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This unique and interesting Worcester mug, of the Dr. Wall period, stands  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches high. It has a fluted handle and is painted in blue on a white ground, with the crest of the Foresters' Company enclosed in a cartouche composed of elegant scroll-work. The decoration includes no less than four inscriptions, of which the most important records the name and date of the original owner—

SAM<sup>l</sup>: SHERIFF

18

1770N

1771

In addition to this, the following mottoes appear, the spacing of the last expressing the inclusion of two letters above the word to which they belong, imparting a quaint effect—

"Industry Produces Wealth"

"Freedom with Innocence"

"Charity is the Strength of Society"

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thankful.



VALLOIS'S SYSTEM OF  
TELEGRAPHY

By  
G. M. VALLOIS

PUBLISHED BY  
AT 30 NEW BRIDGE STREET, BLACKFRIARS  
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**Dedicated to**  
**J. A. MIDDLETON**  
**AS A TOKEN OF**  
**GRATITUDE**

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KING SOLOMON remarked that "of the making of books there is no end." What would he say now, when we multiply them by thousands every year? "Why, then," you naturally say, "add yet another," and my answer is that it has an empty place to fill.

Beautiful, learned, and costly books there are without end on the subject I have taken up, but there seems to be nothing to help the amateur who wants to find out all about his own possessions.

The owners of nice old things would like to know something about them, if they can do so without too much trouble.

They do not want to read learned disquisitions as to the exact period of certain disputed pieces of splendid oak carving, but they do want to know the age of their mahogany chairs. They have not time or patience to read about Petuntse, Kaolin, and Felspar, but they wish to find out if their teapot is an Astbury or a Caughley one.

I claim that I supply their needs, and that I help the amateur to a slight knowledge of, and interest in, the treasures he possesses, and suggest to him the deep and hidden interest that

lurks in many a curio that was once used by those who have "gone before."

We love our old possessions not because possibly they would fetch large sums at Christie's, but because they speak to us of the long distant past, of those who once looked at and handled them, of the little children who ran about the old tables and chairs (new then) and gazed with intent round eyes at the quaint little men and women on the oriental porcelain, and as a great treat were allowed to ring tunes on the fine old glass rammers which gave out such lovely musical notes.

If only these old inanimate things could talk what entralling things they could tell us.

G. M. VALLOIS.

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# ANTIQUES AND CURIOS IN OUR HOMES

## INTRODUCTORY

### ON THE STUDY OF OLD FURNITURE

I WOULD have you remember that furniture may be said to belong—speaking very broadly—to three ages—that of oak—of walnut—and of mahogany. The age of oak was from all time, but few specimens remain to us which were made before 1550.

We may consider that the oak age continued to 1660 or even 1670. Then came the walnut age, which overlapped the oak and mahogany and lasted from 1660 to 1730—and last came the age of mahogany, which endures to our own day.

The exact date of the appearance of mahogany is uncertain, but we know it was somewhere about 1730, and it is well to remember this approximate date in considering the age of our possessions.

Another way of dividing the periods of furniture styles is thus : Gothic—Tudor—Jacobean—Queen Anne and Georgian, with later still a fashion

called Empire, which is a misnomer for English furniture of the period of late George III. when Napoleon's star was brilliant, but which we have adopted as convenient!

Of Gothic little remains anywhere—here and there a fine ecclesiastical cupboard gives us a good idea of what the woodwork of the 13th century was like.

Of Tudor furniture little survives and that little is chiefly to be found in public museums and fine private collections, and in the panelling to be seen in a few municipal buildings and some of our oldest churches. As I think but few of us are likely to possess anything older than Jacobean times, I will begin my notes at that date.

Mr Hayden in his delightful little book on old furniture, says—"Jacobean is only a rough generalisation of 17th century furniture," and I think that defines the period very correctly; from the reign of James I. to that of Queen Anne, there was not any very material difference in the shapes, or styles, and the reason for this is evident. All through the Civil War society was in too disturbed a condition to give its mind to new household gods; then, during the Commonwealth, the upper classes—chiefly Royalists—were so much impoverished, that they could not afford new furniture and were too depressed by public tragedies and private griefs, to take much interest in such domestic surroundings as the greed of the conquerors had left them.

Then came the Restoration, when conservative spirit renewed old fashions with added splendour—slight alterations gradually crept in, but not decisive ones.

The reigns of James II. and of William and Mary were short and although a change may be observed owing to the influence of the Dutch cabinetmakers, great alterations did not occur till the reign of Queen Anne and later.

Then a very distinct alteration may be observed and so lasting were its effects that we speak of the furniture of that date and of the succeeding reigns of the 1st and 2nd Georges, collectively, as that of Queen Anne. It is, of course, incorrect and a very loose mode of expression, but it is very often done all the same.

This great change leads us on to the splendid period of Chippendale, Heppelwhite and Sheraton, etc., which many consider to be the very finest period of English cabinetmaking.

You must always bear in mind that the interest and value of a thing is by no means regulated by the amount of ornamentation that it possesses—indeed in the present day, when such an amount of sham antique furniture floods the market, you will generally find it profusely ornamented, and very dark in colour, the latter peculiarity being due to the fact that the “man in the street” is firmly convinced that all old furniture is black.

It requires long and careful study to discriminate between genuine old pieces and those that

have been made to meet the present craze for ancient things.

As the demand always creates the supply, numerous gifted persons have occupied themselves in creating masterly imitations of the work of past years.

Their skill has increased with alarming bounds; it used to be sufficient in buying a supposed antique cabinet to inspect the lining of the drawers, which in genuine specimens was usually of oak, and in modern impostures plain stained deal, but these crude methods have long since been superseded and a new era of deception amounting to genius has arrived.

The coarse and rough imitations that you see every day will deceive no one, nor indeed are they intended to do so, but really first-class work may easily deceive even the elect.

For amateurs one simple thing to notice is the state of the polish—is it perfectly smooth, or is there varnish run into the corners? And another—are the edges more or less soft and rounded by wear, or are they sharply and clearly cut?

I am now only considering modest buyers like myself, for whom there is a very dangerous kind of sham, very popular in the present day, and perhaps of all shams it is the most insidious. The plan pursued is to buy old wood, good oak panels, or perhaps solid mahogany doors of Victorian wardrobes, and then to weld the old



and the new together to the confusion of the unlearned.

I possess such a piece, and though it is only a make-up I value it for the beauty of the wood that has been used in its construction. It pretends to be a Sheraton cabinet, but in reality its existence—at least in its present form—began about ten years ago.

I append a list of books which you may study with advantage to gain a fuller knowledge of the fascinating subject of old furniture. Books on technical subjects are expensive, but I have put a star against those which only cost a few shillings.

## BOOKS TO BE STUDIED

- Ancient Coffers and Cupboards - *Frederick Roe.*  
 History of Furniture - - *F. Litchfield.*  
 \* Furniture of the Olden  
   Time - - - *Francis Clary Morse.*  
 Furniture of our Forefathers *Miss Singleton.*  
 \* Chats on Old Furniture - *Arthur Hayden.*  
 \* The Chippendale Period in  
   English Furniture - *K. Warren Clouston.*  
 Eighteenth Century Furniture *Constance Simon.*  
 A History of English Furni-  
   ture - - - - *Percy Macquoid*  
 Collecting Antiques for Pleasure  
   and Profit - - - - *Felix Gade.*

## CHAPTER I

### BRIDAL CHESTS, COFFERS, ETC

IT is difficult now to realise the days when furniture was almost non-existent, even in the castles of the wealthy, and the little there was consisted of a rough board as a table, which was brought in at meal times and put upon trestles, hence the expression "the festive board," and a few joined or "joint" stools, which were the seats of little ease, until some years later two more seats of superior quality were added for the use of the master and mistress.

About the same period as the few chairs, appeared the sideboard, a very different thing to what we call by that name now.

First, it was a second table on trestles, where the steward carved and tasted the dishes, a very necessary precaution in those times of secret poisoning; gradually it evolved a permanent character, first in the form of a huge kind of chest, and later developed into the court cupboard.

Travelling boxes were unknown, indeed journeys were almost an impossibility in the existing state of the roads. People were born,

lived, married, and died in the same house, or near to the house of their birth: life was somewhat stagnant and the women of the household spent their time in weaving vast quantities of linen, which was stored away in large coffers or chests, which (with only partial truth) have come to be called Bridal chests, probably because the young women of the noble families made and stored in these chests the various articles which would be needed later on for their own houses when they married. Gradually towards the Renaissance period these chests became, in all countries, a most important thing to possess—their fronts and sometimes their lids were elaborately carved, and often, especially in Italy, much painted and richly gilt. Subjects of all kinds, religious, allegorical, amorous or warlike, were introduced—especially popular was the representation of a tilt-yard, hence the term “tilting chests” frequently met with in old records.

The larger number of fine chests still surviving are to be found in some of our churches, and in our national collections. In Italy one still meets with very beautiful specimens—“cassone” as they call them, richly painted and gilded, the conscientious handiwork of the great craftsmen of the past, who did not disdain to use their talents on household goods.

I remember a really lovely chest of this kind, in a Roman apartment I once rented and strangely

placed it seemed, with its dim magnificence, amidst the vivid canary curtains and magenta plush chairs, so dear to the hearts of Italian landladies!

There is in the Victoria and Albert Museum a most interesting chest, the original owner of which was minded that no one should make any mistake as to the possessor, for, deeply carved under the lid, but on the front, where all must see, we find this inscription: "This is Esther Hobsonne chist 1637."

It is so seldom that we have any direct record like this, enabling us to know the exact date of an ancient piece of furniture—and how much our fancy weaves round the name of Esther Hobsonne—did she order it to hold her bridal possessions, or did she inherit it at the distribution of her father's effects, and, having found it hard to rescue anything from grasping relatives, determine to stamp it hers, beyond dispute; if this latter supposition is correct, the "chist" was nearly new when it came into her hands, for the lettering and date fit the rest of the carving, but judging from the smooth surface left each side of the lock for some such inscription, I should fancy the lady had it made to her order.

These vast receptacles, which in those days supplied the place of trunks, cabin conveniences, hat-boxes, gladstones and hold-alls, were moved by ox-waggon when necessary and many years later much smaller chests were made—sometimes



CARVED CHEST (circa 1600)  
(Fig. 1)



PLAIN CHEST (circa 1660)  
(Fig. 2)



with a drawer below—of dimensions such as might go on mule back.

These being more fragile and subjected to much moving about, have in most cases disappeared and personally I have never met with one.

The sarcophagus form, so much admired in Italy, did not obtain favour in England—ours are almost all of an oblong shape.

The earliest were used probably in churches and monasteries, but by degrees their usefulness became realised by the laity and the ecclesiastical coffer became the domestic chest.

Fig. 1 is a very fine early specimen—it is of oak and the date probably about 1600 or 1610—its length is 52 inches, its width 22 and its height 28.

You see in this chest an example of the “planted arch,” as it is called, which at that period was a very favourite kind of ornamentation, as was also the “guilloche” band at the bottom.

“Guilloche” was another popular decoration—it is formed by circles made of strap ornament, sometimes two, or even three circles are woven together in this way.

The bands of carving running up the dividing “stiles” which separate the panels is rather unusual, resembling a series of pointed ovals, joined diagonally at the points.

All the carving is incised—that is, cut below the surface, in contrast to being worked in relief.

Fig. 2 is quite plain, but unusually large, being 5 feet 2 inches long. It is of oak roughly panelled and has a strong lock with hasp and bolt, calculated to defeat prying eyes and nimble fingers. Across the end near the top, there used to be a narrow compartment, fitted with a lid and strong lock.

Unfortunately the busy wood-worms gradually made away with it and the jagged remnants had to be removed. This was probably used as the bank of the original owner.

So big is this chest that I have slept therein on a pile of blankets, when an extra bed was imperative in my father's house, which was always of an elastic nature for the convenience of his friends.

Its probable age is not earlier than 1660.

Italian craftsmen were most ingenious in making intricate locks to their coffers and it is in connection with a chest so equipped, that the well-known story of the "Mistletoe Bough" is told. I will briefly relate it.

In the late 17th century at an ancient manor house in one of the southern counties, there took place the wedding of the daughter of the house. It was customary in those days for festivities to be prolonged and for the newly married pair—to whom wedding trips were unknown—to remain with the guests until late.

In the intervals of dancing, games of blind-man's-buff and hide-and-seek were proposed,



and it was in pursuit of the latter that a grim catastrophe overtook the bride.

She was the one to hide and the spot she selected was one of the big chests in the picture gallery. It was about the size of Fig. 1 but of Italian workmanship, and closed with one of their elaborate steel spring locks. You may see many specimens of this complicated kind of mechanism in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Conjecture can only hover over that dread hiding, for no witness was there, save the moonlight filtering through the beautiful Jacobean windows into the long and narrow gallery, and no voice came from the grave to elucidate the mystery.

It is generally supposed that, finding herself unable to raise the lid again, which she had drawn down after she had crouched in the chest, and which of course snapped together with its ingenious spring, the poor bride of a few hours fainted from terror, and there being but little air, she could not recover consciousness and so slipped into the arms of death.

The guests hunted high and low, but no human eyes lighted on the lost girl till about a hundred years later, when her skeleton was discovered, whilst a member of the family was searching all likely places for some lost documents.

So runs the story—probably it is embroidered upon facts, and in course of centuries the facts

may have become obscured and legends taken their place, because there are some inherent improbabilities about the grim tale—for instance one fails to comprehend why all the large coffers, of which there were several, were not searched.

The story is, however, true in the main without doubt.

Another early piece of furniture to be found in every house was "joined, joyned or joint" stools, see Fig. 6. It was the precursor of the chair, but it was not so early as the rough bench which first accompanied the table on trestles.

The first standing table was a stately innovation, and was for long the monopoly of the wealthy. They were companioned by the "joyned" stools, and we see on some of them an ingenious arrangement of grooves, in the horizontal bars, across from the legs, which have served the double purpose of keeping the feet from the draught and dirt of the floor, and also for resting the joint stools on; after a meal the stools were slipped sideways on to these grooved bars, and so were out of the way. Fig. 6 is a good specimen, date about 1625. It is still in excellent preservation, and shows untouched the wooden pegs which in those days were used instead of nails. If you have a piece of furniture—apparently of early date—and it shows iron nails, you may be sure that it is either a fraud altogether, or that, though really old, it has been considerably repaired.

## BRIDAL CHESTS AND COFFERS 13

“Fakers,” that is professional makers of fraudulent furniture, etc., know this so well that they sink the nails deeply, filling up the cavity at the top with sawdust mixed with glue, which, when stained and polished, makes a very passable imitation of the old wooden pin.

You will notice an effective but simple ornament round the top under the seat; it is deeply incised, and quite uninjured by the wear and tear of nearly 300 years.

These stools are remarkably strong, and necessarily so, when we remember how, in the wild old times, they were frequently used as weapons of offence and defence.

Their mode of construction made for strength, the legs widening outwards a little to the bottom, and the stretchers strong and solid, going all round, and only a couple of inches from the floor.

They are popularly, but quite wrongly, called “coffin stools.” It is true they are frequently used in village churches to rest the coffins on by the side of the grave, but they have probably only come to that use as being no longer needed for their original purpose, namely, that of seats at the dining-table.

## CHAPTER II

### CHAIRS OF THE JACOBAN PERIOD

UNDOUBTEDLY the expressions "chairman" and "taking the chair" come from the circumstance that, in olden times, chairs were scarce luxuries ; indeed, there was usually but one for the master of the house, or at most two, the second being reserved for the mistress or the most honoured guest ; thus it is easy to see that the visitor of importance was pressed to "take the chair," till by degrees, as more formal meetings began to take place to discuss civic and municipal affairs, it gradually resolved itself into the most important person present (from being continually pressed into the one seat of honour) being called the "chairman."

Up to the beginning of the 17th century the few chairs in use were strong and heavy, at first in the form of an X, and later more or less square, constructed of solid slabs of oak, with simple designs incised in the wood, like the chip carving of to-day.

Size and strength were of the first importance, because the seat, whatever its shape, had to support a knight in full armour, no trifling weight.

## CHAIRS OF THE JACOBEOAN PERIOD 15

As armour gradually disappeared, such strenuous support was no longer needed, and the X chairs, such as the Glastonbury one and other bulky forms, were replaced by the lighter Jacobean styles.

For those who would like to study thoroughly the subject of Jacobean furniture, there is available for that purpose the contents of Knole, which, by the courtesy of Lord Sackville, is thrown open to the public every Friday.

There, among other treasures, one can see the bedroom with all its fittings as it was arranged for the visit of James I. The bed, with its original hangings of crimson and gold, is most interesting, and by studying this room we learn exactly how a great noble of the early 17th century furnished his room of state.

About this time, even in houses of less pretension than Knole, furniture began to be slowly augmented, and there would be perhaps as many as four chairs adorning the "summer parlour" and the "withdrawing-room," and the hard seats were occasionally softened by "quysshens" of "Turkye werke." This "Turkye werke" was a kind of worsted work, imitated from rugs brought from the East, and we read constantly of carpets of Turkey work; the word carpet did not really apply to a covering for the floor, but to a table cover.

One gets a good idea of their style from the well-known picture of Louis Haghe's, "The

Council of War in the Hall of Courtrai," where the warriors are surrounding a long table, covered with a carpet of "Turkye werke" which greatly resembles a present day Turkey dining-room carpet.

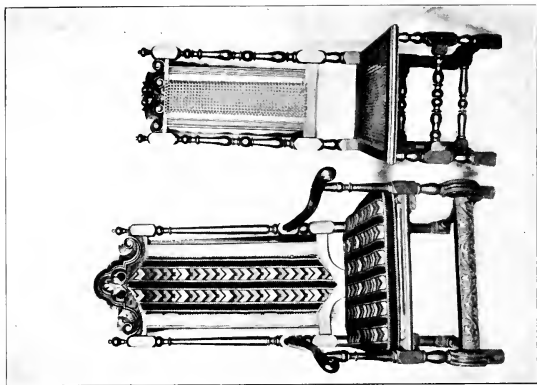
No doubt the artist, who was notoriously careful of the correctness of all his details, painted it from the real thing.

Even as late as nine years after the accession of Charles II., chairs must have been sparse in the houses of the great, and probably, when the nobility left town for their country seats, they took the lighter articles of furniture with them.

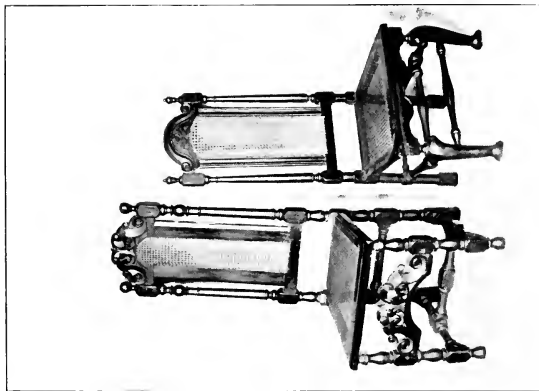
A passage in the Diary of the delightful Pepys—to whom we are indebted for so many side lights on society at this time—seems to prove this.

It is under date 1669: "And so walked to Deptford, and then to the Treasurer's house, where the Duke of York is, and his Duchess, and there we find them at dinner in the great room unhung"—presumably this means that the tapestry had been taken down—"and there was with them my Lady Duchess of Monmouth, the Countess of Falmouth, Castlemayne, Henrietta Hide and my Lady Peterborough. And after dinner Sir Jer. Smith and I were invited down to dinner with some of the maids of honour.

"Having dined, and very merry, etc. . . and so we up and there I did find the Duke of York and Duchess, with all the great ladies,



JACOBEOAN CHAIRS  
(Fig. 3)



JACOBEOAN CHAIRS  
(Fig. 4)





## CHAIRS OF THE JACOBEOAN PERIOD 17

sitting upon a carpet on the ground, there being no chairs, playing at 'I love my love with an A, because he is so and so, and I hate him with an A, because of this and that,' and some of them, but particularly the Duchess herself and my Lady Castlemayne, were very witty"!

Somewhere about 1650, caning first began to be used for the seats of chairs and also as a panel in the back.

