking distance of the Hordley engraving shop.

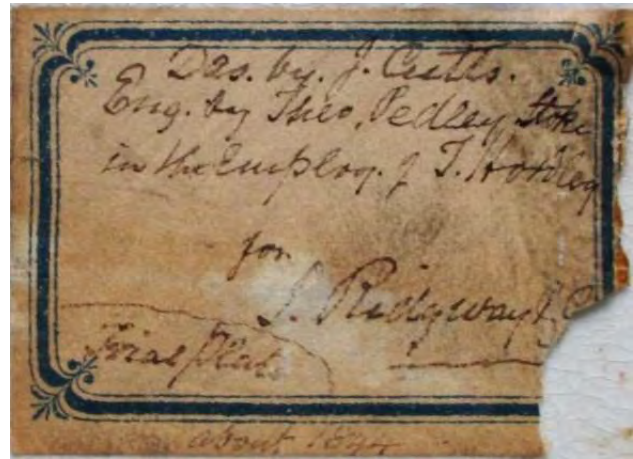
One of the plates (fig. 29) has a paper label with a very extensive inscription, which reads 'Des. by J. Cutts. Eng. by Theo. Pedley, of Stoke In the Employment of T. Hordley, Manuf. By J. Ridgway & Co'. The rim design may be familiar but neither the inner border nor the center design are recorded elsewhere. It may be a trial plate as many of the Theo, Pedley engravings appear to be, but the label doesn't say so, However the label does indicate that it was "manufactured" by J. Ridgway & Co., so perhaps it was produced, but not in great numbers.



29 Plate with label inscribed 'Des. By J. Cutts. Eng. By Theo. Pedley, of Stoke. In the Employment of T. Hordley, Manuf. by J Ridgway & Co.'



Another plate with a similar design is seen in figure 30, it has a similar extensive label indicating that it was also designed by James Cutts and engraved by Theo. Pedley of Stoke in the employment of T. Hordely for J. Ridgway & Co. In addition the words 'Trial Plate' is written at the bottom left hand corner of the label, and the date 'about 1844' can be seen faintly beneath the lower blue frame lines.



30. Plate, blue printed plate: below paper label on the reverse inscribed 'Des. By J. Cutts. Eng. By Theo. Pedley, Stoke. In the Employ of T. Hordley for J. Ridgway & Co.' and 'Trial Plate' and 'about 1844'

It seems unlikely that this plate design went into production. No other examples with this center and border have been recorded, however, the center is known with another version of the border (also seen in fig. 29) which has the addition of florets on the border's geometric ground and a simplified inner border. Shown at figure 31, this plate in the Potteries Museum group does not have a paper label but it does have John Ridgway's Royal Arms mark and it is recorded as #02 in John Ridgway's Archipelago series. This series is discussed in the TCC database where two patterns from the series are shown. It is said to have been made in several colors.



31 Plate printed in blue together with the Royal Arms mark printed on the reverse.





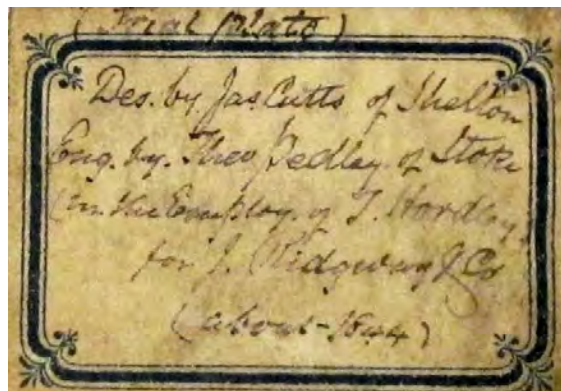
32. Plate, printed with geometric border seen in the TCC data base as series pattern 'Chinese' this central design may be #04 in the series, together with the label found on the reverse.

Another plate from the group engraved by Theo. Pedley is seen in figure 32. The accompanying label on the reverse read, *Trial Plate. Eng. by Theo. Pedley, of Stoke, Emp. by Thos. Hordley, of Hanley for J. Ridgway & Co.* The TCC database has three examples from a series pattern called 'Chinese' which has an identical border and Chinese style central scenes, some of the recorded pieces carry a fret-like mark. The plate in the Potteries Museum group may be a trial plate that was accepted, and is #04 of the 'Chinese' series, and therefore a new pattern to add to the TCC database.