The actual date is somewhat uncertain; on this subject I sit at the feet of Mr F. Robinson, one of the greatest authorities on everything connected with English furniture, and he gives 1650 as a probable date.

All these details are of absorbing interest to those studying the subject, because it is often so difficult to reconcile two apparently conflicting facts.

As an example of this, look at the smaller chair in Fig. 3; it is of oak and in excellent preservation—the sides of the back panel are slightly moulded and the uprights, legs and stretchers are hand turned, the legs terminating in square blocks—all these facts point to the date of its manufacture as being early, probably about 1645, but how can that be, if caning was not introduced into England until 1650?

If that really is so, then it could not have been made earlier, and I should put it down as of that date or even later, but now comes a puzzling fact—if you look carefully at the top of the back,

you will see the design of the Prince of Wales' feathers. Now Charles I. was executed in 1649, so that from that time there was no Prince of Wales, until the birth of the unhappy son of James II. in 1688.

The chair is too old for that period and its date offers a difficult conundrum to solve.

Possibly it once possessed an upholstered seat and panel, and was caned much later to give it a fashionable appearance. I cannot say it shows any sign of such an alteration, except that the caning, which is in good order, is quite fine, instead of the larger mesh of its first introduction.

This gives some colour to my idea that the caning was done many years after the chair was made. The second chair in Fig. 3 I take to have been made not later than 1650 or 1655, because it has the richly carved stretcher near to the floor, which was used to keep the feet from the draught, and even sometimes from the dirt accumulated on the floor.

In Charles II.'s time things had improved in this respect, and the front stretcher no longer needed as a foot rail, mounted higher up the chair, indeed it is often found at this date, much carved and of very scrolled shape, almost immediately under the seat.

Of this you see a fine example in Fig. 4. In Fig. 3 the upper edge of the low stretcher is a good deal worn with the constant scraping of generations of feet. No doubt in those days the

## CHAIRS OF THE JACOBEOAN PERIOD 19

floors were cruelly cold, though much improved from the time of the rushes, when dirt and damp was added to draught.

The back and seat are solid though veiled with upholstery and a cushion ; the seat has evidently been mended and now has an uncompromising oak slab added to it which does not fit at the corners, and the mistress of the house did well to add the substantial straw-stuffed pad, that now softens the asperities of the situation.

The needlework is not more than 60 years old, but the cushion and padding to the back are far older. In Georgian times it was considered—in the phraseology of the day—more “genteel” to have stuffed backs and seats, and indeed poor humanity cried aloud for cushions !

Observe the arms, they are very graceful, having the slightly outward curve, which modern imitators find it difficult to achieve with precision, when all is done by machinery.

This chair being in excellent condition, and possessing this beautiful stretcher, and the two front legs with the strange curved excrescences near the feet, may, I think, proudly consider itself what dealers call a “collector’s piece.” The big chair in Fig. 4 is a fine one and perfect in every way, except that it has been re-caned. It was probably made about 1680. It could hardly be much later, for in William and Mary’s reign chair legs had lost their earlier simplicity, and were often somewhat elaborately joined by diagonal

stretchers and also showed various different terminations at the feet.

The peculiar form of the front stretcher too, as I said before, is interesting as marking approximately its date. The second one in Fig. 4 is again a puzzle, though some manifest alterations throw a little light on the subject.

The extreme simplicity of its shape and total lack of ornamentation suggest an early date, but the front legs, which are dumpy and inclining to the cabriole form, must, I think, have been added, somewhere about 1720 or even later—they in no way agree with the chair itself.

Various curious little signs point to the legs of another chair having been used to repair this Jacobean one. Had they made new legs, though of Georgian date they would certainly have made them the right length, but these have been sawed off about 4 inches above the club feet, a portion taken out and the club feet replaced! The effect is that of a gouty dachshund!

I fancy another Georgian addition is the scoloped band under the seat in front. When it came into my father's possession (left to him by a relative, so that we can trace its history back as far as 1780) it was upholstered in a kind of damask. The moths had left but little, and when we pulled it to pieces, we found that the back and seat had been originally caned, and that *apparently* the scoloped band had been added to conceal clumsy upholstery.

## CHAIRS OF THE JACOBEOAN PERIOD 21

If one is a real lover of old furniture, one studies it as a mother does her child and finds out all sorts of curious facts and peculiarities about it, which makes the subject one of undying interest.

Before leaving the subject of Jacobean chairs, I must say something of those specially called "Restoration" chairs. When the Merry Monarch came to his own again, Royalist enthusiasm could not be restrained, it blossomed upon everything and notably upon chairs. The crown appeared on the centre of the back at the top, often also in the centre of the bottom, upon the middle of the ornamental band of carving between the front legs and sometimes—most inappropriately—side-ways on each edge of the back panel.

The specimen I show you in Fig. 5 is typical and in fairly good condition, but it is not such a handsome one as may be seen in public collections.

You will see it has the Royal crown in the centre of the back at the top and a smaller one on the two finials—one of these is unfortunately half eaten away by worms.

It has also what adds to its value as a good example—the Tudor Rose—showing on the two uprights at the top and bottom and also on each side of the centre dividing the typical scroll like ornamentation, so frequently seen on Charles II. chairs, and supposed to be an arrangement of his initial C.

The caning of the back is, I believe, original,  
C

but the seat has been twice re-done to my knowledge.

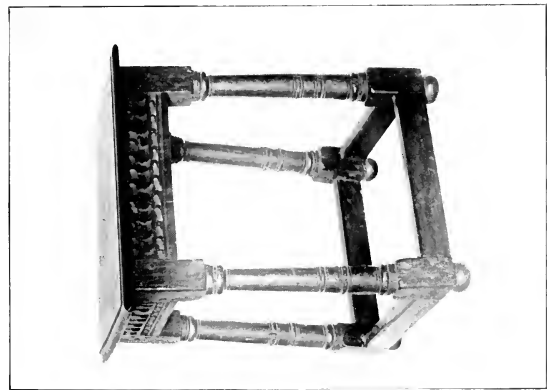
You will notice that the seat is very low, and I am inclined to think, that at some time it has been cut down for the convenience of some owner, for as a rule Jacobean chairs are high.

It has been so well done, that it might deceive the very elect, and one expert, under whose stern and determined eye I never so much as whisper an opinion, almost swallowed me for the suggestion—unguardedly advanced in a moment of expansion—but as he is not likely to read this humble volume, I boldly reiterate my opinion that it has been “cut down,” probably for the use of a child.

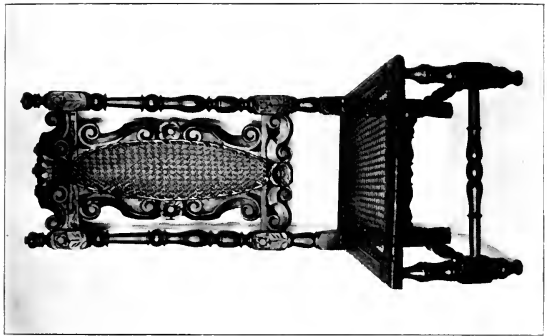
I never saw any chair of the period so remarkably and inconveniently low as this one, hence my conviction.

It was evidently done long ago, perhaps even two hundred years since, but I feel sure it *was* done.

A curious fact is, that the Restoration design was by no means confined to the year 1660—we find it far later, showing the determination of the Royalists to advertise their principles and their joy at the triumph of the good cause; it is moreover very probable, that families who had been Puritans and Roundheads under the Commonwealth, when such views paid well, were anxious by all kinds of outward and visible signs, to show how entirely they were in accord



JOINED STOOL. (circa 1625)  
(Fig. 6)



RESTORATION CHAIR  
(Fig. 5)





## CHAIRS OF THE JACOBEOAN PERIOD 23

with the ruling powers, as represented by the restored monarchy, and one can easily imagine these time-servers hastily ordering "Restoration" chairs to be made with all possible expedition.

This would account for the comparatively large number that still remain to us, singularly large, when one considers that more than two hundred years have passed since even the latest were made. I judge Fig. 5 to have been made about 1675. I gather this date from several signs. First, it has the Royal crown, so presumably it was not made before 1660; secondly, it is rather ornate, showing that it is not an early specimen, for ornamentation became much more pronounced towards the end of the century; and thirdly, the most convincing proof of its date is the fact that it is painted black.

This was a fashion only adopted after the Braganza marriage, which opened up to us traffic with the East and with Holland, and from thence, among other ideas adopted by us, was that of black chairs.

Probably this was intended as a humble imitation of the beautiful ebony and lacquer of the East.

The study of furniture, silver, china, etc., is so enthralling, mainly because it involves so much careful thought—one has to study closely—to consider deeply—to weigh one point against another—before even an approximate date can be arrived at.

As in this instance, there is the crown, the Restoration sign, at first we might be inclined to put its date at 1660 or 1661, yet on consideration we know it must be at least ten years later, because we are confronted with the fact, that black chairs were not known in England till after 1670.

## CHAPTER III

### GATE LEGGED TABLES

THESE appeared about 1630—originally, as I said, there were no tables—boards were used for meals and these were laid upon trestles, both boards and trestles being removed after the food had been eaten. The diners sat upon similar, but narrower boards, precariously stretched across smaller trestles.

By degrees this rough arrangement was improved and dining tables became the fashion, at first being only seen in the castles of the nobility. These first tables were constructed of thick slabs of oak, more or less carved round the sides immediately under the slab and supported on four or six heavy legs, with bulbous ornamentation and of immense thickness.

To go hand in hand with this advance in luxury, dining stools were invented, some long to accommodate several diners, and some of dimensions to seat one only. After use, these were pushed under the table on their sides (see chapter on bridal chests and joint stools).

The first tables made, such as I describe, were enormously heavy, and could not be moved from

their usual position; moreover, the mediæval custom of the entire family dining together was gradually disappearing, so that before long it was felt desirable to have something a little more commodious.

The next step was the "drawing" table arrangement, by means of which the table could be made twice its original length by the pulling out or "drawing" of the upper portion, which dropped down to the level of the lower half. This no doubt suggested the "telescope" dining table of the nineteenth century. These heavy pieces of furniture all had the "Turkye werke" carpets on them and must have been most imposing objects.

Generally, to accompany these tables, there was a narrower one, of somewhat the same style, placed against the wall, on which extra dishes etc., were placed. I have in my possession a strange narrow table that may have been used for this purpose. I can trace it back only 130 years. It is certainly very old and looks as if it might have an ecclesiastical origin. It is very narrow being only  $16\frac{1}{2}$  inches from back to front and 48 long, the height from the ground is 38 inches. The four legs are absolutely square and extraordinarily massive for so small a piece of furniture, measuring 4 inches on each face—these are roughly adorned with incised carving and the front has a band of oak beneath the slab, cut out in something resembling Tudor arches,

whilst the slab itself is ornamented with irregular incised cuts, resembling what is made on the edge of a pie when pressed by a fork, only these cuts are curved.

It has always puzzled me to know what could have been its original use, if not ecclesiastical.

My only other idea is, that it might have been *made up* of old wood taken from some church by the village carpenter, but this does not seem very likely, as that is a species of vandalism that was not much resorted to as far back as I know it to have been in its present condition.

Somewhere about 1645, a double piece of furniture made its appearance, proclaiming itself to be both a chair and a table—the chair portion was, in fact, a box of the settle type—a very useful article when receptacles were so few. The box had arms and a back, which, to form a table, swung forward on iron pivots, and was fastened to the arms by means of rude pins.

There are plenty of sham chairs and tables of the kind to be bought, but the real ones are very scarce. I have only seen one—outside museums—and that was of quite common wood, and comparatively modern, in a Cornish cottage.

Compared to the heavy tables I have described, the “gate-legged” was a feather weight, though mine (of solid oak) is too massive for me to move unaided. It was, however, in those days, a great move in the direction of convenience. As most of you know, this kind of table is oval; when ex-

tended, it has two flaps, which let down, leaving a straight space between, so that when closed or put against the wall, it occupies very little room.

The flaps, when up, rest upon two of the legs, which pull forward, and the number of the legs altogether is eight, though in a few specimens the number reaches sixteen.

Many of these tables still exist, and it may interest you to know something as to the approximate dates of the different kinds you meet.

Remember that genuine old tables of this shape are always made in oak or in walnut; by the time mahogany came into general use this kind of table was seldom made.

The earlier ones, prior to 1670, were usually, though not quite invariably of oak, and those from 1670 to 1740, or thereabouts, generally of walnut.

Fig. 7 represents the earliest kind made, and this method of arranging the legs, to what was then a new kind of table, was probably first employed about 1630, and continued up to 1650. It is, however, impossible to give exact dates, because as there was little travelling, and therefore but little interchange of ideas in commerce, craftsmen often continued to work on old patterns in the provinces, though new forms and new tools to aid in their development had been for some time in use in the great capitals. It is, therefore, on this account dangerous to speak assuredly as to the age of any piece of furniture, simply on account of



OBLONG GATE LEGGED TABLE  
(Fig. 8)



EARLY GATE LEGGED TABLE  
(Fig. 7)





its pattern or mode of construction being such as belonged to a special date.

You will notice that in this specimen the legs are cut from the solid square, the rounding being entirely due to carving, not turning.

Turning with the lathe was but little employed, at any rate in England, till the reign of Charles II. Probably for a long time lathes were very expensive, and beyond the means of humble artificers.

Fig. 7 is in good preservation, and I cannot detect any reparations except new hinges, which, though not the original ones, are still of a respectable antiquity, and the drop handle to the drawer, which appears to me not more than fifty years old.

Usually the runners for the drawers in old tables show the restorer's hand, for in consequence of some cause which is obscure, it is a part very generally attacked by wood worms, and repairing therefore is compulsory—in this case all seems original.

It is rather unusually large, measuring 66 inches long and 47 across and will seat 7 comfortably at dinner. Its surface is of a hard, glassy smoothness only found after generations of notable housewives have rubbed and polished, in a manner that would astonish the slack servants of the present day.

These early gate-legged tables are sometimes called Cromwell tables, but that seems to me quite a misnomer. Cromwell was not made

Protector till 1653, and these tables were by that time well established pieces of furniture, though only in the homes of the nobility and very wealthy citizens.

The next advance was to have the legs turned with a lathe and they were generally altogether more slender. A fairly large number of these are still to be found here and there with old families, but the third variety, with spirally turned legs, are very rare. They are extremely graceful and are mostly found of walnut. The reason for their rarity is probably that they were rather smaller and lighter than their predecessors, and so were more often dragged from one position to another, and also, that society gradually becoming more progressive, there was more travelling and changing of residences, and consequently more wear and tear to furniture. Of this special type I do not possess an example, though I am the owner of three of different dates.

Occasionally, one sees a very small specimen of the gate-legged species, but they are very rare and difficult to acquire. They are about 20 inches high and 30 long and, I fancy, must have been made for a nursery, as they are just a convenient height for a child sitting in the low basket chairs that one never sees now.

They are most desirable and I have my eye on one now, in the private room of a public-house not far from London, where I often go for tea.

It is placed in a low dark room near a window, and my attention was drawn to it by the presence on its worm-eaten surface of a superb green and orange wool mat, supporting a luscious group of wax fruit. It is, I think—I say *think* advisedly, for I have never had the good fortune to penetrate into this apartment, sacred to family uses—genuine, and it is a species of Naboth's vineyard to me.

I often pass the window on purpose to see if the coveted treasure is still there, but my spirit is not—as yet—of that courageous sort, that can unshrinkingly demand if the owners will sell. Truly they have the air of being very much richer than I am.

I have another table of this kind though not so remarkably small—it was given me by one who knew me to be languishing for the Naboth's vineyard in the public-house. It is small, only measuring 34 inches long and 24 across. It is in several ways an interesting piece and I wish I had room to give you a picture of it.

It was probably made for my lady's parlour, perhaps for coffee. It is in good condition though I think one flap has certainly been repaired and there has also been a reparation to one leg. These legs mark a period and present an object lesson on what I said just now, with regard to the danger of judging dates only from forms and fashions.

In this case the legs are carved by hand

and not by a lathe, and yet the table was certainly not made before quite the latter years of Charles II.'s reign, for the feet show the peculiar slightly outward turn which began at that date, and which became much more marked under William and Mary. The outward curve being only slight in this case, and having regard to the legs being hand carved, I should say it was made somewhere between 1680 and 1695, and probably in the remote country, where lathe turning was not as yet in much evidence.

The drawer has a dear little drop handle shaped like an acorn, and is, I think without doubt, the original one.

I inaugurated a kind of house-warming to introduce it to its respectable housemates, and used my Sheffield plate kettle seen in Fig. 59, and the old Caughley tea and coffee service of which I speak in Chapter XXIII. In Fig. 8 you see a small table of walnut wood which I take to have been made in the reign of Queen Anne, or possibly in that of William, the 8-sided legs slightly tapering towards the feet are very unusual, though occasionally seen about that period.

It is rather a peculiar little table and some are of opinion that it was made to private order, from timber cut on the estate, which was a very usual arrangement with the landed gentry 200 years ago.

It is as you see a gate-legged table, though only a one-sided one, and the flap which is rect-

angular, instead of dropping down, turns up, and over, on its strange and primitive circular hinges. I have had it photographed so as to shew this peculiarity in its construction.

It is these peculiarities, and a certain roughness of workmanship, that has given birth to the idea, that it was made by the family carpenter. It is deplorably worm-eaten at the back, and in the part under the slab, so I never put any serious weight on it.

It has one little drawer in good order, and with its tiny circular brass knob as the handle—this is rather a distinctive feature of Queen Anne furniture and so helps us to consider her reign as its date.

With regard to worm holes, it is a terribly difficult matter to stop the creatures' ravages, and I think the only way is to patiently squirt paraffin into every hole with a fine sewing-machine oil can, Not unfrequently they first attack the feet of tables and chairs and then the difficulty is easier to deal with—put each foot into a jam jar of paraffin for 12 hours.

## CHAPTER IV

### ARMOIRES, CUPBOARDS, ETC

THESE being as a rule heavy things, they were not much moved and so did not perish from rough usage like chairs and other small articles.

There is a considerable variety in the cupboards of olden days ; we have the court cupboard, the livery cupboard, the Dole cupboard, the press, the hutch and the armoire.

As there is a great variety in their kinds and styles, so is there an equal diversity in the opinions of experts, as to the separate uses of each.

The court cupboard seems to have been used for keeping table linen, glasses, mugs, etc., and we hear of a ewer and bason in some instances, which belonged to the cupboard, and were used in cleansing the table appointments.

One of the chief characteristics of the court cupboard seemed to be that the upper part was less deep from back to front than the lower, leaving a space on which to stand cups and flagons, and that the sides sloped off, showing the upper half wider behind than before, also that the top was supported at the corners, down to the lower half on Bulbous columns.

Then comes the livery cupboard ; controversy is very brisk as to the exact meaning of "livery," and also what was the shape of the article so designated.

It appears to me after studying the different opinions of the learned ones, that the "livery" cupboard was, at first, simply a set of shelves without doors, and that later an improvement was made and (still keeping in mind that the food on the shelves must have air) doors composed of open balusters, were made—this makes the livery cupboard come into line with the butter cupboard, and the Dole cupboard.

The earliest specimens certainly had no doors, for in the British Museum there is an interesting joiner's bill, of the time of Henry VIII., mentioned by Mr Litchfield in his monumental work, "Illustrated History of Furniture."

"Ye cobards they be made ye facy on of livery, y is without doors"—the spelling, you see, is strictly phonetic.

The later idea of the baluster front is the same which gave birth to the beautiful open work wheel front cupboards, let into the wall in some of the old houses in Brittany, which are still used for the storage of food, and which are often companioned by wall bedsteads, closed by doors of the same pattern. Evidently, in those far-off days, cupboards of all kinds were most popular, for we read of "cubberts," "cobards," and "cubbords" being made to order and left by will.

We hear, too, of hutches, presses, and armoires. Presses were always of the "cubbert" type, and were almost identical with armoires, but the latter usually possessed a drawer, and hutches inclined to the chest formation.

Fig. 9 is a grand specimen of a Jacobean armoire. It has one drawer at the top and two cupboards below, while still lower is a single cupboard, which extends inside, the whole width.

You must understand that the little nest of drawers on the top does not belong to it, any more than the china does. Of that charming little piece of furniture you will see an account in the chapter on Queen Anne furniture, but it has stood (I imagine) on that armoire ever since it was born, somewhere about 1710, and I felt it would not do to separate the old friends; though of totally different dates, they seem to suit each other so well.

The armoire has been in my family for several generations, and I should think it was made about 1640.

It is of oak, inlaid with what I take to be pear. The hinges of iron are original, and so are the two drop handles to the drawers, but the key plates, though undoubtedly very old, are not original, I feel sure, because if you look at the bottom one, you will see it has been cut at the side to make it fit.

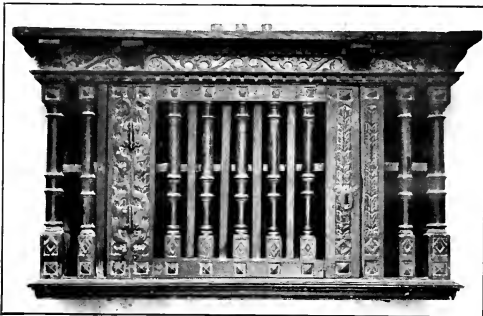
Inside the upper cupboard are two rough shelves, and the whole thing divides in half, where you see





JACOBEOAN ARMOIRE

(Fig. 9)



DOLE CUPBOARD

(Fig. 10)



the projecting moulding, and fits together with pegs in sockets. It would be too heavy to move without this arrangement.

You will see the doors are rivetted with wooden pins. If you are ever tempted to buy an old armoire or press, be very careful, for fraud reigns supreme with this kind of *pièce*. The makers have all kinds of ingenious methods for the undoing of the simple-minded.

A very general way is to buy old wood, really old, very often panels from churches, rooms, etc., and with great care and ingenuity make them up into apparently stately pieces of antique furniture.

The gifted Ouida introduces an amusing incident of this kind into one of her novels. An Italian aristocrat, poor and unscrupulous, employs his leisure moments in constructing spurious antiques of all kinds, but he justifies himself on the ground that his treasures are really old.

“My tabernacle is a beautiful tabernacle,” he said tranquilly. “Pure quattro cento—pure quattro cento, that I will swear—not a detail of it that is not quattro centisto. I chose every detail myself, and the wood is old—old—that too I will swear, and I ought to know, for the wood was a flour hutch of my mother’s when I was a baby, per Bacco! I know what the City of London and its very clever people will accept, and what it will not accept, though I have never been there. It will be on its knees before my tabernacle; all their

South Kensington will adore my mother's flour hutch . . . ”

It was a very clever satire, and it will be useful to us all to remember it. Let us beware of the flour hutch of the antique dealers.

Fig. 10 is a good specimen of a livery cupboard. These being, as a rule, rather small, and on account of their baluster fronts, delicate of construction, have mostly perished.

There are several in the Abbey Church of St Albans, of which this is one. It stands in the south aisle. There is, too, a much larger one there that I take to have been a Dole cupboard. The carving is similar to that on my “joint” stool. See Fig. 6.

In the oldest cupboards destined for food, if there were solid doors, they got over the difficulty of lack of air by piercing the sides and back with air-holes.

There is a remarkable example of an enormous Dole cupboard, which, however, Mr Robinson designates as an armoire, at Aubazine in Central France. It is either 12th or very early 13th century work.

The church is 12th century, and probably the cupboard dates from the same time. It stands at the foot of a long and picturesque stone stair, which leads from the north transept up to the dormitories, once occupied by the monks, and opening on to a curiously paved corridor, from which the cells open. This fine old cupboard, a

grand survival of craftsmanship, is almost 8 feet high, and is pierced at the sides, for the admission of air.

It was, I should think, almost certainly a Dole cupboard, for in those days, and in so wild and deserted a part of the country, as it must have been, judging from its present state of isolation, the peasants must have been often dependent (especially in bad weather) on the charity of the monks, who made their own bread in the huge kitchens, which tell of the vast community founded by the saintly Etienne d'Aubazine, in the early part of the 12th century.

His tomb in the S. Transept (1280) is worth making a long pilgrimage to see.

We drove up there from Brive, one lovely autumn day, and at that season the winding road through the chestnut woods was a blazing glory of crimson and gold.

The beautiful Abbey is now (or was in 1908) in the hands of nuns, who are a Providence to the surrounding country and who have an orphanage there, but they were daily fearing expulsion, which would be a real calamity in the long hard winters, when the peasants round largely depend upon the good sisters for help in most of the ills that flesh is heir to.

The old monastery garden with its charmingly picturesque well was bathed in a glorious September sunshine when we first saw it and we remained till we saw it again in the soft gloom of twilight.

## CHAPTER V

### THE EVOLUTION OF THE CHEST OF DRAWERS

THERE is still a large number of genuine old chests of drawers to be seen about the country, being heavy, they were not easily moved about and have not perished from rough usage like so many smaller pieces.

What a comfort an old one is, the drawers all made of good seasoned wood, running like satin, far removed indeed from the odious specimens one encounters in lodging-houses, which for long resist all persuasive measures, before they will open, and having at last done so (all on one side as if they were making a face at their temporary owner), it is with such violence that some of the contents leap to the floor—then what a business—almost worse, to shut the unwilling creature again.

Not so our old treasures, which after a useful life of from one to two hundred years, open and shut at the word of command.

I should like you to consider the gradual development of what is now called “a chest of drawers”—first came the vast coffers, deep and strong, which contained not only the clothes

and the linen, but also the valuables of the family.

By degrees rough cupboards were made, of oak and elm, but generally of the former, and from these two pieces of furniture were gradually evolved the fine cabinets with which we are now familiar and the "chest of drawers."

The latter began thus—first there was added to the coffer, or chest, a drawer, which was placed below the box part, next came two drawers, still below the chest, and then a daring innovator swept away the coffer altogether, and behold three drawers.

This, with various changes and varieties, has become the "chest of drawers" of everyday life.

I do not think that this piece of furniture came into being till about 1646 to 1650 and the high double chests, called by some "tall boys," were not in use till 100 years later.

There is diversity of opinion as to the exact use of this term. It seems to me that a double chest of drawers cannot correctly be termed a "tall boy," because the same name cannot be used to express two totally different things, and undoubtedly the expression "tall boy," or "high boy," properly belongs to a piece of furniture introduced under William and Queen Anne, which consisted of a chest of drawers mounted upon a table furnished with four or six legs.

We have in our family a piece of this kind,

the date of its birth being about 1730. It is easy in this case to fix the age with fair precision, because the drawers slightly overlap beyond the framework; a style of workmanship which, common in Queen Anne's time, did not last much beyond 1730.

The lower or table part of this "tall boy" has, as was usual, three small drawers and four slightly cabriole legs.

This lower portion is slightly larger all round than the piece which rests on it, and if separated from the upper part, can be used as a table only.

The "low boy" was a distinct piece of furniture and was the dressing table made to go with the "high or tall boy." These dressing tables are usually some 6 inches lower than the under part of the "tall boy." The table surface in these "low boys" is extremely limited and gave but little space for the wealth of brushes, combs, mirrors, cosmetics, boxes and trays that one associates with the toilet of a beauty of the 18th century.

My example is of walnut, and has all but two of the original handles. Handles tell much to the enquiring student, concerning the age of furniture to which they belong. I should like to devote some time to their consideration, but have only space enough to warn you—first, that naturally certain styles belong to certain periods, and secondly, what is most important,





CHEST-U'PON-CHEST (handles intact)  
(Fig. 11)



CHEST OF DRAWERS (handles intact)  
(Fig. 12)



that it is necessary to use close observation to discover whether certain specimens are genuine or only clever imitations.

There is a soft roundness in the edges of old brass handles, almost impossible to achieve in the new, which usually betray a certain harshness of outline.

The plan pursued by some clever "fakers" is to put several new examples into a kind of cylindrical box, made to revolve rapidly after the manner of a coffee roaster—the imprisoned handles and key plates, by dint of constantly shouldering each other in this confined space, assume a certain amount of roundness of outline, calculated to ensnare the unwary, but never quite acquire the soft edges which have been produced by the kindly hand of time.

Fig. 11 shows a "chest upon chest," or "double chest," by some also called a "tall boy." These pieces generally possess three drawers in the lower portion, with two or three in the upper, according to their depth, and two smaller ones under the top which is flat, whereas the "tall boy" proper usually—I think I may say invariably—has a kind of curved horn on each side, such as you see in the Chippendale cabinet, Fig. 24.

I judge Fig. 11 to have been made about 1760 to 1775, on account of the fluted sides of the upper half, also because it is oak as to the "carcase," as it is called. The drawers are fronted with

solid mahogany and solid slabs of this wood form the tops of both portions.

I am not sure whether the handles are the original ones or not, but I fancy they are; they have, I feel sure, been untouched for over one hundred years. I have a second chest of this kind, in some respects handsomer, about the same age, but not nearly in such good preservation; it has, however, a good broad projecting cornice, which greatly adds to its imposing appearance. The handles are all perfect but one and very pretty they are, quite different to those of Fig. 11, being entirely round both as to the plate and to the rings which are deeply serrated.

Immediately under the top of the lower half, a mahogany slab pulls out—some think this was for writing, others that it was used as a dressing-table and others again that it was intended as an aid to brushing and folding the clothes. I incline to this last idea, for a writing slab or dressing-table projecting from the middle of such a solid piece of furniture would assuredly be very inconvenient. I have a good but not specially handsome single chest of a later period, about 1790 I should think, very likely made for the nursery where it lived as lately as during my childhood.

It is of red mahogany, decorated round each drawer and the top with a narrow inlay in black—probably stained holly. The handles are extremely handsome, being substantial lions' heads

of formidable appearance. They are certainly not the original ones, which should be more of the Sheraton period, slight and graceful, with a round or oval brass disc, set flat upon the wood, and a circular or oval ring to hold by. There is a distinct hole under each lion's head, and smaller marks round which show that a handle of a totally different form was once attached. The question of handles is well worth study, and often suggests subtle difficulties; for instance, these lions' heads are manifestly much older than the piece of furniture on which they are; they must, therefore, I conclude, have been saved from some older defunct piece and transplanted to this comparatively modern chest.

I must not multiply illustrations, otherwise I should like to have shown you a handsome example of about 1820. It is of rosewood, slightly curved in front, and having two charming spirally-turned columns at the two sides. It has wooden handles, which at that time were beginning, in all their vulgar ugliness, to supersede the fine old brass ones. A little later something even more in bad taste appeared—namely, huge round handles of cut glass.

Fig. 12 is an earlier specimen, and of a superior kind; indeed, it proudly considers itself a Chipendale. It certainly belongs to that period, and is a beautifully made piece, as solid and perfect as when it left its maker's hands. It is of oak as far as the inside of the drawers goes and the back,

but the top, sides, and fronts of the drawers are of mahogany, darkened by the polishing and friction of generations. The handles are certainly original, and all perfect, except as you see for the loss of a small drop ornament from the second drawer on the left side.

The tiny chest on the top at first sight appears to belong to a doll's house, but in reality it is a medicine chest. I do not think it is of a greater antiquity than 1790. It once must have had two tiny doors, which, unfortunately, have disappeared, leaving no disfigurement until very closely inspected, when you see the marks left where once there were four small hinges.

In those days good housewives made much of their own family medicines, and stored quantities of such horrid things as rhubarb, Epsom salts, sulphur, jalop, and kindred atrocities. No house was well furnished without a medicine chest. I remember at one time our family was well equipped with four.

The kind of drawers most frequently imitated, and sold as genuine old ones, are those pretending to be of the Sheraton period—satinwood inlaid a little, and sometimes enriched with suitable painting, generally curved in front, or still more frequently, because less expensive to make, mahogany, with bands of satinwood about three-quarters of an inch wide round each drawer.

There are but few real ones to be found floating about the market, so be careful if you are tempted

by an engaging looking antique. Very often the handles alone will warn you, but of course you must remember that the handles may have been added yesterday, and yet the piece itself may be genuine. Alas! there are so many snares gaping to swallow the inexperienced.

## CHAPTER VI

### FURNITURE OF THE QUEEN ANNE PERIOD

ANNE came to the throne in 1702, when the 18th century that was to give so much decorative treasure was in its infancy, and when the Dutch influence which began in the later years of Charles II. and increased greatly under successive reigns, had largely affected the shapes of furniture, by introducing the forms we now recognise under the name of Queen Anne furniture, though no doubt much of it had been made in Holland.

The extremely ornate marquetry decoration of the Dutch style did not obtain much popularity in England—we copied the shapes but executed them without their elaborate decoration—indeed, the furniture of the first half of the century was very plain and simple in England, affording a great contrast to that of the last hundred years. All was simple and with very little ornament and the chairs showed a tendency to study the anatomy a little more; under William the backs began to show the double curve in the splat, which yielded some slight comfort to a weary sitter, instead of the absolutely straight and narrow supports of the previous reigns. Still later the





QUEEN ANNE CHAIR

(Fig. 15)



seats became broader and the backs lower, the legs developing a more decided cabriole form, which form remained a favourite for a good sixty years or more, and died hard at last. This is not strange, for the delicate curves of the knee and foot always have such a pleasing effect, owing to the play of lights on the rounded surfaces that catch them, and the corresponding shadows around these bright points.

Chairs of this period, if of uncertain date, are often called Dutch chairs, without sufficient reason, except that they certainly owe their form to the taste imported from Holland and from the end of William's reign to the beginning of that of George III., there was but little radical alteration in shape, so the difficulty of exact dating is comfortably glossed over by the general term "furniture of the Dutch form."

The example I give you in Fig. 15 is, as far as my knowledge goes, a pure example of a real Queen Anne chair, date about 1708 to 1712. I think it shows its English origin by the form of the seat; the Dutch chairs usually had a wooden frame-work, into which the upholstered seat sank; in this case, as you see, there is no visible frame-work and the covering is carried over the edges, everywhere except where the legs make it impossible.

It is one of three and the original covering was a seductive kind of powder blue brocade, which, alas! fell into shreds and was perforce changed,

for something strong and useful for everyday purposes, the original powder blue, however, has been respected, in the humble cretonne of to-day.

These three chairs are of walnut, and are only slightly inlaid in a rather unusual way with holly or some other light wood, in slanting lines on the splat (the splat is the central portion of the back) coming down diagonally from the edges and meeting in the centre, thus forming a kind of V, the two uprights on either side, are similarly decorated, but have only the single diagonal inlays.

These lines, being of a very decided yellow, come out black unfortunately in photography and therefore do not show at all. There are small head pieces ornamented with the same carving in relief that adorns the cabriole legs. This addition—first seen in William's reign—was decidedly imported from Holland and is, I think, far more graceful than the effect of the straighter topped backs, seen in late Chippendale chairs.

The back legs terminate in pad feet, but the front ones, though also of the pad form, finish with an indication only of a curious kind of animal's foot—what it is meant to represent I cannot imagine, for there are distinct nails shown, somewhat like the nails of a human foot, but otherwise the somewhat indistinct toes, are those of some large bird, unknown to natural historians. The chairs being hand made, in each one the carving varies a little.

They are singularly heavy—when one of them, through senile decay, dropped a leg, I was astonished at the enormous weight of the severed member.

N.B.—The prices charged by expert workmen for mending valuable old furniture are prodigious; it cost me 10s 6d to restore this leg to the body before the war, so if you possess anything good, take care of it and if possible avoid the necessity for repairs.

To this period belong the bombé tables with drawers, chests of drawers, and cabinets. Bombé fronted means that the two ends of the front are rounded and come forward, and another variety is when the lower drawers of a cabinet or chest of drawers swell out in a bulging form, further than the top ones; when the sides bulge correspondingly, the American connoisseurs, who have invented so many telling expressions, call them "kettle" cabinets, etc.

There were also made at this time writing tables, that resembled almost exactly the dressing table in Fig. 18, but they were naturally not quite so high. Very many of these are still to be found, made generally of walnut, sometimes ornamented with "herringbone" inlay, of which I shall speak presently, quite as often showing a carved shell either between the drawers or on them; this ornament, however, was not much used, I think, until somewhat later, not perhaps until 1730, but it is difficult to be quite certain of this.

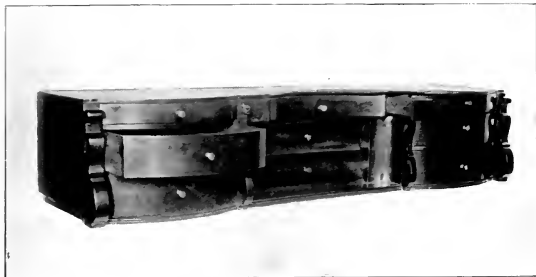
Certainly one peculiarity of drawers in the time of Queen Anne, is that they were so constructed that they did not sink into the slides prepared for them, but the fronts were a little larger than the opening, and so covered it all round. I have seen one or two charming little bureaux of this period, of walnut, but remarkably small and bearing no cabinet above. They rather resemble writing-desks, mounted on cabriole legs, some taller, some shorter. They are most dainty and charming pieces, but very scarce.

Rather commoner are such tables as you see in Fig. 14. It is either a "low boy," such as I described in the chapter on chests of drawers, or perhaps an unattached dressing-table, or again perhaps it was a writing-table.

It certainly is not the "low boy" belonging to my "high boy." I should like to think it is, but the arching under the three drawers is of quite a different form to that of the lower part of the "tall boy," or "high boy," so that I cannot flatter myself I have the complete set.

Fig. 14 is, like so much of Queen Anne furniture, of walnut, and its polish, the effect of two hundred years of friction, is really wonderful.

The handles are original and uninjured, the legs cabriole, and terminating in pad feet, and the drawers all working in good order. You see here fairly distinctly, the peculiarity of the overlapping front to the drawers, and it is well always to remember that this fashion died out somewhere



BURR WALNUT CHEST OF DRAWERS  
(Fig. 13)



WALNUT "LOW BOY"  
(Fig. 14)





about 1740, but did not absolutely disappear—cabinetmakers being extremely conservative—until later.

I have not space to say much of the elaborate Dutch marquetry of this period, it was never very popular in England. Some of their best and most valuable cabinets and chests, etc., present such a medley of colour, design and restless decoration, that the tormented eye seeks anxiously for a plain surface, in the contemplation of which to rest the vision.

There seems something a little incongruous and false in taste, in having delicate flowers, fruits, ribbons, etc., meandering upon solid cabinets and chairs.

Fig. 13 is a valuable little piece, I have never met with one like it.

It is entirely uninjured, and has its tiny brass knob handles all perfect. I cannot say whether it ever belonged to some other piece of furniture, but I rather think not; for over one hundred and fifty years it has passed its peaceful existence on the top of the Jacobean armoire, as you see it in Fig. 9.

The wood is "Burr" walnut, which means that it has been taken from the root of the tree, showing a large amount of "figure," and has a most decorative effect. Collectors are always keen to light upon specimens of "Burr" walnut.

Round each drawer and panel is a "herring-bone" band of inlay; the name almost explains

itself, narrow lengths of wood, extremely thin, called "veneer," are so chosen and cut that the "figure" shall run diagonally across it; two pieces are so placed side by side that the "figure" lines shall meet in the centre in the form of a V—the effect is very pleasing, so delicate and so simple. This form of decoration belongs to the early 18th century. Unfortunately the "herringbone" inlay does not show well in the photograph.

There are, as you see, three drawers each side and one in the middle at the top, with a deep one below which only *pretends* to be two. Notice what a graceful effect is obtained by making the drawers at the sides convex and those in the middle concave. The large photograph, Fig. 15, is given to show the details of construction, but a better idea of the whole thing is obtained in Fig. 9 where it is shown on the Jacobean armoire.

On each side of the central top drawer there are two tiny ones concealed—I use the word concealed, because they have the appearance only of small ornamental panels, and no visible means of opening, so that no one would suspect to find drawers. The insertion of a finger nail under the front edge creates the miracle. I have opened one to show the arrangement.

The great mystery, however, is lurking behind the deep central drawer. On pulling this out, you find four little boxes rather than drawers that lie like coffins in a Royal vault, one under the other on each side, sunk in the thickness of those con-

cave recesses, you see each side of the deep drawers, which have the air of being purely ornamental.