33. Plate printed with geometric border and Chinese-style central scene, together with label on reverse inscribed '(Trial Plate) Des. By Jas. Cutts of Shelton Eng. by Theo Pedley of Stoke in the Employ. of T. Hordley, for J. Ridgway & Co. (About 1844)'

The trial plate seen in figure 33 was also designed by Cutts and engraved by Pedley and is dated 'about 1844'. The main and inner border are geometric designs, the center is once again a Chinoiserie with a family group in the foreground, an arched bridge in the middle ground and a distant waterside landscape. Neither the border nor the center patterns have yet been recorded except for this example. Perhaps it never made it into full production.



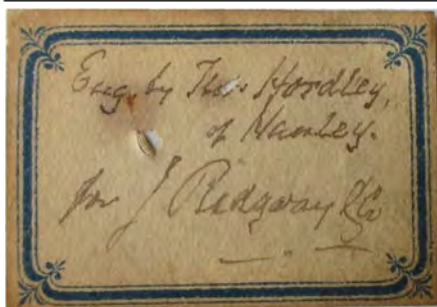
The design engraved by Pedley illustrated in figure 34 is quite different from the last few examples. It does have a geometric border, but the centre design is like a picture postcard view of a European landscape with an ornate frame. The label says it is another trial plate, and as with the last design no other examples have been recorded so perhaps it never went further than a sample pattern.



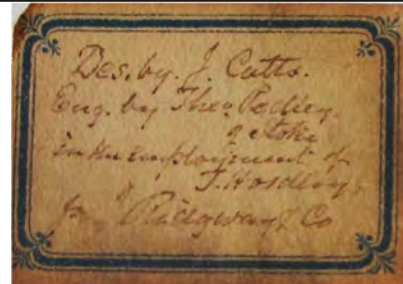
Figure 34 plate printed with geometric border and European landscape center: right, label inscribed 'Trial Plate Des. by J. Cutts of Shelton Eng. by Theo. Pedley of Stoke in the Employ. of Thos. Hordley for J. Ridgway & Co. 1844'

The plates, shown in figures 35 and 36, have identical border designs but quite different centers, one engraved by Thomas Hordley, one by Theo. Pedley. The plate in figure 35 has a label on the reverse telling us that it was engraved by Thomas Hordley for John Ridgway & Co. It has the same border as two examples in the TCC database from Ridgway's *Baronial Castles Series* and conforms to the criterion of having a large country house in the middle distance. In this example the central scene depicts Cashiobury House in Hertfordshire which features in earlier prints by several makers¹¹ and was either copied from one of these earlier patterns or from a print source based on the drawing of John Preston Neale and engraved and published by various artists and publishers from 1818 to about 1830. This appears to be a previously unrecorded #03 in Ridgway's *Baronial Castle Series*, and therefore will be a new addition to the TCC database.

The border design from John Ridgway & Co.'s *Baronial Castles*' series also appears on the plate in figure 36. The label on the reverse of this example tells us that it was designed by James Cutts, engraved by Theo. Pedley in the employ of Thomas Hordley, for John Ridgway & Co. The reverse also has the addition of a printed mark which is not commonly found. The central design does not include a grand castle or house and is either from a different series or was another trial plate that never got put into production. There is no record of another example with an identical center pattern, the only similar design is a poor interpretation of the same subject in mirror image which is currently unattributed in the TCC database¹².



35. Plate printed with border from John Ridgway & Co.'s 'Baronial Castle Series' the center depicting Cashibury House, Hertfordshire. with label on the reverse reading 'Eng. by Thos Hordley, of Hanley, for J. Ridgway & Co.'



36. Plate printed with border from John Ridgway & Co.'s 'Baronial Castle Series' the center with landscape featuring horses. Below right : label on the reverse reading 'Des. by J. Cutts. Eng. by Theo. Pedley of Stoke in the Employment of T. Hordley, for J. Ridgway & Co.' Below left; black printed backstamp on the reverse of the plate, the center reading 'PORCELAINE FRANCAISE', the ribbon beneath inscribed 'JOHN RIDGWAY & CO. LTD. ENGLAND'



Figure 37 is another example engraved by Thomas Hordley. It's on the characteristic octagonal shape made by John Ridgway, & Co, and therefore likely designed and engraved for consideration by him. The central scene features a log cabin type house with more of a Scandinavian look than the American frontier. Again, it is a previously unrecorded pattern and therefore may be another sample design that never went into production.