In Chapter V. I have given an account of the "high" or "tall boy" which was a piece of furniture much used in Queen Anne's reign, but, as I explained, the double chest did not appear until considerably later.

## CHAPTER VII

### BUREAUX, DRESSING AND WRITING TABLES

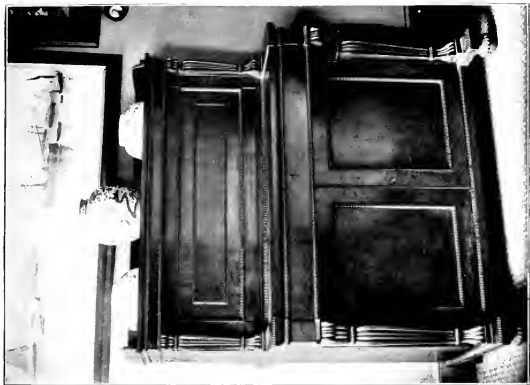
THERE is a peculiar fascination for me in the bureaux of the past. They could tell us so much, if only they could speak.

Fig. 16 is a very peculiar and uncommon specimen, and is immensely admired for its wonderful handwork, especially in the black beading which is either ebony or stained holly, probably the latter, as ebony is so hard to manipulate. This beading is its sole decoration, except the very charming effect which is achieved by placing the beautifully grained mahogany at different angles.

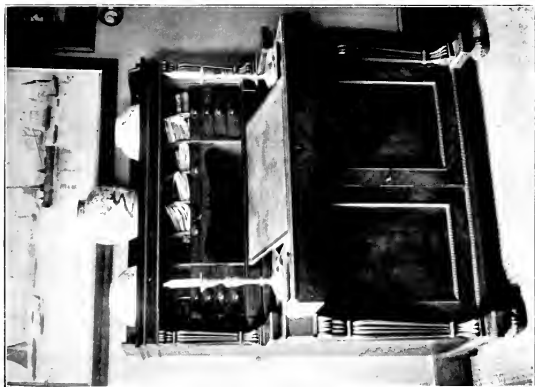
It is of the period of early Sheraton, having been made according to family records for an Admiral to take to sea.

Sheraton was fond of using satin and other woods as inlay. There is nothing of this in the piece we are now considering, but its peculiar construction and the various ingenious hiding-places certainly give some colour to the theory that it was made in the workshop of the famous Sheraton.

When closed, as in Fig. 16, it has somewhat



BUREAU CLOSED  
(Fig. 16)



BUREAU OPEN  
(Fig. 17)



## DRESSING AND WRITING TABLES 57

the appearance of a cottage piano—under the front are two doors, which opening show a shelf and plenty of space,

The front part where the keyhole is, veils the great hiding-place and until you are let into the secret it seems impenetrable; there is no visible crack, hinge or anything which can possibly give a clue to the method of opening. In reality it is very simple—you press firmly and steadily on the upper part, above the keyhole, when behold! as you push, the part below your hand, which is about eight inches deep, comes forward, whilst the part on which you are pressing disappears mysteriously, disclosing, by the sudden dropping of a mahogany band, a small opening into which you insert your fingers, raise them gently, and you displace the whole upper front, which seems to turn upon a kind of pivot. This reveals a set of pigeon-holes, a space in the centre below with a drawer above, and three drawers on each side.

This is as you see it in Fig. 17. The central table part when open is covered with leather; it can be raised and forms a desk, with a considerable space below. On each side are mahogany compartments, which lift out and disclose more drawers, the presence of which is ingeniously concealed by candleslides, which pull backward and forward according to convenience.

Sheraton was a past master in the art of making these puzzling contrivances, and it is quite possible

it is a piece of his early work, though there is nothing to prove it in any way. I have never seen any bureau in the least like this with its complicated arrangements for opening and shutting, and it cannot be considered at all a typical example though a most interesting one. The half front which I described to you as turning on a kind of pivot, is, of course, a variety of the principle of the roll-top desk of the present day, which was well in use as far back as the middle of the 18th century, as we may know by the famous *bureau du Roi* by Oeben and Riesener of the time of Louis XV., of which there is a most perfect copy in the Wallace collection. Different students of furniture apply quite different names to the same articles, and Americans generally apply the term bureaux to the kind of chests of drawers that we usually speak of as "commodes," but this does not seem to me correct. Bureaux, to my mind, are pieces of furniture consisting below, either of a cupboard or two or three drawers, then a slanting board, which, dropped down, reveals nests of drawers and pigeon-holes, and itself forms a writing-board, or more rarely when the closing part slips back as in Figs. 16 and 17, but in any case I call nothing a bureau that has not nests and pigeon-holes. Some bureaux have cabinets above and some not, but that does not affect the enclosed part.

The study of furniture is quite complicated



## DRESSING AND WRITING TABLES 59

enough without increasing the difficulties and confusion by calling different kinds of pieces by the same name.

There is a great variety in the arrangement of the pigeon-holes and not unfrequently there are secret places which remain undiscovered for many years.

A common place for these interesting places of concealment is in the centre, concealed beneath a tiny cupboard or between drawers. Its presence is so contrived as to be quite undiscoverable, except to those who are sharp enough to perceive that the real and *apparent* depth of some part is not the same.

Sometimes the secret part is at the sides behind little ornamented pillars, sometimes running the entire width at the back, the opening being under one of the drawers.

I have a cabinet not more than one hundred or perhaps one hundred and ten years old, which has a very singular place of concealment at the very top. There is below a narrow secret cupboard hidden behind a valuable Dutch picture painted on glass, but besides this at the height of 6 feet from the ground there is a cavity in the cornice about 16 inches long by 8 wide and 6 deep, which is concealed by a small panel fitting so accurately that it can only be dislodged by a penknife. This piece of furniture was made to order by my great grandfather, who must have shared the cynical belief that a secret shared with

even one confidant is no secret at all, for he never divulged this mystery even to his nearest and dearest, and it was left to me to discover this long hidden "safe" only six years ago.

Fig. 18 is a dressing-table, the same form was used for writing-tables but the difference in the height will generally show you for which purpose the piece was made. This one is far too high for writing at. Its date I should think to be about 1740 to 1750. I have some interesting family records concerning it, going back apparently to the year of its construction.

It is immensely and cruelly heavy. The interior is of oak, but the top, sides, fronts of drawers and cupboard door are of mahogany, so is the "drawing" slab which, as you see, can be pulled out under the table part.

Above the little cupboard and under the long drawer, is a small secret drawer divided into two compartments. All the drawers are lined with a thick rough blueish grey paper, like nothing that is made in the present day.

The handles are all perfect and unusually handsome—observe the charming baby pair on the "drawing slab."

The mirror standing on the top is of later date, perhaps about 1785. It is in good condition, with three little jewel drawers below, where our great grandmothers kept their trinkets and patches, etc. These drawers have still their discoloured ivory knobs. The knobs remain



DRESSING TABLE (circa 1750)  
*(Fig. 18)*



WRITING TABLE  
*(Fig. 19)*



also on the two uprights, but the brass screens on which the glass swings are manifestly restorations.

The mahogany of which it is made is very dark, and it is inlaid with a narrow line of holly.

If this glass could speak what histories it could tell of the fair faces that gazed upon its surface—sometimes with gaiety and joy written on them—sometimes with grief and tragedy bitterly stamped there.

These glasses, if genuine, are now very rare, and not to be bought, if in good condition and un-restored, under £10.

I am always surprised, in looking at the dressing tables of the past, to see how very small was the available space—this table, for instance, only measures 38 by 21, though the use of the extra slab gave additional surface. Then, again, the “low boy” of an earlier period, shown in Fig. 14, is still more inconvenient, only 30 by 20 inches.

This seems very inadequate when we remember the japanned boxes and similar things in china and silver used to contain the numerous aids to beauty, such as we read of so delightfully in the “Vicar of Wakefield,” and that seemed, indeed, indispensable to an 18th century belle.

I am inclined to think that many of these boxes, bottles, powder-puffs, etc., were kept on auxiliary tables in the bedroom, and that, perhaps, accounts in some measure for the numerous small tables of the period, to which one is sometimes puzzled to ascribe a use.

In some sumptuous examples of dressing-tables, made quite at the end of the century, there were arrangements for housing and concealing all these beautifiers in the table itself. Of this arrangement there is a lovely and sadly interesting example in the Jones collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum. It belonged to the ill-fated Marie Antoinette, and all the elegant fitments in pale greenish blue are as she left them at Versailles, never to return.

Fig. 19 is what is called a knee-hole writing table, and also resembles to a certain degree what in France is called a "commode." It is, as you see, serpentine in form, and I should consider its date to be about 1785.

The wood is a bright mahogany, with a good "figure" on it, and the decoration, which is extremely simple, must have been very expensive all the same, for there are no less than 8 lines of banding in some extremely light wood, 2 lines of black, and a wider band of satinwood cut on the cross, as one may say. The delicacy of this arrangement does not show well, unfortunately, in the photograph. For some reason not exactly apparent, tables of this kind are very rarely met with, yet they were made in large numbers, and there is no special fragility about them to cause easy destruction. In this one the handles are not original, and not even a correct imitation; they should be oval or round discs, with appropriate rings. The legs taper, and have the most

## DRESSING AND WRITING TABLES 63

charming little castors, looking only fit for doll's furniture.

The drawers ran as if on oil ; the craftsmen of those days used only thoroughly seasoned wood, and so in their use we do not lose our tempers by finding it nearly impossible to open them, and then, having by a colossal exertion succeeded, finding it equally impossible to close them.

I have but little room left to speak of other writing-tables. I may just remind you that about 1800 to 1810 appeared the sofa writing-table, as it was called, because of its length being suitable to occupying the space in front of a sofa. It was of rectangular form, generally of mahogany or rose-wood, with two flaps, which extended on brackets ; underneath were two straight supports connected by a broad bar, and terminating in curved feet, which were tipped with brass lions' claws.

These tables are not very pretty, but eminently convenient, and always well made, so they are desirable possessions.

About the same period came the round revolving writing-table, with leather on the top. These stood on a single pillar from which radiated three curved feet, also ending in lions' paws. These tables, too, seem mostly to have disappeared—they were large and heavy, and perhaps were found inconvenient. I have one measuring 44 inches across and such a size when entirely unalterable means big rooms.

The reason for this table being made to re-

volve was that it was furnished with drawers all round, and so the writer could twirl it round to reach the other side, without leaving his seat.

In mine, the arrangement of the drawers to avoid the inconvenience arising from the circular form, is rather quaint. The drawers go straight so that at each side there is only a wedge-shaped space left, but the ingenious contriver uses one as an ink and wafer receptacle, which, pretending to be a drawer, swings round at right angles, and the other is a "sham" pure and simple which does not move.



## CHAPTER VIII

### CHAIRS OF THE 18TH CENTURY—PART I

WHEN one speaks of the 18th century furniture, one naturally thinks of Chippendale, Adams, Heppelwhite and Sheraton, though there were many other makers, whose work, resembling closely that of these great names, gave us splendid results, but whose conscientious efforts as master cabinetmakers, never attained the posthumous glory of those four.

Of these lesser lights Manwaring, Ince and Mayhew, Gillow and Shearer, stand forth as the best known names. No doubt much of the furniture, now attributed to the first four well known names, is really the work of those men, who attained so much less celebrity. Most people are acquainted with the style in chairs, that goes with the name of Chippendale, for—to say nothing of genuine work of his time—there are hundreds and even thousands of chairs now made in “the style of Chippendale,” and perhaps no others are so popular, partly, no doubt, because the shapes are so practical and strong, whereas the latter styles, made after Heppelwhite and Sheraton, are of far more fragile construction.

If you have any chairs in your possession, that you think are genuinely old, try and trace back their antecedents, see how long they have been in your family and if it is not many years, see if you can find out their previous history.

A short time ago, I was asked to give an opinion as to the age and value of two chairs which had been found among the rubbish at the back of a cellar.

They were in a shocking state, and the splat of one was broken ; fortunately the missing part was found later, in an outhouse among the firewood !

The splat is the centre of the back which joins the top rail to the seat, remember this. The chairs were so filthy, and so covered with extraneous matter, that at first it was impossible to discern whether they were genuine or not, but much labour expended was rewarded by disclosing two remarkably fine Chippendale chairs in the style of the armchair in Fig. 20, but far handsomer.

Of course, as I warned you before, when I say Chippendale, or when I say Heppelwhite, or Sheraton, you must understand that I only mean that the article spoken of is undoubtedly of that period, and belonging to that particular school.

As furniture is not signed (except in one or two almost unique instances) it is impossible to say the work is actually that of any given hand.

Occasionally, but alas ! very rarely, bills have been kept, relating to the making of furniture,

## EIGHTEENTH CENTURY CHAIRS 67

such as the one long kept in the Soane Museum, concerning the splendid armchair to be seen there, thus proved to be the work of Chippendale himself.

These bills are enormously valuable to the owners of the furniture scheduled therein. A friend of mine possessing 5 chairs and a settee of what I took to be Heppelwhite's make, was compelled to sell them; he was somewhat a "lily of the field," and took very little thought for the morrow, as far as commercial matters were concerned, like many other most lovable people, but on my saying that if they were Heppelwhite's they would be worth a great deal, he airily replied, "I believe I have the bill somewhere, I found it in my grandfather's desk." Imagine my excitement, it was looked for and found, with the original price paid, a very modest sum indeed. Those chairs—alas! the hard fate that compelled their sale—fetched in the auction room, if I recollect rightly, £112, and would have realised a much larger sum if the set of six had been complete, but their owner naïvely explained, that as his rooms were now small, and the sixth was broken, he had given it to his charwoman, who, "poor thing, is very poor, and her husband being a carpenter could mend it."

They were lovely specimens of what is called the wheel pattern, and resembled closely the pierced doors which close the wall beds and wall cupboards of Brittany.

To begin with Chippendale's chairs, I think we may consider that he was working at his best, about the years 1735 to 1765. In his later years—he died in 1779—he revelled too much in ornamentation of the Rococo style, and (according to the prevailing fashion) did much work on Chinese lines, which never lend themselves satisfactorily to European treatment.

The two chairs in Fig. 20 are fine examples of what I personally consider his best manner; notice the splendid sweep of the cabriole legs in the one to the right, and the excellent carving in both. The knees and feet of the cabriole legs are ornamented with a simple but carefully executed decoration of acanthus leaf, and the seat of this specimen is of the "drop in" order, which Chippendale was partial to. The splat is of the vase shape, pierced widely, and the ornament on the top repeats the acanthus leaf.

The general shape does not differ greatly from that of the first quarter of the century—there is the wide seat and back, and the cabriole legs of the same form, though more massive as a general rule than those of the earliest years.

I should think the chair on the right was made in the middle of the century, somewhere between 1740 and 1760, and if this is so, it shows that fashions moved slowly at that time.

The one to the left is also a good chair, but not to my mind so handsome. The absolutely straight legs appear always a little clumsy, after



HEPPELWHITE CHAIR

(Fig. 21)



CHIPPENDALE CHAIRS

(Fig. 20)



our eyes have become accustomed to the charming double curve of the cabriole. I think it is of rather later date, perhaps from 1765 to 1775—the slightly awkward-looking and somewhat inadequate little brace, uniting the front legs to the seat, seems to point somewhat to the later years of Chippendale's work.

One interesting point about this armchair is that it shows very well what is called the Cupid bow back; notice the peculiar curve of the top. Chippendale evidently admired this form, and some experts consider it to be very distinctive of his own work, but that is difficult of proof, when we remember that all cabinetmakers followed each other's designs closely.

One thing to keep in mind with regard to Chippendale's chairs is that they always have the splat joined firmly to the seat; this was also the custom with the Dutch chairs and in English ones of Queen Anne's time. The only exceptions to this rule with Chippendale's chairs are in those with lattice backs, in the Chinese style.

Sheraton, on the contrary, hardly ever joined his splat to the seat, but put a crossbar from one upright to the other, fixing the splat in the middle.

Had I space, I should like to have shown you a ribbon-back chair of Chippendale's—he himself preferred that design to any other. Purists, however, object to it on the ground that it is an unsuitable idea to carry out in wood and on a

chair, where it will, in imagination, be subject to the inevitable crushing by the occupant's back.

This seems to me to be hypercritical; at that rate how many beautiful designs must go? How about the eagles' heads pecking into our backs? How about the splats representing Grecian vases? How about the honeysuckle pattern and the—supposed filmy—Prince's feathers? The ribbon-back chairs are of a rather later date; this elegant pattern was no doubt suggested by the style of ornamentation then introduced in France and which is so often spoken of under the title of Louis XVI., even when we are speaking of English furniture.

So many beautiful designs came from France and were adapted by our cabinetmakers with some slight differences at that time, and we have no expression that covers that period so well as "Louis XVI. furniture." We have to content ourselves with "late 18th century," which is somewhat vague and unsatisfactory, and may mean any period after 1770.

Before going on to speak of Heppelwhite's, Adam's, and Sheraton's chairs, I should like to give a passing glance at such names as Manwaring, Ince and Mayhew, Sir W. Chambers, Shearer, Gillow, etc.

Almost all the furniture-makers of the 18th century brought themselves into public notice by publishing various books of designs and prices, which were usually brought out by subscription



and it is by a close inspection of these that we are enabled to study the differences of style between the great craftsmen of the past.

The introduction of the Chinese element into our cabinetmaking, etc., may in a great measure be attributed to Sir W. Chambers, who built Somerset House. In early life, circumstances took him to China, and he seems to have acquired a somewhat overwhelming love of their style. He too published a book, in which Chinese features of all kinds figure.

This vehement desire to import these various specimens of oriental taste into architecture and furniture was not a happy idea, the East and West do not assimilate any better in these ways, than they do in domestic life.

Look at Sir W. Chambers' Pagoda in Kew Gardens—can anything look more thoroughly out of place and discordant?

It was, however, clear that the taste for Chinese effects had already been gaining ground for some time before Chambers' star appeared, probably slowly, but surely, ever since our trade with the East had been opened up. Chippendale's book of designs, which was published a few years before that of Sir W. Chambers, shows very many Chinese ideas; it would perhaps be correct to say, that taste was tending that way, and that Chambers gave a fillip to it by his undeniable taste and fashionable following.

In 1765 we hear of Robert Manwaring, for he

brought out a book called "The Cabinet and Chairmaker's Real Friend and Companion, or the Whole System of Chairmaking Made Plain and Easy." In many ways it is very amusing reading. Some of his ideas are very strange and exaggerated, but others are elegant, good and practical. It must be admitted, however, I think by all, that such designs as fountains and cascades spouting up and tumbling down the backs of what he calls "rural chairs," were not happy conceptions.

There is, all the same, no doubt that he did good work, and apparently the monstrosities mentioned were not made in large numbers, if even at all, for we never meet with a specimen. My idea of Manwaring is that he was a close follower of Chippendale, but on the downward grade.

Ince and Mayhew, or Mayhew and Ince, for there is diversity in the description of their firm, did much good work and also published books—indeed were ambitious enough to write a special title page in French for the benefit of cabinet-makers across the water. This seems a little presumptuous when we think for a moment what great names were already known among the *Ébénistes* of France.

Gillow's name, now joined in partnership with that of Waring, is the only one of the 18th century firms that still carries on business, as far as I am aware. It commenced work as long

ago as 1724, if not earlier, but it does not seem that they publish any pattern book. I have three pieces of Gillow's work of about 70 years ago, not yet old enough to be interesting, but so beautifully made in every particular, and calculated, I should think, to stand the wear and tear of another 500 years.

Copeland, Lock, Shearer, and many others, I have no space to dwell on. If you really wish to know something, however superficial, of the 18th century cabinet and chairmakers, you must not shrink from a little vigorous study, and if my remarks on the subject give you a desire for more knowledge, I shall feel my object is attained.

"English Furniture Designers" by Constance Simon is a most valuable book on this period, but it is unfortunately expensive. There is, however, much useful information to be gained from the articles by R. S. Clouston in the "Connoisseur," in vols. 8, 9, 10, and 11. Both authors of this name are most interesting writers on the subject of furniture and it is generally within the power of all (where there is a circulating library) to get volumes of well known art magazines.

## CHAPTER IX

### CHAIRS OF THE 18TH CENTURY—PART II

IN these days most people's knowledge of furniture goes as far as distinguishing between a Chippendale and a Sheraton chair, and they roughly distinguish between the two periods, as one being carved and the other inlaid; but when it comes to explaining the difference between the work of the later furniture makers, then difficulties begin, and as I said before, it is only the closest observation and continual practice, aided, if possible, by the books of designs published by themselves, which will teach us to differentiate between the work of one and another of these great workers of the past,

Even then, clever as we imagine ourselves to be, no doubt we make prodigious mistakes.

When you have gained only a little knowledge, which you know we are told is "a dangerous thing," do not be tempted to dogmatise or to buy antiques rashly. The more you learn the more modest you will be—why, even the authorities at the Victoria and Albert Museum are far too wise to rush in "where angels fear to tread," and shelter themselves behind such

labels as "in the style of Chippendale," "in the style of Sheraton," and "chair of the late 18th century."

I shiver when I hear of self-confident innocents who, six months ago, did not know the difference between Jacobean work and that of the Louis XVI. period, going gaily into a shop of the kind that forms itself upon the amiable lines of that hospitable insect, well known to us in the nursery rhyme, "Will you walk into my parlour? said the spider to the fly." They enter with disastrous results and come out again the proud possessors of a 17th century sideboard—though no such thing ever existed—as black as ebony, and reeking of glue and varnish.

Knowledge of old furniture, as of china and silver, is not gained in a few months or even a few years; there is always something new to be learnt and some previous incorrect knowledge to be corrected.

Now with regard to the later 18th century chair makers, let us first consider Robert Adam. He was an architect and never himself *made* chairs or furniture of any kind, but he published an infinity of designs which were eagerly used by leading artificers. In the Soane Museum one can see what a close observer and worker he was. There are there three volumes devoted to furniture, out of a much larger number.

Though Adam was not himself a cabinetmaker, his influence on the craft should be carefully

studied, because it was to a large extent due to him that we have the classical designs in furniture, china and silver, as well as in the architecture of the later 18th century. Robert Adam was one of five brothers, he was ambitious to do work that should not resemble that of others and to that end, being apparently a man of some means, he determined to travel and steep himself in the traditions, the architecture, the sculpture and the ornament of classic times.

He seems to have spent two entire years in Italy, and then a third in close study of the remains of Diocletian's Palace on the Dalmatian coast.

To study such a building had been the dream of his life and in his diary he gives most careful descriptions of all he saw and the artistic conclusions he drew.

He must have been somewhat suddenly successful in life, for in 1762 he was fully occupied as an architect, and very quickly was appointed to the important post of Royal Architect.

His best known work, in which he was assisted by his brothers, is the famous Adelphi Terrace, which still remains a perfect example of the building of 1768. It is not quite so well-known perhaps that the brothers built Portland Place, Stratford Place and numerous other streets, or parts of streets, still existing in London.

But to return to our subject. I have no space to give you an illustration of a chair made from

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Adam's design, but I should like you to remember that a favourite one with him was where the carving in relief, especially along the top, was somewhat in a running pattern, frequently representing flowers and leaves, but the style of the carving was very different from that of Chippendale. I possess one of these chairs; it is perfectly round in the seat, with arms rather near together, which shows that it cannot be an early example, as this form would not have agreed with the hoops of earlier days.

Another favourite design, but by no means confined to his books, is that of a lyre, and he also had patterns with very light bars going across the back, very much in the style of Fig. 21, which is a Heppelwhite example.

Naturally on chairs there was not much scope for his favourite decoration of ovals, wreaths, draperies, urns, etc., which we see so much on his sideboards and in his wall decoration.

To my mind a room or house built and decorated from his designs and furnished throughout after his own fashion, is somewhat stiff and cold.

I think a mixture of furniture is more homely, because after all, that is how a home is built up, at any rate if the family is an old one; each generation has added something, and so we live with the remembrances of the tastes of succeeding members of the family. My rooms would shock an enthusiast for the "one period" surroundings,

for I have Jacobean chairs rubbing shoulders with those of the 18th century, and Queen Anne cabinets and tables supporting copper and brass Spanish water-pails of to-day, whilst a Louis XV. chair shares the hearth-rug amicably with a tall one of the time of Charles I.

We have not much information regarding Heppelwhite ; we do not know when he was born, but he died in 1786, and this date gives us a clue to the years of his working life. He was associated with Shearer more or less, and together they published a book of prices, but who was especially responsible for the various designs, it is not possible to say.

Heppelwhite was a hard worker, and differed greatly from Sheraton, in that he was somewhat conservative in his ideas, and never ventured into startling and untried fields, which, in the latter years of Sheraton's life, caused him to produce designs that we cannot help regretting ever saw the light.

Heppelwhite was the first, at any rate in England, to use painting as a decoration upon his wood, and Sheraton adopted the same custom to a larger extent.

It does not seem good taste ; brilliant flowers go very ill with satinwood—so much employed by Sheraton—and it was a far prettier idea of both of these makers, to put delicate inlay into their work, such as ovals and shells in light wood upon mahogany, or vice versâ.



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Even in the beautiful examples of French furniture in the Jones bequest, where we see plaques of Sèvres china inserted in the wood, the effect is hardly pleasing because the contrast is too great, and there is something still less agreeable in small bright flowers, crawling about on the splats and legs of chairs.

Fig. 21 is, I think, without doubt a genuine Heppelwhite, though not of a handsome kind. It has marked peculiarities, one of which was, if it is permissible to criticise so great a craftsman, that he sometimes constructed his chairs not quite in symmetrical proportion.

In this case, as you see, the seat is a little high in proportion to the back, which gives rather a clumsy effect. The back also is very distinctive, the very narrow bars across, broken by small bosses between, is a style much beloved by this maker.

It is one of a pair and is made in beechwood lacquered in the fashion he introduced, that is, it is painted black and the design on it is executed in gilding.

Another point is, that it shows his characteristic ornament of a pointed leaf, on the uprights of the arms.

The seat is rushed and evidently original, though not a pretty chair, it is distinctive and therefore interesting. An exactly similar one, is in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Heppelwhite seems to have been the originator

of the shield back in chairs and it appears over and over again with variations. He also invented the back composed of Prince of Wales' feathers, and he often used the conventional honeysuckle in the same position. The open work wheel back, to which I referred in the last chapter, was used by him, beautifully rendered in a species of ribbon design, and often the whole framework, splat, and even legs, were formed of bands of wood on which the husk ornament was carved, and the wheat ear, too, in all its forms, was a favourite decoration.

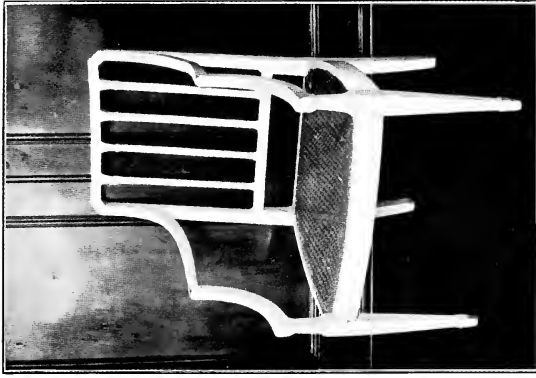
Fig. 22 was in old days considered to be a Heppelwhite, but further study in the present day, and the ability to get at books and proofs not to be reached eighty years ago, seems to point to it as an early Sheraton production.

There is an immense similarity between the chairs of Heppelwhite and Sheraton, at least in the productions of Sheraton's earlier years.

He lived much longer than Heppelwhite, and naturally his later chairs, after his adoption of satinwood as the vehicle used for his most valued creations, do not resemble his predecessors in the same way.

He was born in or about 1751, but apparently did not become known at all until he settled in London in 1790.

Heppelwhite was already dead, but presumably Sheraton, who was then forty, had already been working many years, and no doubt had



EARLY SHERATON CHAIR  
(Fig. 22)



FRENCH CHAIR (LOUIS XV)  
(Fig. 23)



closely copied the well-established Heppelwhite. Thomas Sheraton was a strange man, and decidedly his was a sad and disappointed life.

He seemed to have but little education, but a great natural aptitude. At some period prior to 1790, he left the Church of England and became a Baptist, and even at times preached with great zeal. He was probably what in these days we call a "crank," and in no way calculated to succeed in commerce.

He was more or less a "Jack-of-all trades," and though, in view of his masterly work as an artistic and practical cabinetmaker, we cannot say he was "master of none," still the old adage holds good in his case, in so far that, in spite of his undeniable talents, his industry, and the perfection of his mastery of his trade, he did not give his whole mind to it, but had so many roasts at the fire, that whilst he was basting one, the others were burning.

The result was ruin more or less, and dire poverty, and the man whose work now sells for sums running into three and even four figures, had hardly the means of bare subsistence.

Probably his ultimate failure was brought about by publishing expenses. He was the author of several books concerning his trade, of which the best known and most valuable to students is "The Cabinetmaker's and Upholsterer's Drawing Book," brought out in 1791. He also (fatal mistake for a tradesman) wrote on religious subjects,

and between these two literary snares poor Sheraton fared but badly.

In the "Memoirs of Adam Black," a most instructive book to anyone studying the state of society at that time, there are passages descriptive of Sheraton that in a few simple and well chosen words give us a picture of the man, who seems to stand before us in all his strength and weakness: "This many-sided, worn-out encyclopædist and preacher, is an interesting character. . . . He is a man of talent, and, I believe of genuine piety. He understands the cabinet business—I believe was bred to it. He is a scholar, writes well, and, in my opinion, draws masterly: is author, bookseller, and teacher. I believe his abilities and resources are his ruin in this respect—by attempting to do everything, he does nothing. . . ."

Poor fellow, as time went on and things became worse with him financially, he attempted to strike out fresh lines, and invented and constructed furniture that adds no lustre to his name.

Fig. 22 shows a marked characteristic of his—three, four, or five narrow upright bars in the back was a favourite pattern, and the back slightly curved in the centre often marked his work, especially in the earlier years.

It is important, too, to notice the front legs; they are square and slightly tapering—"thermed" is the correct expression—at the foot, which shows the spade form.

In the days of my childhood these chairs, of

which there are three, were really unusually ugly.

They were painted pea green, with delicate wreaths of many coloured flowers hanging down from the top on to the little bars, and the same design was carried along the front of the seat. This style of decoration, markedly Sheraton, was not calculated to wear well. I remember adding to the force of the dainty little flowers, all round their edges, by the aid of a lead pencil.

I must say, in spite of their coming from the hand of the immortal Sheraton, that their effect was crude and gaudy, and their present appearance in plain white is much more pleasing, though of course their commercial value is entirely destroyed.

Sheraton adopted the lyre-shaped back which evidently pleased his taste for lightness, and many of his chairs are purely imitative of the Louis XVI. style, and we often see in his later examples the small padded blocks on the armchairs which you see in the French chair shown in Fig. 23. He was not partial to a round turned leg, though he occasionally adopted it, but this fact will sometimes help us to decide whether a specimen is a Heppelwhite or early Sheraton.

I have left myself no room to speak of Louis XV. and Louis XVI. chairs, but it is as well perhaps not to intrude into the study of the furniture of France.

Fig. 23 is, however, though a Louis XV.

example, very much the same as was made in England at the same date, and it will help you to see the kind of chair that was in common use, especially in France at that time. I should think the date of this one is not earlier than 1770. It has been much spoiled through having its feet cut off, to make it a convenient height for an invalid. The covering, though very old, is not original; the stuffing, however, was so excellent that it has defied the hand of time, even on the little ungraceful padded arms.

There are some lovely examples of the furniture of this period and of Louis XVI., both chairs and sofas covered with Beauvais tapestry in the Wallace collection; but they are only uncovered during the height of the summer, for at all other times the smoke and grime of London ruins and rots this wonderful fabric.



## CHAPTER X

### TWO CHIPPENDALE CABINETS

WHEN I speak of them thus, I must again remind you that such an expression does not mean that they were actually made by Chippendale himself—it only means that they were made at that period, and by a skilled workman who closely imitated the work of Chippendale, and most likely worked from his designs.

I said but little of Chippendale himself in speaking of the 18th century chairmakers, for I thought I should have more room in this chapter.

Thomas Chippendale, second of the name in the cabinetmaking trade, is supposed to have started work with his father in London, about 1725 or 1726, and in 1749 he rented a shop in Long Acre; he only remained there until 1753 when he took the premises we connect with his name in St. Martin's Lane.

Some few years ago, a fine doorway was to be seen during the demolition of surrounding buildings, at what had been No. 60. This doorway according to Miss Simon was the entrance to Chippendale's premises. It was a handsome

door, and I was fortunate enough to have a chance of studying it, though at the time I was not sure of its special interest, and have only recognised its identity since reading her most interesting book, which I commend to the perusal of my readers. It is called "Eighteenth Century Furniture," and is written in a way that is not too oppressively learned for the beginner.

He must have been a well-educated man for his time; he wrote several books dealing with furniture designs from commercial and artistic points of view. His "Director" is a well-known work, now scarce and valuable.

He is also supposed to have contributed to the kindred work—published under the direction of the Society of Upholsterers and Cabinetmakers—which has a quaint title page running thus: "Upwards of one hundred new and genteel designs, being all the most approved patterns of household furniture in the French taste, by a Society of Upholders and Cabinetmakers."

He appears to have begun work on his own account somewhere about 1730, though still residing with his father, and from that time to his death in 1779, he had no doubt many imitators.

He was buried near his home in St. Martin's Church.

There was no such thing (except in very exceptional cases) as patenting designs in those days, and nothing to prevent admirers copying the beautiful work of other craftsmen.

I must not in my limited space attempt any detailed account of the many different styles adopted by Chippendale; he was a hard and continuous worker and designer, but had he made all the pieces boldly attributed to him, a life of two hundred years would not have sufficed.

It is not of so much consequence whether a cabinet, a table, or a chair was made in the actual workshop of Chippendale, Heppelwhite, or Sheraton, as whether it is a good design, perfect work, and of the exact period to which it professes to belong.

There was no machine-made furniture then, and all the great makers hung together, consulted with each other, exchanged designs, and laboured with but little jealousy (only such an amount as is inseparable from poor human nature) to produce work that should be perfect of its kind.

By the time that Chippendale's work was at its best, mahogany was in general use, and it is in mahogany that all his finest works were produced, just as it was in satinwood furniture of all shapes and kinds that Sheraton excelled.

Sir Walter Raleigh had brought home specimens of mahogany as early as the close of the 16th century, but it had not been imported till somewhere about 1720, or perhaps rather earlier—the exact date is not known with absolute certainty—its use, however, did not become common till some years later.

There is a story in connection with a candle-

box and the first recognition of mahogany as a desirable wood for furniture, told by so many chroniclers that I think it must be true in the main.

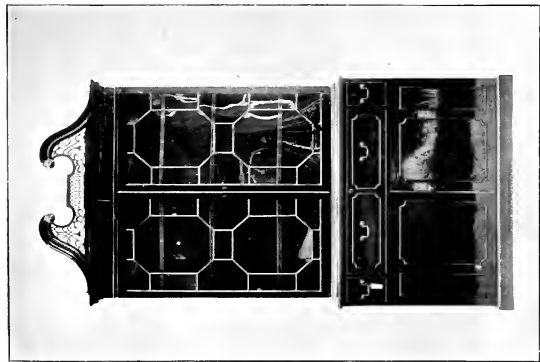
It seems a certain Dr Gibbon had stored in an outhouse sundry unvalued planks, sent to him from the West Indies by his brother, and his wife wanting a candle-box, the Doctor desired the family carpenter to make one out of the despised planks.

The man found the wood so hard that it blunted all his tools. The Doctor, however, was determined, and eventually a box was made, that caused envy to sit enthroned in the bosoms of Mrs Gibbon's friends.

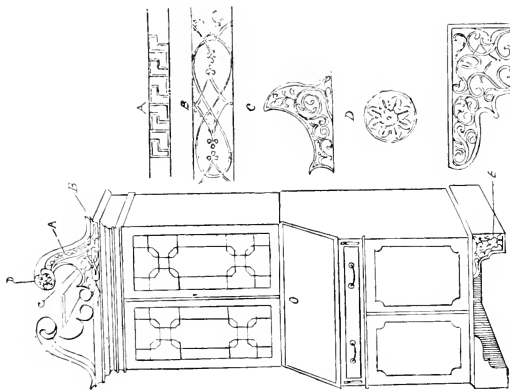
Pieces of the precious wood were begged and borrowed, and from these small beginnings—it is said—began our immense importation of mahogany.

The best is what in the trade is called Spanish, of a rich dark maroon red, with sometimes almost a purplish tinge, and when really fine and old has most beautiful patterns, or "figure" in the grain.

The old craftsmen knew well the decorative value of the markings in the wood, and in pieces large enough to show this beauty, such as cabinets, table tops, and wardrobes, etc., they so placed panels, cut from the figured portions when suitable, in opposition to each other, like leaves in a book, or otherwise so arranged them as to



CHIPPENDALE CABINET  
(Fig. 25)



CHIPPENDALE CABINET WITH  
DETAILS OF CARVING  
(Fig. 24)



form a most pleasing effect, not needing the overloading of ornament and the poor carving that spoil the furniture of the mid-nineteenth century. I have a late George III. wardrobe which is a fine example of this use of the wood's natural marking. There is no decoration except a large Georgian cornice, characteristic of the period, and the two heavy doors of solid wood are both cut from the same tree, and each repeat exactly opposite to each other, the same handsome pattern in the mahogany itself.

You will see the effect of this kind of arrangement in Fig. 16, where the wood is cut and applied at all sorts of angles, making such a pleasant variety of surface that no decoration beyond the beading is required.

The cabinet and bureau combined, which you see in Fig 24. is a fine specimen, and I show it to you in outline that you may study the different points that mark a good piece of the Chippendale period.

Look carefully at the particular kind of ornamentation it exhibits—I have given details of the carvings so that you may notice its peculiarities.

This kind of cabinet is largely imitated, but a careful and minute examination of the ornamental part will usually unmask the deception.

It is almost impossible even to the most accomplished manufacturer of sham antiques to produce the beautifully softened outlines in the carving

that are effected by the hand of time and the strenuous exertions of notable housewives, who have expended many precious hours and a vast amount of elbow grease on its beautiful smooth surface.

Observe the graceful geometric band marked B and the delicate key pattern A, so typical of the time.

Think, too, of the conscientious work bestowed on the two front legs E.

In those days workmen who were often true artists, gloried in their work ; they never scamped anything, so that on these squat feet, hardly to be seen except in a brilliant light, we have the most refined workmanship and an exhibition of delicate artistic conception.

You will see there is a small shelf between the two sides of the swan-necked pediment—this was to show off some valuable piece of oriental china. At the time when this was made, probably 1750 to 1760, the taste for beautiful porcelain from the East was strongly marked, and was provided for in the form of the cabinets and in the glass doors which closed them.

In this example these doors are remarkably good, a point always to be carefully scrutinised in considering the age of a glass-fronted cabinet.

You will see how good and yet simple is the design of the tracery ; the careful joining of this tracery and the insertion of the glass are to be examined in buying such a piece. If the



tracery is *laid on a whole sheet of glass*, instead of having separate small panes inserted, then the cabinet is modern, or at any rate the doors have been renewed.

I have a cabinet made up of old wood and old panels and it is really a pretty little thing, but the doors at once give it away. I keep it because its wood is good and I like it for its dainty convenience, so it lives peacefully among its better born companions.

The glass doors of Fig. 24 close with a brass band and so do the mahogany ones below. When the slanting front is open, charming little drawers, all with their handles intact, and engaging pigeon-holes are revealed, exactly the kind of receptacles for all kinds of sentimental souvenirs, which give us such a keen and tender interest when we come upon them unexpectedly in forgotten corners.

Fig. 25 is a very good typical example, but is not in some respects so graceful as Fig. 24; the difference, however, in the two examples makes them instructive to study together.

This second one came from the East India House in Leadenhall Street. Its age is about the same as that of Fig. 24, but it is altogether a plainer piece.