37. Printed plate together with label on reverse inscribed 'Eng. by Thos. Hordley Hanley.'

The plate shown in figure 38 is a challenge, the label reads *Engraved by Thos Hordley of Hanley, for J Davenport & Co, Longport* with the date 1857. However, there is an almost illegible impressed diamond registration mark – and the shape of the plate may have given it away – it's the same as the John Ridgway plate-shape registered in 1847 and none of my colleagues who specialize in Davenport have ever seen the design. Did Hordley make a mistake on the label? I don't think so, perhaps he just used an old blank. Obviously this plate needs more thought.



38. Printed plate and label on the reverse which reads
"Eng. by Thos, Hordley f Hanley for J. Davenport & Co. Longport 1857"

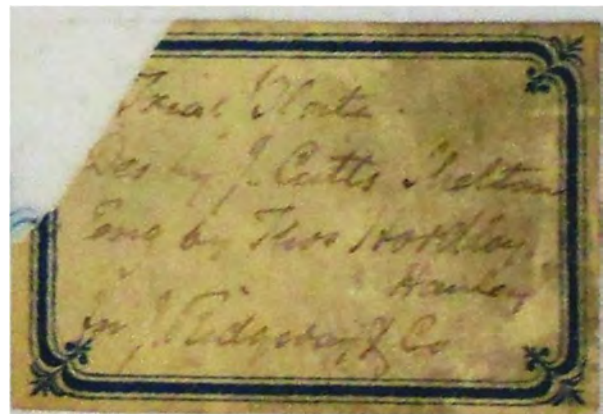
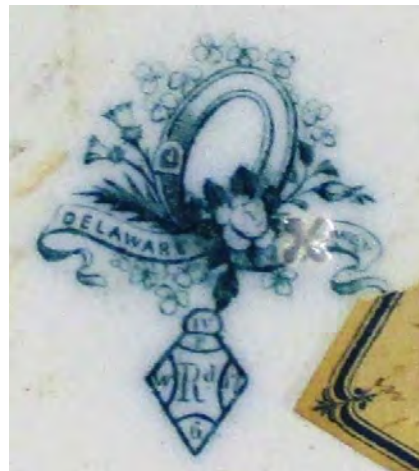
There are four more mystery plates in the Hordley group, none of which have hand-written labels, The plate with a floral print seen to the left in figure 39 has the faintly impressed diamond registration seen in figure 28, and is a shape registered by John Ridgway & Co on 2nd October 1847. The plate second from the left has another floral print, beautifully engraved, but there is no mark. The plate third from the left has a very distinctive pattern with a strong floral border and a romantic gothic landscape center. The plate to the right has a simple floral swag border. None of these designs are recorded elsewhere, if you ever see any of them please let the TCC know!



39. Mystery plates

And finally, we end where we began: Who decided Delaware looked like this?

Well now we know, because the label says *Trial plate. Des. By J. Cutts Shelton Engraved. By Thos. Hordley Hanley for J. Ridgway & Co.* The printed mark includes a diamond registration showing the pattern was registered by John Ridgway on March 17, 1847, parcel number 6. So, we also know that at least some of the trial plates became production patterns. And while this pattern is not found in the TCC database, almost identical examples can be seen online advertised as flow blue. It really doesn't look a typical flow blue pattern and perhaps it should have a place in our database.



40. Plate with printed design 'Delaware' with pattern and with registration mark and hand-written label.

To conclude I think it would be helpful to view many of the pieces organized in a slightly different way.

These are all the plates engraved by Theophilus Pedley. It seems to me most of them have a similar look – a look that is very attractive. Nicely designed and skillfully engraved.



These are all the patterns designed by James Cutts an accomplished artist, and one of, if not the first specialist transferware designer to the pottery industry. They illustrate his great range and exceptional talent.



And finally, the last two images illustrate all the designs engraved by Thomas Hordley. Not merely a skilled engraver, and successful businessman – but someone who seemed to know that future generations would continue to enjoy transfer-printed pottery and left us the evidence so we could find out and honor those involved in creating the Staffordshire transferwares we all enjoy today.





And please, if you see any of these designs that are not yet recorded, let us know.

Pat Halfpenny
December 2016

Acknowledgements

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Appendix I

In discussing designing and engraving with Paul Wood, who trained as an engraver, with Spode, he became a designer and eventually managing director of Spode and brings a wide experience to the question of production of transfer-printed pottery. In one email he wrote

When Spode worked 8 til 5 and Saturday mornings, for a full 10" plate engraving, centre and complete border, six weeks was estimated to completion, including a print and firing trial to check the strength of colour (too light meant re entering all the detail- bad news, too dark meant an apprentice could whet stone the surface down and lighten the engraving.) The tendency was therefore to err slightly on the side of too heavy.