The swan-necked top is entirely of pierced work, and, handsome though it is, the feeling one has about it is that it is too light and slender for the heavy style below—moreover, I think one regrets the absence of the little shelf in Fig. 24,

which, when furnished with its beautiful piece of richly hued china, must have made a delightful finish.

The band under the cornice of Fig. 25 is quite plain and there are no feet to rest on, only a plain plinth, more hygienic but far less pretty.

The glass doors are good but not so good as the others, the interlacing of the tracery in those being so remarkably graceful.

The colour of the two is absolutely different. Fig. 54 is a coppery red, whereas the East India one is of the deep mahogany colour of which I spoke before. I prefer this tint, and this example has the "Patina" that can only be acquired at the hand of time, and when such atrocities as varnishing and French polishing have never defiled the beautiful surface.

Unfortunately Fig. 24 has suffered in this way at the hands of the French polisher, which somewhat detracts from its value.

The other one is to be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum and will repay study.

## CHAPTER XI

### SMALL TABLES OF THE 18TH CENTURY

AS furniture became more plentiful and the mediæval custom of the whole family and dependants dining together began to be abandoned for more cosy meals, taken in greater privacy, small tables naturally began to be used; first the large and heavy rectangular ones with ponderous legs, then the drawing-table, then the "gate legged," and about the middle of the 18th century the Pembroke variety became a favourite.

The Pembroke was occasionally oval, but generally square or rectangular, and stood upon four legs, first cabriole, then straight and later tapering in the Sheraton manner. There were two flaps which when open were supported, not like the "gate legged" by the swinging forward of some of the legs, but by sturdy brackets, which when the table was closed fitted flat against the body. There is usually one drawer, sometimes one at each end of smaller size. Mine is of dark mahogany, with the drawers of which there are two slightly inlaid with holly, or some other light wood—satinwood was not in use until later.

The handles are perfect, round, rather solid discs, with rings to hold by. The weight is, for its size, prodigious, for it only measures 3 feet each way.

The Sutherland table, an invention of the 19th century, resembles the Pembroke, but the difference in shape is, that when closed the Pembroke measures across the central part from about 16 inches to a much greater width, but the Sutherland in the same position only occupies from 6 to 8 inches from the wall.

The Pembroke table seems, about the middle of the century, to have been much used in well-to-do families for breakfast ; probably this was the kind of table seen by Franklin, which caused him to write to his wife of the new fashions, evidently anxious that she should not be found wanting in the latest modes and be dubbed "behind the times." The letter was written in 1758.

"I send you by Captain Sudden six coarse diaper breakfast cloths ; they are to spread on the tea table, for nobody breakfasts here on the naked table, but on the cloth they set a large tea board with the cups."

I found this interesting item in a charming book by Esther Singleton, called "Furniture of our Forefathers"; it is a most informing and useful book and very amusing too, and you could not study a better one should you have the opportunity ; unfortunately, like most books on technical subjects, it is expensive.

The great efflorescence of small tables in the 18th century was caused by the tremendous vogue for tea drinking.

The taste for tea had obtained a firm hold, by the time of Queen Anne's accession, though its price at that time was prohibitive, except for the wealthy.

By 1740 it had become general, though still extremely dear, but we may be sure that the enterprising cabinetmakers of the reigns of George I. and II. were certainly turning their attention to the making of suitable tables.

Small tables such as those spoken of in this chapter, are called by the French *Tables Ambulantes*, which seems to express them far better than our "occasional tables," which sounds like an upholsterer's catalogue.

Somewhere about 1740 to 1750, the circular tables, rather small, resting on a central pillar with three legs, forming a kind of tripod, came into fashion. Many of these have mouldings round the edge, which were doubtless intended to prevent the delicate little cups—they were small and precious—from sliding off, and thus did away with the necessity for a tray.

I think the terms "pie-crust" and "dish-top" tables come from America and like most of their expressions are very descriptive. A "dish-top" is when the edge has a plain turned-over band, something like a hem, and a "pie-crust" has a rather more ornate moulding, and very generally,

though not universally, the border of the table is in scollops; very likely these scollops were to accommodate the cups and saucers.

It was customary to keep the tea equipage in evidence, on some such table as this. In Miss Singleton's book mentioned above, she quotes an account of a tea-table equipage, date 1748, which is typical of the time: "It was set with ten china cups without handles, and saucers, and five handle cups, a slop basin, and plate beneath, milkpot, teapot, and plate, and a boat for spoons; the tea in this case was kept in a shagreen tea-chest with silver canister and sugar ditto."

You see ten of the cups had no handles, and five had no saucers; these latter were like little mugs, and the handleless cups resembled small basins. I have a complete set of these in Caughley china and I imagine the mugs with handles were for coffee, you sometimes find them spoken of as coffee "cans." What the boat for spoons could have been like I do not know, unless it was filled with hot water after the manner of our arrangement to keep a gravy spoon warm.

The round and oval tables such as I describe, have movable tops which are fixed when in use to the pillar leg, by means of a pin, or a bolt, which, when withdrawn, allows the top to be tilted and the whole can be placed flat against the wall. Mine is a good example and likes to be called a Chippendale—the ball and claw feet are certainly reminiscent of his work at its best

showing the strained grip of the claws on the ball.

Turn to the illustration of the "tea-party," in the chapter on Old Worcester, and you will see the table is of this description, the top in that case is a sort of three-cornered affair, but it has the raised edge and the table rests on the same pillar and tripod.

Very often in attendance on these tables were smaller satellites of the same pattern, presumably, to accommodate the urn, tea kettle, or candle. These tiny ones, perhaps because they were so frail, have become very rare, though thousands of imitations flood the market.

Card tables hardly come under the name of occasional tables, but I may mention that a large number were made, as card-playing and gambling were very general in the 18th century.

Sheraton made many dainty examples of satinwood, inlaid with mahogany and harewood and imitated (with the addition of Wedgwood plaques) the exquisite French examples ornamented with insets of Sèvres.

A very common form of table in the middle and later 18th century was the dumb-waiter, and these tables, some of them very handsome and in good condition, are to be found in many country inns even now.

They were of mahogany and consisted of three circular tables, tapering to the top in dimensions and placed round a central pillar, revolving in

some cases for the conveniences of those seated at the general table.

The work-tables of our ancestresses are ever and always interesting. How delightful they are and what romances tragic and gay can be woven around them.

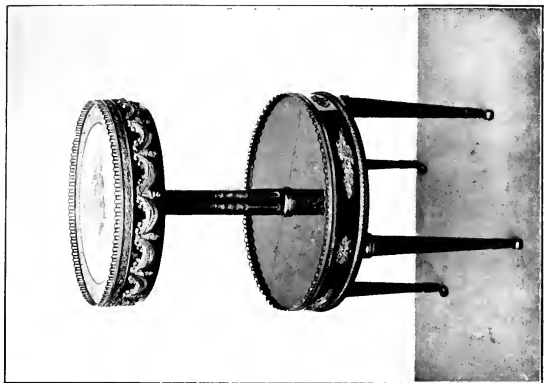
Fig. 26 is to be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum in the splendid Jones' bequest and I seldom pass through the gallery without stopping to look at it and also at a beautiful dressing-table, full of the many mysterious aids to beauty and fascination which were as general in the 18th as in the 19th centuries.

Both these elegant and fragile pieces of furniture chain our attention, for they belonged to the unhappy Marie Antoinette about whose doings, sayings, and tragically dramatic life and death, interest never flags.

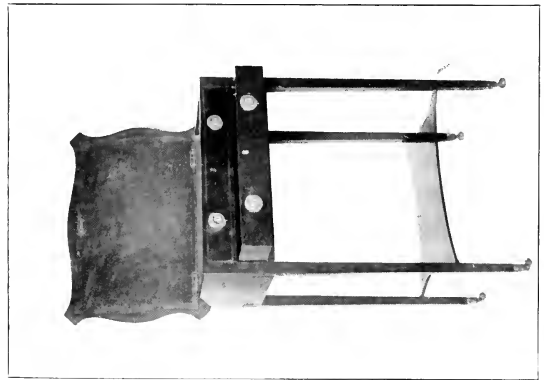
I have not allowed myself to say much of foreign furniture, and have turned away from the temptations held out to study the works of the *ébénistes* of Louis XV. and Louis XVI., but Fig. 26 is so exquisite and appeals to our sympathies so much, that I have made an exception.

As one looks at it, one sees in a vision the beautiful, ill-fated Queen, surrounded by flatterers, luxury and elegance, so soon to know the deepest grief and agony of mind—so soon to become acquainted with a prison so damp, and dark, that her clothes rotted on her attenuated body, and





WORK TABLE OF MARIE ANTOINETTE  
*(Fig. 26)*



WORK TABLE AFTER ADAM  
*(Fig. 27)*



she herself, from confinement without air or light, became waxen white, in hair and skin.

Poor Queen! she had perhaps sometimes been frivolous and foolish in the splendour of Versailles, but in the dark days of her adversity, she showed only noble dignity, Christian forgiveness and unwavering courage; these qualities she showed without faltering from the moment of her imprisonment in the Temple, through all the terrors of the Conciergerie, to that last awful day when the guillotine ended her sufferings on the Place de la Concorde.

Fig. 26 is made of tulipwood and some other darker wood which I take to be mahogany or harewood. It is in perfect condition, and is now kept under glass, to preserve it from the effects of the acrid London smoke.

It has two round and deep shelves or drums as they are called, and each drum is surrounded by a little ormolu gallery to prevent reels and bobbins from falling off.

The upper shelf has a Sèvres plaque let in which covers the entire space, the ground is white, and in the centre is a basket of flowers, suspended by a mauve ribbon. Round the edge is a band of the beautiful turquoise, so well known in Sèvres china, about two inches wide, which is again ornamented with small circles containing roses. In this upper drum is a secret drawer, the key-hole of which is concealed in the simulated drapery of ormolu.

The lower drum opens at one side by means of a spring, and shows the internal arrangements for needlework.

Fig. 27 is a very different specimen, quite plain and simple, and probably made from a design by Robert Adam about 1765 or 1770. It was given to my great-great-grandmother as a reward for constructing one of those marvellous samplers that we occasionally meet with even now.

N.B.—A flourishing industry has lately cropped up for imitating most cleverly these old pieces of needlework.

It is a pretty graceful little table with all its simplicity—made of dark mahogany slightly inlaid, and it has some peculiarities worth noting—especially that the lid, when open, goes back *behind* the body, a somewhat unusual arrangement; it is therefore unnecessary to have any other appliance for supporting the hinges.

The upper division is only a simulated drawer, but the lower one is real, and contains divisions and slides, showing that once there were compartments with small covers for work materials.

The handles are not original. When it came into my possession it had atrocious wooden knobs of Victorian times, and I searched London over before I could find four old handles alike that were of suitable date.

The small lower shelf, too, is worth remarking, and is of a shape belonging to Adam's style. I have a washstand with the same, and I believe

it to be of similar date, though I have no record to go by.

I have another table later in date, about 1795 I should think—it is of rosewood slightly inlaid with satinwood and ebony in fine straight lines. Within the drawer is concealed a folding book rack. The bag below is to hold work and slides in and out sideways below the drawer; the silk (original fabric) is now a dingy yellow and the bottom of the bag, formed by a piece of thin board, is suspended by the pleated silk.

A third table still later, is of Gillow's make and does not belong really to the 18th century, for it is dated on a small silver plate 1825, but I venture to speak of it here on account of its splendid workmanship. It is of burr walnut, so unusually light as to resemble satinwood to the untutored eye. It has the same bag arrangement as the 1795 one. It has two drawers, the upper one evidently for writing, and the lower is arranged for needlework, and here is something I felt made it worth noting, though its youthfulness makes it outside our subject.

This lower drawer has a tray covered in rose coloured silk like the bag, and has a silver ring about the size of a 5s. piece at each side, which by some ingenious mechanism, snaps back when released from the fingers which have raised it to lift the tray, and so allows the drawer to close.

It has two sizeable flaps which extend on brackets and the top, which is covered with

leather, forms a writing-desk, which rises and falls on a rack and also slides forward for further convenience. All the mechanism at the back is as beautifully finished and polished as the front, and the silver plate telling that it was a wedding present gives us the date.

## CHAPTER XII

### TEA CADDIES OF OLDEN DAYS

ARE we not all more or less addicted to tea drinking? I think so, for even our men folk, who, twenty years ago professed to despise the womanish beverage, now seldom fail to procure a cup in the afternoon. It is indeed quite comical to move about the City between 4 and 5 o'clock, and to watch the London office boys, rushing hither and thither with trays of tea and scones, and juggling in a marvellous manner at street corners to avoid collision with others intent on the same errand and who, more than likely, are forging full tilt ahead, while staring open-mouthed over their shoulder, disaster only averted by the almost demon-like agility of the genuine London boy.

It is rather singular how much tea is an English and Russian beverage, it has never become really popular on the Continent. Gradually the French have learnt to like it and increasing numbers dispense it at a "5 o'clock" when it is accompanied by the richest cakes and pastry, but this sort of hospitality is only met with in the houses of the upper classes and the wealthy *bourgeoisie*.

In Italy, the loathly infusion called by the sacred name of tea, is a thing of horror. The natives regard it as a drug and only to be taken in emergencies.

To begin with, it is very expensive, so little is bought and less is used by the thrifty *Hôteliers*, and it is usually kept in a cardboard box by no means air-tight.

The manner of preparation is to take a china teapot of generous dimensions (probably holding two pints)—all methods of warming disregarded—a small quantity of the precious herb (not more than a pinch or two) placed inside, and then a deluge of water, that may and may not boil, generally not, is poured in, to the brim—result: a tepid infusion, often slightly mouldy, with stalks and leaves floating forlornly on the top.

We first begin to hear of tea about the middle of the 17th century, and in 1658 an advertisement appeared in one of the few existing newspapers, which set forth the fact that “the china drink called by the Chineans tcha, and by other nations tay, alias tee, could be obtained at the advertiser’s shop near the Royal Exchange.”

It seems, I think, proved that in those days, the word was pronounced “tay,” as shown in Pope’s well-known lines where “tea” is made to rhyme with “obey.”

“Here, thou great Anna! whom three realms obey,

“Dost sometimes counsel take—and sometimes tea.”



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By the courtesy of the Twining firm, I have had the great pleasure of looking over their long established and most interesting Tea House, at the sign of the "Golden Lyon" in the Strand, which has now entered upon its three hundredth year of existence.

This business—at one time a Bank as well—is but little changed with the passage of years.

Its founder, a cadet of a well-known family in the neighbourhood of Evesham, came up to London and settled first in Cripplegate, but quickly prospering, he took one of the well-known coffee-houses, and there set up his sign in 1710.

In the following year he was appointed the Queen's "Purveyor of teas" and the firm has continued in that position through nine succeeding reigns.

The house, backing upon quiet Devereux Court, where still may be seen on a corner wall, "This is Devereux Courte 1676," remains much as it was in Queen Anne's time, when great ladies and the wits of the time, assembled there, to "tea and tattle," consuming much tea out of the tiny little cups then fashionable.

The price of it in those days was very great, varying considerably with different years.

The prices furnished by the Twining firm are as follows—In 1714 the cheapest quality was Bohea, 9s. to 25s. per lb.; other kinds were Congou at 24s. and Pekoe at 45s.; green could

be purchased from 16s. and thrifty housewives could buy tea-dust at 10s.

In 1722 prices came down a little, but were up again in 1748.

In Pepys' time it was a rare drink and as usual, we find the immortal gossip taking a "dish" of it, as a drink he had "never before tasted."

Dr Johnson was a huge tea-drinker, and without doubt he was a constant customer at Twining's, for Gough Square and Bolt Court were both close by. He could consume with ease fifteen or sixteen cups, though probably they were small ones. He speaks of himself as a "shameless tea-drinker, who has for twenty years diluted his meals with only the infusion of this fascinating plant; whose kettle has scarcely time to cool; who with tea amuses the evening, with tea solaces the midnight, and with tea welcomes the morning."

Dr Johnson's teapot, or rather one of them, is treasured at Pembroke College. It is indeed a vast receptacle; according to the Twining records it holds two quarts.

Considering the price of tea, it was very natural that special receptacles should soon be made to contain the precious herb, and the first things of the kind were undoubtedly the flattened earthenware and china bottles, standing about 7 inches high, such as you see in the centre of Fig. 28.

It certainly *appears* to be Lowestoft, though he is a bold man who will venture upon anything

## TEA CADDIES OF OLDEN DAYS 107

more definite than "appears to be" where Lowestoft is concerned.

It is white, with rough blue decoration on the shoulders, a tiny spray of flowers on each side, and a medallion back and front, enclosing a monogram of P. A. B. This is very elegantly arranged, surrounded with ribbon scrolls and a chain of gold and lilac. It came from Yarmouth. Boyd is one of our family names, and I know it to have belonged to us since 1770.

It seems to us very small as a caddy, but tea being the price it was, a small receptacle was sufficient to hold the treasured store.

The next change coincided with that from china teapots to the more general use of silver, Sheffield plate, pewter, etc., for the purpose, when caddies, too, came to be made of these materials, and very generally enclosed in little wooden caskets, as in those made of ivory, tortoiseshell, etc., for the small tea-boxes themselves were very frequently made in pairs, one for black and one for green tea, and these were enshrined in the afore-said ornamental caskets.

These boxes are many of them most beautifully made and inlaid with great delicacy; an especially fine specimen is shown in Fig. 56, shown with its silver boxes in the chapter on silver. This box alone is worth many pounds; it appears from its style to be about 120 years old.

The caddy to the right in Fig. 28 is a very

good specimen, and I like to think from its delicacy of workmanship that it came from the hands of Thomas Chippendale; it was certainly made about 1760, but though undoubtedly of his time, there is nothing whatever to prove it to be his work. It was evidently an expensive piece, plain and good, with two divisions in the box itself to contain the tea.

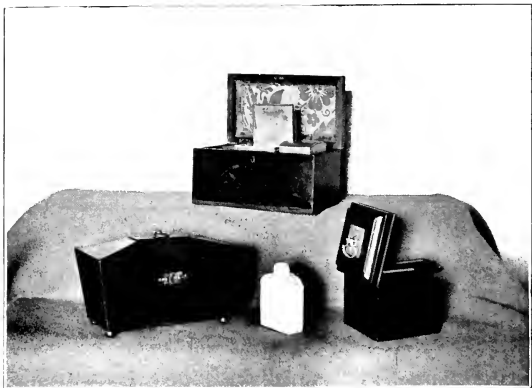
It is of dark mahogany, and has a heavy silver handle at the top. The lid is lined with faded green velvet, and the two bright things you see on the inner divisions are silver labels, respectively marked Green—Bohea.

The silver plate and handle to the lid are very massive, showing old work; we do not as a rule meet with this kind of conscientious solidity in later years.

The box on the top shelf is also a good specimen, but of a less expensive type. It is made of harewood, showing a curious lined marking; otherwise it resembles mahogany.

The lid is supplied with a solid and somewhat plebeian brass handle, and the tea-boxes inside, which are movable, are of zinc with curved lids on hinges; I have opened one to show you the mechanism. The lining of the lid is rather grand and evidently original; it is lemon coloured brocade and seems but little faded, after a useful life of some hundred and forty years.

In the early years of the last century, tea caddies had become larger, and were generally



A GROUP OF TEA CADDIES

(Fig. 28)



TEA CADDY MADE BY LADY DOROTHY NEVILL

(Fig. 29)



made of mahogany or rosewood, frequently inlaid with mother-of-pearl and also with brass.

Very often there was a central compartment in which stood a cut-glass sugar bowl. Of this type, but unfortunately minus the sugar bowl, is the example to the left. Sometimes you find them fixed on small tables. If alone, they usually stand on four little brass ball feet like this one, and sometimes on little lions' paws.

The well-to-do had them lined with velvet, and humbler folk were contented with red paper, usually with a kind of embossed pattern upon it.

That is the status of this one and the lock plate and lid handle are of stamped brass, the latter with a ring through a basket of flowers.

We are now reverting to the earlier fashion and using small silver boxes again ; these are brought in on the afternoon tea-tray as in the days when tea was 32s. a pound and was not trusted to the sacrilegious hands of servants. It is a move in the right direction, for servants' tea is hardly ever good.

Fig. 29, though of no value and comparatively modern, is of some interest, as it shows a humble kind of art work, imitative of that done in the 18th century, at least so says Lady Dorothy Neville in her fascinating "Reminiscences." This is what she says :

"At different times I have collected all sorts of things and attempted many kinds of amateur work, and of late years a kind of old-fashioned

paper-work, which I have found very fascinating. This consists in arranging little slips of coloured papers into decorative designs, as was done at the end of the eighteenth century. When completed, this work is made up into boxes, trays, or mounts for pictures. One frequently meets with old tea-caddies and screens embellished by such ornamentation."

Fig. 29 is the work of Lady Dorothy Neville herself, it has her card inside, and the caddy was bought at a bazaar very many years ago and has been lent to me for illustrating this subject.

It is so admirably done that it is hard to believe it is only some fifty years old. The scheme of colour is faded mauve and green. It appears that the coloured papers were rolled into little cylinders and then cut into sections and glued on to the box in various designs. On the lid is an old print of military trophies in black on a pale green ground, surrounded by a circlet of pearl beads. The whole effect is rather that of a delicate piece of mosaic work.



## CHAPTER XIII

### OLD WORKBOXES

THERE is a fascination about the study of old workboxes—as we gaze inside it is not difficult to bring before our mind's eye the many generations of fingers that have used the articles therein.

Some of them are so strange in shape and so different to those seen in the present day, that we hardly know their uses ; workboxes, indeed, are beginning to be things of the past, they hardly seem to be made at all in these degenerate days, when everything is bought ready-made and run up by machinery.

A small workbasket, some 6 or 7 inches square, is now deemed capacious enough to hold all the implements necessary for needlework, and if we see a workbox in use, it is usually a survival of a bygone time.

The box in the centre of Fig. 30 is of rosewood and not more than ninety or one hundred years old. It is handsomely inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and was no doubt looked upon as a valuable specimen at the time.

The shape too is very pretty, but the inside is not equal to the exterior, being lined with

emerald green paper, and having a long pin-cushion covered with magenta sarsenet.

I fancy this must be a renovation, at least as far as the silk is concerned. Emerald paper belongs to the time, but the horrid aniline dye we call magenta was not then discovered.

The narrow white box is of Indian make, ivory outside and sandalwood within.

The top of the lower part where it is open, and the edge of the lid which closes upon it are covered with whalebone. It was brought from India early in the last century, and I was told it was Delhi work; whether this is true I know not, nor can I say how long prior to 1817 it was made.

The big box to the left is also of rosewood, and is curiously studded with steel-headed nails.

It belonged to my great-aunt and must have been made about 1800, or possibly a few years before. It is lined with faded blue silk, matted down with cut steel heads to match the nails on the outside.

There is no tray nor is there any sign of its ever having had one.

In the centre of the lid is a silver plate with the owner's initials, and the hinges are also of silver.

In it are various pretty and curious little implements—two or three tiny ivory boxes, one no bigger than a cherry—what could these have been for?—a very small pair of silver-handled scissors, and a second pair so minute that they



A GROUP OF WORK BOXES  
(Fig. 30)



MRS. FITZHERBERT'S WORK BOX  
(Fig. 31)



only measured 2 inches, handles and blade included. These last must, I fancy, have been used for the hair embroidery fashionable in olden days. I found wound on a card, some long hairs in company with these scissors, which makes me think that this delicate work was that for which they were used, especially as I have two landscapes executed in hair by this ancestress.

There is, too, a gold thimble studded with turquoise and some small four-cornered and round articles of mother-of-pearl with notched edges, used evidently for winding silk and cotton; a blue silk yard measure in a tiny silver box, and a lilliputian glass bottle—this last must, I think, have been a child's toy. It is of deep blue glass studded with mock jewels also in glass; in my childhood it was full of emery powder and closed with a cork, but I do not think that was its original purpose.

It is in old workboxes such as this that we come upon strange curiosities of the past, even their very uses no longer known to us.

On the extreme right is an oak box, very different to the last, being of the most simple description. From its size, weight and general clumsiness, I should think it was made by some village carpenter, early in the 18th century.

The lid has a vast pincushion fixed in it, which is arranged separately on a board and stuck into a recess made to fit it.

I do not know its history, it was found among

family rubbish and was probably the treasured box of some old servant, and made for her by a village swain as a love token, or perhaps was the first instalment to housekeeping when a wedding drew near.

Fig. 31 is a box of Mrs Fitzherbert's, the wife of George IV., the woman whose love was so great that she was willing to remain under the stigma of being only his mistress, rather than endanger his public position, and who, even in death, declined to speak and carried her secret with her to the grave.

The truth (always suspected) was not known with certainty, until her marriage certificate and other papers lodged at Coutts's Bank by Mrs Fitzherbert in 1833, were, by permission of his late Majesty, made public in 1905. As I look into it, I think of the heavy heart of its owner as she used the delicate little implements within, which have now all disappeared.

How often she must have hoped, as years glided by, that her selfish and unthinking husband would at last, however late, do her justice and clear her fair fame.

The wood of which the box is made is harewood, and shows strongly the peculiar slight tinge of greenness which is a characteristic of that wood.

Round the edges are bands of satinwood, about one third of an inch wide, and the bottom is heavily weighted with lead.

There is a drawer which is supposed to defy unauthorised inspection, but it is in the nature of *le secret de polichinelle*, for, as you see, the silver peg that holds it closed is in the very front and somewhat large. Its lining is green paper, a favourite arrangement at that period, and you will see a curious contrivance for holding embroidery. It turns round by means of a small ivory cogwheel, so that, as the work grows, it can be wound up and held fast, and the box being thoroughly weighted, it was not pulled along by the worker's exertions.

The pedigree of this box is clear. Its present owner when a child received it from a Miss Prujean. Miss Prujean's aunt was Mrs Fitzherbert's cousin, and this cousin received it herself from Mrs Fitzherbert.

A few days ago I was having tea at Marble Hill, Mrs Fitzherbert's beautiful home at Twickenham, and where it is supposed she first met Prince George. It is very likely, as he was living more or less at Kew at that time, with the King and Queen, a home in which there was but little unity or happiness.

Marble Hill is now a restaurant; we had tea in what I suppose must have been the dining-room, and all the time my thoughts were busy with the past. It is a very interesting house. Originally built by the Countess of Suffolk in the reign of George II., it has a really magnificent staircase of Honduras mahogany and a re-

ception room of most unusual proportions. There are also some semi-secret openings and contrivances in the big chimneys, which show it was constructed at a time when the political strife between Jacobites and Hanoverians was at its height, and speedy means of entrance and exit without witness was desirable.

As well as the workboxes shown here, I have a giant one of Japanese lacquer. What it was meant for I cannot say; it is very large for a workbox, but it is full of many more of the rather curious products of the industry of our great-grandmothers—knitting stands, a long rosewood cylindrical box for knitting needles, and several square boxes made of thick cardboard and covered with scraps of satin and damask. Cheap boxes did not exist in those days, so our ingenious forebears contrived them for themselves.



## PART II

### ON THE STUDY OF OLD CHINA, POTTERY AND GLASS

PORCELAIN was made in the East long before any was manufactured either on the Continent or in England. Pottery, of course, was common long before, but you must keep the two distinct in your mind.

Naturally the first thing to know is whether the piece you wish to study is porcelain or pottery.

Porcelain, when held up between your eyes and the light, is more or less transparent, whilst pottery is absolutely opaque.

You probably have one or two pieces of porcelain whose history you would like to know—where and when they were made, and if valuable or not. You will not learn much about them unless you make up your mind to set about the matter seriously in your leisure hours, for in the study of china there is so much to be thought of, observed, compared and considered, that it is a work of patience.

The marks on china are often misleading instead of helpful, and a large number of pieces—indeed the larger half by far—bear no mark at all, by

which we may say with certainty that they came from this or that factory.

Some china, as for instance Lowestoft, seems never to have been marked in any way, except occasionally by numbers, which were probably painters' private signs; some factories again, adopted quite other marks than their own, such as the crossed swords of Dresden which appear on a good deal of English work, notably Worcester; again, both English and Continental potters copied oriental china and carried their imitation even to the marks.

In England another difficulty crops up caused by two or more firms using the same marks, such as those of Bow and Chelsea—the anchor appears on work from both, and so increases our difficulties.

As therefore we are not greatly helped by marks, except in a few cases such as Derby and Spode china which is usually plainly marked, we must note closely the difference between the various *kinds* of china, the quality and colour of the pastes and any peculiarities observable in work from different factories.

You must try to learn the difference between *hard* and *soft* paste, by some referred to as “true porcelain” and “artificial.” All English china with the exception of Plymouth and Bristol and New Hall is *soft*.

*Hard* paste cannot be filed, the file only leaving a slight mark—you can try an experiment on an under edge where no harm can be done.

*Soft* paste will yield to the file and is much more porous, consequently sometimes colours have run a little.

Next as to glaze—notice if the painting is *under* or *over* glaze.

*Under* glaze means the decoration was applied *before* the glaze is put on, whilst *over* glaze naturally means ornamentation applied *after* the glazing process.

It is essential to understand these simple facts, before commencing your studies. I give you a list of a few books to help your difficulties, and have put a star against those the price of which suits slender purses.

I am not sure that it is not even more difficult to arrive at the age and birth-place of old pottery, and I must not linger to say much of that, there is but little left in private houses and you must carry on your researches generally in museums.

To speak of glass also I have left myself but little room. I have given you the names of two or three books that would be helpful. It is an even more difficult subject for study than that of china, there is much less to go upon and the records concerning its various places of manufacture are somewhat uncertain. There is much to be studied both in the Victoria and Albert and the British Museums, but, as we may neither touch nor handle, it makes research somewhat casual.

## BOOKS TO STUDY

- A History and Description of  
 English Porcelain - - - *W. Burton.*  
 \*English Porcelain - - - *A. H. Church.*  
 The Old Derby Factory- - - *J. Haslem.*  
 History of Pottery and Porcelain - *J. Marryat.*  
 Marks and Monograms on  
 Pottery and Porcelain - - - *W. Chaffers.*  
 \*English Earthenware- - - *A. H. Church.*  
 Two Centuries of Ceramic  
 Art in Bristol - - - *H. Owen.*  
 Lowestoft China - - *W. W. R. Spelman.*  
 \*Chats on English China - *Arthur Hayden.*  
 \*Chats on Earthenware - - *Arthur Hayden.*  
 Wedgwood's Life - - - *Meteyard.*  
 Memorials of Wedgwood - - - *Meteyard.*  
 A Brief History of Old  
 English Porcelain - - - *L. M. Solon.*  
 Porcelain - - - *Edward Dillon.*  
 Glass - - - *Edward Dillon.*  
 \*English Table Glass - - - *Percy Bate.*  
 \*Early English Glass - - - *D. Wilmer.*  
 Old English Glasses - - *Albert Hartshorne.*  
 Old Glass and how to  
 collect it - - - *James Sydney Lewis.*  
 Blue Dash Chargers  
 and other early  
 English tin enamel  
 Circular dishes - *Rev. E. A. Downman.*

## CHAPTER XIV

### CHELSEA AND BOW CHINA

THE honour of having produced the first porcelain in England is claimed both for Chelsea and Bow by their admirers, and it seems a moot point which factory produced the first piece—there is much controversy on the subject, but no clear proof.

For instance, we hear that a patent was granted to Thomas Frye with reference to the invention of porcelain in England, and he is spoken of as “one of the managers” of the Bow works. This was in 1744, and naturally we infer that the factory was already of some importance if it could support more than one manager, but as to the actual year of its commencement no certain date is known. Mr Hayden, whose opinion is of value, thinks it was about 1730.

There is a jug—indeed several alike—framed to rest on goats, and decorated with a life-sized bee in front and other devices. This design, often spoken of as the goat-and-bee jug, was common to both Chelsea and Bow, and we meet with it bearing the marks of both factories, but an interesting point is that the Chelsea ones bear the early mark of a triangle and the word *Chelsea* inscribed, with

the date 1745. Here at any rate we are on firm ground; we do not know how long the works at Chelsea had been in existence at this date, manifestly some time, because the goat-and-bee jugs are of first-class workmanship, but the date 1745, so inscribed on a really good piece, shows that the factory could not then be in its infancy.

The question of marks with regard to Bow and Chelsea is most bewildering because, though there are but few marks on Chelsea—the anchor and triangle in different forms being, indeed, the only ones, with the exception of the delightfully plain and straightforward word *Chelsea*, which is only very occasionally used—we are confronted with the strange fact that Bow also used the anchor mark.

Observe the similarity in my list of marks for the two factories.

There is certainly less Bow china still to be seen than Chelsea, probably because Bow existed as a separate concern only to 1776, whereas the Chelsea works lasted, though under the management of Duesbury of Derby, until 1784.

There is a very strongly marked similarity between the china of Bow and that of Chelsea, especially as to the figures, so great, indeed, that it needs an expert to decide which is which.

This little book is not learned, and it would be out of place to enter upon the difficulties that beset the path even of those whose long and painstaking study of pastes, glazes, shapes, colours, etc.,

has rendered them fit to give us their opinions on these knotty points.

Some experts look upon Bow as being almost similar to Chelsea, but coarser, and perhaps that is not on the whole a bad definition. The colours seem a little more crude, and the limbs and draperies do not seem quite so delicately finished off by the "repairer"—that is, by the artist who worked up the delicate edges after the piece came from the moulds.

Very frequently in Bow figures there may be found a square hole, somewhere at the back, which was made to enable candlesticks to be fitted to them, and some say this peculiarity is *never* found in Chelsea work.

Like most of our factories, Bow began by imitating oriental designs, and presumably that was the cause of their calling themselves the "New Canton" works, a name found on some rather humble pieces, like the inkstand at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

The "New Canton" buildings stood where Bell & Black now have their match factory, and some houses near there are still called China Row.

A very favourite design was the so-called May-flower or "Prunus," in white raised figures upon a white ground, as you see in Fig. 33.

This is a small tureen, which has classic masks at the handles.

The best known of all the Bow figures is that of

Kitty Clive, the celebrated actress. I saw one sold a few years since at Christie's for a prodigious sum.

To my mind that of a woman playing on a Pastorella (an instrument which she holds on her knee) is far more interesting; this is to be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum. In that example you see very markedly the scroll-like stand on which the figure rests, to which some point as very distinctive of Bow—I cannot say I feel it is so, because one sees scrolls almost identically the same, under Chelsea figures.

There is one supremely interesting piece of Bow work, in the small but beautiful collection of china in the British Museum. It is called the "Craft" bowl and has with it the extremely instructive autobiographical account by Thomas Craft of its manufacture. It is so curious and gives so many interesting particulars, together with Craft's quaint personal reflections and philosophies that I venture to transcribe it.

"This bowl was made at the Bow china factory at Stratford-le-Bow, Essex, about the year 1760, and painted there by me, Thomas Craft—my cipher is in the bottom; it is painted in what we used to call the old Japan taste, a taste at that time much esteemed by the Duke of Argyle; there is nearly two pennyweight of gold, about 15 shillings; I had it in hand, at different times about three months; about two weeks' time was





CHELSEA FIGURE

*(Fig. 32)*



BOW TUREEN

*(Fig. 33)*



bestowed upon it, it could not have been manufactured, etc., for less than £4. There is not its similitude. I took it in a box to Kentish Town and had it burned there in Mr Gyles's kiln, cost me 3s; it was cracked the first time of using it. Miss Nancy Sha, a daughter of the late Sir Patrick Blake, was christened with it. I never used it but in particular respect to my company, and I desire my legatee (as mentioned in my will) may do the same. Perhaps it may be thought I have said too much about this trifling toy; a reflection steals in upon my mind that this said bowl may meet with the same fate that the manufactory where it was made has done, and like the famous cities of Troy, Carthage etc., and similar to Shakspear's 'Cloud Cap't Towers' etc. The above manufactory was carried on many years under the firm of Messrs Crowther and Weatherby, whose names were known almost over the world; they employed 300 persons; about 90 painters (of whom I was one) and about 200 turners, throwers, etc., were employed under one roof. The model of the building was taken from that at Canton in China; the whole was heated by two stoves on the outside of the building, and conveyed through flews or pipes, and warmed the whole, sometimes to an intense heat, unbearable in winter. It now wears a miserable aspect, being a manufactory for turpentine and small tenements, and like Shakepeare's 'baseless fabric,' etc. Mr Weatherby has

been dead many years, Mr Crowther is in Morden College, Blackheath, and I am the only person of all those employed there who annually visit him,  
"T. CRAFT, 1790."

How well it would be if we had a few more of these delightful human documents, about the treasures of the past. I enjoy very much his Shakespearian reflections, the name spelt differently in the ardour of composition.

He must have been a kind and faithful friend and it is comforting to know that he did not forget his old employer, stranded in the little backwater of life at Morden College.

One simple fact may help you a little in studying the differences between Bow and Chelsea—it is this: that the glaze of Bow is not so clear as that of Chelsea, it is frequently speckled and sometimes slightly pitted, moreover it is often put on too thickly, with a tendency to run into corners.

Now to turn to Chelsea; it may interest some London readers to know exactly where the works stood. To reach the site, go down Lower Church Street, hallowed by memories of Charles Kingsley, leaving on the left the old rectory and on the right an old two-storied house, which is the scene of the "Hillyars and the Burtons" by Henry Kingsley. Passing the rectory about a hundred yards you come to a little slummy opening, defended against the incursions of

costers' barrows by a central post, usually occupied by the youth of Chelsea swinging on ropes attached to the side walls. This is Justice Walk, once possessed of a fine lime avenue.

Part of the works stood here, probably the mixing rooms and store places. The ovens were certainly in Lawrence Street, which is at the end of Justice Walk ; turn to the right on leaving Justice Walk, and where Lawrence Street and Cheyne Walk meet—there stood the kilns.

At the commencement of the industry we hear nothing but vague references, such as that in 1747 several potters went from Burslem to work in the Chelsea factory, and in a paper of 1750 we read of "Mr Charles Gouyn, late proprietor and chief manager of the Chelsea House." Presumably Charles Gouyn, a Frenchman or Belgian, was the first manager and proprietor.

It was in 1749 or 1750 that Nicholas Sprimont, also a Frenchman, became head of the concern, and for twenty years he remained the presiding genius of the place.

He had working under him Francis Thomas as manager and foreman. Thomas died in 1770, just one year after the works had passed into the possession of Mr Duesbury. He is buried in Old Chelsea Church, in the south aisle, in the silent company of many notabilities, such as the unfortunate Duchess of Northumberland, who lived to see her son and his wife, Lady Jane Grey and

her husband, all beheaded on Tower Hill, and her second son die a prisoner in the Tower itself. Old Chelsea Church, with the Thomas More chapel and these historic recollections, is one of the most interesting and untouched in London.

The twenty years of Sprimont's management were the halcyon days of the factory, and especially the fifteen years from 1750 to 1765.

To this period belong the larger number of the best known groups and the specimens of magnificent vases, such as the "Foundling" and "Chesterfield," and also the tea and coffee services, etc., resembling in style the work of Sèvres. These often had a groundwork or panels of turquoise, Royal blue, apple green, and that curious tint peculiar to Chelsea, which is a kind of mixture of claret and magenta. Amongst these beautiful specimens we may also see white pieces, with landscapes and various scenes executed in a frightful emerald green; these, being somewhat rare, are valued accordingly, but to my taste are really hideous.

Roubiliac, the French sculptor, was employed by Sprimont to model figures and groups, and to his design we owe "The Music Lesson," now to be seen in the Schreiber collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum—the two figures are seated within a hawthorn bosquet, a very favourite form of decoration both at Chelsea and Bow.

Sprimont started auction sales of his wares, for we come upon an advertisement for one of these

periodic auctions which gives us an insight to the many different things turned out from the factory. Among other things it mentions "the entire stock of porcelain toys, snuff-boxes, smelling bottles, *etwees*, and trinkets for watches mounted in gold and unmounted, in various beautiful shapes of an elegant design, and curiously painted in enamel."