As for your artist, [Cutts] if he did this stuff day in day out, it is pretty formulaic and I could see an hour being a reasonable guess. [to complete the drawing seen in figure 5]

One well drawn and detailed border section would need a bit more care, as this was the unique part where the engraver would need more specific directing, but would only need to be furnished with the one section and then this could be adapted on all items. It was the usual practice for engravers to produce the complex shape fittings for each piece and position the detail of the border in outline on a spare copper, test print to fit and then transfer this to the working copper. No point doing a nice centre and then not cutting the border to the correct fit.

I have attached an early piece of Italian, with a pull off the original copper, which shows the fittings needed. Really quite complex as you can see.

I don't know if you are familiar with the process, but the fitting was done by the engraver, drawing a pencil line drawing of the position of the border on a white biscuit piece, rubbing over a sticky coating a beeswax stick on this border area.

This then had a roughly cut oversized piece of thin printing paper carefully pressed onto the waxed area, and rubbed smooth to stick to the wax, and become semi-transparent.



The original drawn pencil lines could then be seen and drawn over. Carefully peeling the paper off, this gives you an outline of the final desired shape. Cutting off the excess paper, this drawing was rubbed down on to a copper which also had a wax coating and the outline drawn through the paper with a fine steel needle that looked like a pencil. The fitting was usually extended by an inch or so to allow for size variation in the production pots (you can always cut a bit off but too short is a pain.)

Appendix II

Whether a design came from an art work, a book or any other source – for a transfer-printed pattern engravers needed a design to begin their work, they were skilled craftsmen but not necessarily artists. In the first quarter of the 19th century, prints were the major source of ready-made designs. But how did a print on paper become an engraved pattern for pottery printing?

Once an engraver had a print or drawing to copy, he would draw a grid of lines onto the source design and then draw a grid of the same number of squares onto his copper. The design in each square of the source would then be engraved into the corresponding square on the copper. Sometimes the copper plate was smaller than the source design, sometimes it was larger, but using the same number of squares ensured that the design would be copied to the appropriate size depending on whether the final image was for a small saucer or a large tureen. The shape of design might require a little filler here and there, but that would be limited to a flower or a decorative tree or some such minor detail, the greatest part of the pattern would be close to the original.

Endnotes

¹ Godden, Geoffrey A. 1988. *Encyclopaedia of British porcelain manufacturers*. London: Barrie & Jenkins. pp. 593-4

² White, William. 1834. *History, gazetteer, and directory of Staffordshire and the city and county of the city of Lichfield*. Sheffield: Printed for the author, by R. Leader.

³ See <http://picclick.co.uk/Antique-Vintage-W-Adams-Sons-252100100696.html> (accessed December 28, 2016)

⁴ J. Pigot & Co. 1835. *Pigot and Co.'s National commercial directory: comprising a classification of all the merchants, bankers ... and traders, and lists of the nobility, gentry and clergy, resident in ... the Counties of Derby, Hereford, Leicester, Lincoln, Monmouth, Nottingham, Rutland, Salop, Stafford, Warwick and Worcester ; and also of those in North and South Wales ... The embellishments comprise a map of each of the above-named counties, and a ... map of North and South Wales, etc.* London: J. Pigot & Co.

⁵ *Census Returns of England and Wales, 1841*. Stoke-on-Trent, Shelton, p.6 (TNA Class: HO107; Piece: 992; Book: 5; County: Staffordshire; Enumeration District: 5; Folio: 6; Page: 4; Line: 4; GSU roll: 474621)

⁶ See Appendix II

⁷ See appendix I

⁸ British Museum collection 1872,0113.32 illustrated at http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=3127798&partId=1&searchText=Alfred+in+the+Danish+camp&page=1

⁹ Hyland, Peter. 2006. *The Herculeum pottery: Liverpool's forgotten glory*. Liverpool: Liverpool Univ. Press. Figure 107

¹⁰ The second version of Game Keeper includes nesting birds hiding under the fallen log to the left, one version of the pattern is recorded in Friends of Blue Bulletin 118, however there is no illustration and no way to know which version is referred to, this latter example was impressed Hackwood – information generously communicated by Richard Halliday.

¹¹ Information generously supplied by Richard Halliday at the TCC 2016 Annual Meeting.

¹² See TCC pattern and source print database id #8302, pattern name 'Horse Hunt'