There is a beautiful collection of these trinkets and *etwees*, both in the Victoria and Albert and in the British Museums, and they are worth careful study—one struck me very much, having the singular arrangement of diamond eyes in the china head of a woman.

Fig. 33 shows a charming little Chelsea figure, the well-known Mars, a similar figure much larger is in the Schreiber collection, but it is not so good as mine, neither the modelling nor the colours being so delicate.

In mine the tunic and sleeves are brilliant turquoise, whilst the vertical stripes on the tunic and the lining of the helmet are Venetian red. Draped from his right shoulder is a lemon-coloured cloak, and immediately behind, at his feet, is one of the Roman standards.

Notice the exquisite modelling and delicate finish of the limbs, conspicuously visible in the knees and the hands.

There is no mark, but experience points to the date of manufacture as being between 1750 and 1760.

Unfortunately, his dear head (he is regarded as a cherished member of the family) has been broken, though the fracture is imperceptible this greatly detracts from his commercial value; all the same, an astute Jew furniture mender, who entered my flat to repair another valued friend, could with difficulty be induced to relinquish his burning desire to buy my Chelsea soldier, and through a beak-like nose he snuffled out ardent entreaties to be allowed to purchase him for £3.

Finding me obdurate, he gradually rose in his bidding to £10, and at last, with a final burst which seemed to tear his Jewish soul to pieces, he offered £12. This lavish and agonised offer meeting with no acceptance, he retired muttering and discomfited.

The characteristics of Chelsea china are marked. First in importance is its great weight; for instance, Fig. 33 is only 7 inches high, but it weighs three-quarters of a pound; secondly, the glaze is very pure and white, and more delicate than that on Bow; thirdly, three marks are often found on the underside, caused by resting on points in the oven; fourthly, if some flaw appeared in the piece, an insect or flower was arranged to conceal the misfortune. This arrangement was, however, also carried out at Bow.

A very distinctive feature is the raised flower work—that is to say, flowers modelled exactly as they are in Nature, as in hawthorn arbours, and again white blossoms, also modelled in the round,



are sown thickly upon a coloured ground. This style was also prevalent at Dresden ; indeed, there is a certain similarity between the Watteau-like figures of Dresden and those of Chelsea.

On the whole, the chief output from the Chelsea factory was of the ornamental kind—candlesticks and candelabra, single figures, groups of figures, often surrounded by foliage, fruit trees and hawthorn bosquets, animals of all kinds, especially sheep and goats, poultry, lovers in arbours, etc.

There were, too, all kinds of dishes, teapots, etc., formed of melons, pineapples and cauliflowers, lobsters and crawfish, sweetmeat and toilet dishes in the shape of fruit, flowers, and vegetables.

Besides all this there were splendid tea and coffee services, as well as some of a plainer kind, amongst which one may reckon the ugly green ones already described. The output was very varied, but I think it is correct to say that the larger part was ornamental.

Nicholas Sprimont directed the factory for nineteen or twenty years, and sold the works and entire plant to Duesbury in 1769 or 1770. He had been in failing health for some time, and had already in 1764 made an attempt to dispose of the whole thing. We learn from an advertisement of that year that “ as Mr Sprimont, the sole possessor of this rare porcelain secret, is advised to go to the German Spaw, all his genuine household furniture, etc., will be sold at the same time.”

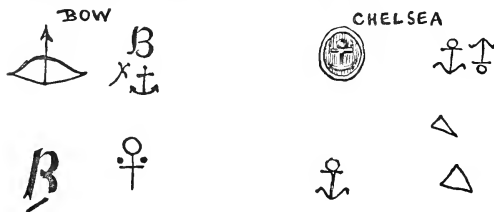
Duesbury carried on the business at the old

premises until 1784, when the plant was removed to Derby, and Chelsea china became known as Chelsea-Derby or Derby-Chelsea.

There are now in the Chelsea Public Library, open to the inspection of all, several very fine specimens of Chelsea and Bow figures, bequeathed by Mrs Henrietta Yates.

They are all clearly marked respectively as Bow and Chelsea, and it is, therefore, very informing to study them attentively. I confess that to my mind there is *very* little difference between them.

It is interesting, too, to see the Chelsea pieces surrounded by the very remarkable and striking pictures of the late Mr Burgess and others, of different parts of the old suburbs, which really remained in many particulars very little altered from the appearance it presented at the time those figures were made until 1887 or thereabouts, when (to artistic minds) a dreadful era of sanitary improvements took place, old houses and streets were ruthlessly pulled down, model dwellings and palatial flats were erected in their place, and Chelsea lost much of its old interest.



## CHAPTER XV

### PLYMOUTH AND BRISTOL CHINA

I PUT these together, for the Plymouth factory only lasted a short time, and was later entirely merged in that of Bristol.

Plymouth and Bristol china bear a close resemblance to each other and very naturally, for Cookworthy, the Plymouth potter, only ran the Plymouth works a very limited time, some twelve or fourteen years, and in 1774 Richard Champion of Bristol bought the whole concern from Cookworthy.

It makes the study of Plymouth china a little difficult for beginners that Cookworthy moved his works from Plymouth to Bristol some few years before he became involved in financial difficulties, and was compelled to cede his rights to Champion.

It is instructive to know that Cookworthy was the first potter to make the hard paste in England, and it seems a cruel mischance that he should have been financially so unfortunate

William Cookworthy was a Quaker and born at Kingsbridge in South Devon, and it was he who first discovered and used the china clay,

which he found in Cornwall, for the making of hard paste china, but apparently he did not utilise his discovery for some years.

It is important to bear in mind that Plymouth and Bristol were the only two factories where genuine hard paste was made.

Oriental china is hard paste and will bear an extraordinary amount of heat, such a temperature, indeed, as would melt the ordinary soft paste. Numerous were the attempts in the 18th century to make this hard paste, or "true porcelain," but in England William Cookworthy was the only successful experimentalist.

He was by trade a chemist and evidently a thoughtful man. Probably he had heard of and read with great interest the account sent to Europe by the Jesuit priest, Père d'Entrecolles (a missionary in China) of the making of oriental porcelain. Père d'Entrecolles had been for some time working in or near King-te-tchin, one of the principal centres of porcelain making in China, and in writing an account of the factory to a fellow priest in Paris, he explained that the two principally necessary ingredients for the making of the true porcelain were *kaolin and petuntse*.

This information probably set Cookworthy's mind to work, but it was many years later that he discovered true china stone and clay in Cornwall. There is great diversity of opinion as to the date of his successful discovery and the first starting of his works near to Plymouth. We can

only speak with certainty of the factory after the granting of the patent in 1768, but no doubt he had been making china a long time before that.

This patent granted in 1768 was a great gain for Cookworthy, but somehow he was not a successful man; he had not served a regular apprenticeship as a potter, and he met with many difficulties and trials, and the early Plymouth pieces were coarse and somewhat imperfect; but he was a painstaking and persevering man and not easily daunted.

He employed a French artist whose name was Soqui, or something of that sound, but it is spelt in so many different ways that the correct version is uncertain, and he has left no signed pieces.

Probably many of the more delicate pieces are due to his inspiration and talent.

Poor Cookworthy's success was short lived. Lord Camelford was a good friend to him, gave him pecuniary help to fight for his patent and probably also to run the works; but misfortune seemed to dog him, though it is difficult to arrive at exact facts: his want of technical knowledge as a potter and lack of capital were probably the cause of his failure.

It is thought by some, and it seems likely, that Champion who bought out Cookworthy had been his partner; if this is so, it is pleasant to know that the business was honourably conducted, that poor Cookworthy was not unjustly treated because he was in hard straits. He has left a distinct

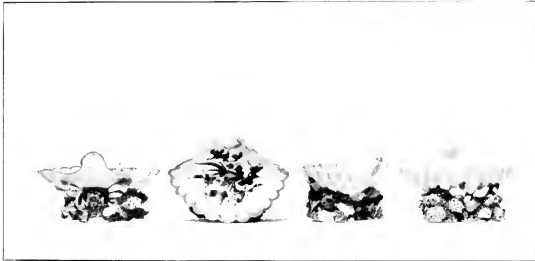
statement to the effect that he had been well considered in the affair in all respects by Champion, and certainly they always remained close friends.

As the Plymouth works existed as a separate concern so short a time, it is naturally difficult to find many genuine specimens of the factory.

I met with a really fine example in a cottage in Cornwall a few years ago, and tried hard to buy it but failed. It had little monetary value, being terribly broken, but I should have mended it carefully and it would have been a pleasure to look at. It was a large bowl, 10 inches across, a most unusual size.

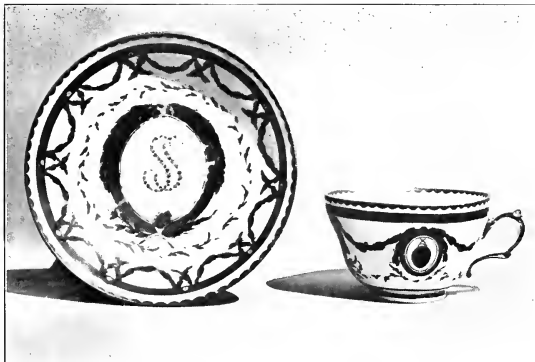
Cookworthy made much pure white china for the table, such as salt-cellars and sweetmeat dishes in the form of shells, rockwork, etc. He also made busts and figures now much prized for their rarity and as usual he copied the Chinese style on teapots, mugs, and cups.

Fig. 34 represents four salt-cellars in the form of scallop shells resting on a group of smaller shells. This was a favourite design of the period, and very typical of Plymouth, but the confusion is very great as to the amalgamation of the two factories, and we have no proof as to what was made actually at Plymouth itself, or during the later period—before his failure—when Cookworthy had moved his works to Bristol. Then again comes the time when Richard Champion had absorbed altogether the Plymouth factories.



PLYMOUTH SALT CELLARS

(Fig. 34)



BRISTOL CUP AND SAUCER

(Fig. 35)





These three different periods make it difficult to attempt any decision as to dates.

I cannot help thinking that some of the pieces that are called Plymouth are in reality Bristol, for Cookworthy met with great difficulties in his work, and certainly his early efforts showed many defects—somewhat rough modelling, not a very good tint in blue and considerable specking of the paste.

It seems to me that if these finer specimens are really from Cookworthy's factory, they must have been made at the last just before the failure of the proprietor. Bristol and Plymouth having to some extent used the same marks adds to our difficulties.

Another puzzling thing is the great similarity at first sight between Bow and Plymouth china because the patterns used at Bow very many years before, especially the white shells and rockwork, reappear in Plymouth. This is greatly accounted for, if, as many people think, Bow workmen were engaged to start the first works of Cookworthy's.

With regard to the figures, too, the celebrated Kitty Clive was made at Bow in 1785, and appears again several years later at Bristol from Cookworthy's works. As, however, Plymouth is hard paste and Bow soft, careful investigation will enable us to see the difference, only, unfortunately, careful investigation is not possible where specimens are enshrined in cabinets, where sometimes they are in a very bad light.

Plymouth china and also Bristol has one peculiarity, which, so far, no fraudulent imitator has been able to copy. This is a singular ridged appearance in the paste; it is impossible to give any idea of this in a photograph—even with the piece in your hand, you only discern it in a strong reflecting light, but to the touch it is very marked.

To come to Bristol china, there is still a considerable amount to be seen and very graceful it is; it realises very large sums in the auction-room and can only be bought by the wealthy.

Like Plymouth, the Bristol china was made of hard paste and the effort to recoup himself for the expenses to which he had been put, led Champion in 1775 to petition Parliament for an extension of his patent. He was violently opposed by Josiah Wedgwood and others; he gained the day, but the immense outlay crippled him and in 1781 he sold his business.

The laurel leaf design is continually present on Bristol china; Champion seemed never to tire of it. Sometimes it appears as a plain wreath, sometimes elegantly festooned and tied with ribbons. Very often these wreaths surround medallions with figures and heads on them, or classical vases.

Very frequently the groundwork is a beautiful canary colour. In the possession of a friend of mine are two Bristol dessert dishes, of which the edges are perforated to resemble basket-work. The ground is canary colour divided by narrow bands of white, on which are painted

delicate wreaths of flowers, and at the two ends are deep green vine leaves in low relief.

You will also find on Bristol china that a common design is wreaths of festooned flowers, accompanied by isolated blossoms, such as a mauve tulip or a delicate harebell. The flowers generally are of three or four colours, amongst others that peculiar shade of Venetian red, so much affected by the old china painters.

Sometimes you see pieces which closely imitate Chinese designs and others with exotic birds and butterflies. I think I have never seen any blue flowers painted on Bristol china, though a considerable amount of china purely blue and white was made in the factory, when the blue is generally to be seen rather deep in colour. A great many figures were made there, the four seasons and the four quarters of the globe being fairly familiar to all from illustrations.

Tea and coffee sets were made in great numbers, and the two celebrated tea sets, the "Burke" and the "Smith" set, still survive in part at least to show us what a Bristol tea set could be like. In Fig. 35 I give you a cup and saucer of the "Smith" set. In the year 1774 Edmund Burke contested an election at Bristol and during this somewhat agitating time he stayed in the house of a certain Mr Smith. At his departure (after his success) he ordered a splendid tea service to be made for the Smiths.

As you see it has the favourite laurel leaf

design and is very heavily gilt, the double S, which represents Mrs Smith's initials, is rather curious, being composed entirely of tiny roses.

Another set, still more sumptuous, was made and presented by Champion to Edmund Burke's wife; the design was most elaborate and each piece bore the Burke arms impaled with those of Nugent. The service consisting of six pieces—teapot, sugar basin, milk jug and three cups and saucers—was made in 1774 and sold according to Mr Chaffers in 1871 for £565, the teapot on this occasion realising £190. This was later resold for £210, and a third time for close on £500; and it passed once more into new hands at the sale of the well-known Trapnell collection.

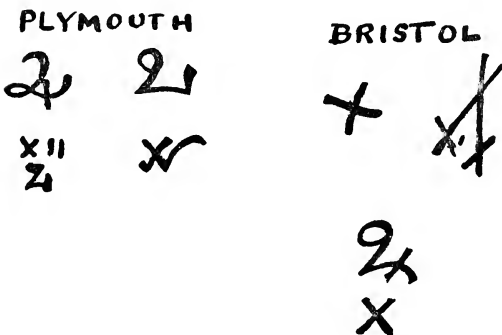
There is, or was, a specimen of this celebrated service in the British Museum. The collection there of English china is very excellent, and the student is able to compare specimens with ease.

One of the most marked productions of the Bristol factory are the hexagonal vases, peculiarly delicate and graceful; sometimes the neck is in open trelliswork, sometimes plain, and generally with exotic birds or sprays of flowers depicted. Sometimes there are covers, when by rights they should be called jars not vases. There are some splendid examples of Bristol porcelain in the Schreiber collection at the Victoria and Albert

PLYMOUTH AND BRISTOL CHINA 141

Museum, where you can study its special characteristics very thoroughly.

All the factories made figures and large numbers were turned out at Bristol, as the oval and round plaques of white biscuit, with flowers, fruit and foliage in high relief over the surface. These were of all sizes and kinds—the one best known is that with a portrait of Benjamin Franklin in the British Museum. In the Trapnell collection were the beautiful figures, "Fire," "Water," "Earth" and "Air," and the even better known set of the four quarters of the globe.



## CHAPTER XVI

### CROWN DERBY CHINA

SINCE—as we have already seen—the Derby factory absorbed both the Bow and Chelsea works, and they became entirely merged in it, it is easy to see why, in many instances (especially with regard to the figures and groups), there should be so strong a resemblance between specimens of the three factories.

The men once employed in different works must have worked side by side, and no doubt unconsciously copied each other's methods.

The origin and date of the first Derby factory is obscure—there was certainly early in the century a pottery establishment of some kind on the Cockpit Hill, but it is very doubtful if porcelain was ever made there, and the "Darby figgars" referred to in old notebooks were probably of pottery.

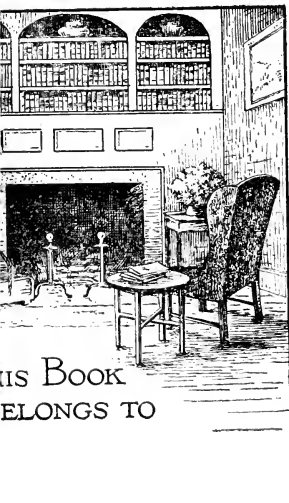
The important time to note is when William Duesbury joined the firm. He seems to have been a "toy" figure-maker at the Cockpit works. At the same time there was in the town a French figure-maker, Andrew Planché, who worked on his own account, but had his figures fired in the

Cockpit kilns. The Cockpit works were in the possession of two brothers named Heath, and we hear of an agreement in 1756 between Planché, John Heath, and William Duesbury, as partners in the making of china.

We never hear again, however, of Planché, so perhaps he withdrew from the firm. Mr Church suggests that "in the actual arrangements carried out Planché, the 'china-maker,' became foreman

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We never hear again, however, of Planché, so perhaps he withdrew from the firm. Mr Church suggests that "in the actual arrangements carried out Planché, the 'china-maker,' became foreman or manager, while Heath, the capitalist, and Duesbury, the enameller, were the only partners concerned in setting up the factory in the Nottingham Road early in the year 1756."

In 1780 the senior partner, Heath, became bankrupt, and William Duesbury remained sole manager and owner.

He seems to have been a man of remarkable commercial instincts—his principle appears to have been to "buy out" all rivals. In 1769 he bought up the celebrated porcelain works at Chelsea, and for a few years he carried on both factories separately; there were, however, drawbacks to this plan, and in 1784 the Chelsea works were finally closed, and the stock-in-trade, moulds, finished and unfinished ware of all kinds, as well as the potters, painters, and enamellers employed there, were transferred to Derby.

In 1775 or 1776, as we have seen, the Bow plant also passed into the management of the omnivorous Duesbury, and these two amalgamations explain the similarity of workmanship

in pieces bearing the marks of Bow, Chelsea, and Derby.

In 1786 the older Duesbury died, and his son inherited the business—he took into partnership Michael Keane, who after the death of Duesbury the second, carried on the business on behalf of the widow, whom eventually he married.

After this a third Duesbury reigned at the works for a short time, and in or about 1815 the factory was leased to Mr Bloor.

From this time a period of decadence set in; Robert Bloor died in 1845, and after that the interest of the china wanes.

The cause of the rapid deterioration after 1815 is not far to seek, and is to be found in the fact that up to that period nothing had been allowed to leave the factory except absolutely perfect pieces.

That had been as the laws of the Medes and Persians under the Duesburys!

No matter how small or imperceptible had been the flaw, if there was one, the piece was condemned, but, unfortunately, not destroyed, as was the arbitrary, but wise rule of Josiah Wedgwood.

Consequently, when Robert Bloor took up the management, and was probably somewhat overweighted by the initial expenses attendant upon his purchase, he conceived the fatal idea of selling all this imperfect stock. He sold it off by auction, realising at once large sums; this tempted him to make quickly vast quantities of china, the per-

fection of which left much to be desired, and so began the downfall of the old Derby factory. We may roughly distinguish the different periods as the Derby, the Chelsea Derby, or Derby Chelsea, the Crown Derby, and the Bloor Derby.

The Derby is from 1751 or thereabouts to 1769—the Derby Chelsea from 1769 to 1773—the Crown Derby from 1773 to 1815—and then comes the Bloor Derby.

As we shall see later, there is some confusion as to the marks; for example Mr Bloor took command in 1815, but he did not change the mark till 1830.

With regard to the characteristics of Crown Derby—a rich mazarin blue (the *gros bleu* of the Sèvres china) is very much in evidence at this period, used in bands, panels and as ground-work, also apple green and canary yellow were employed in the same manner, though not so often as the deep blue. In vases such as you see in Fig. 36 which were a favourite shape with the elder Duesbury, the blue or other ground-work often covers the article almost entirely whilst compartments only are left white for the introduction of painted landscapes, flowers, birds, etc. Another point is the beautifully smooth and rich gilding which covers the edges with broad bands and frequently the handles also.

The handles of early vases are often formed of masks, or of serpents.

The older tea and coffee services show fluted

sides as a distinction to the later ones, which are usually plain. Both these and the Chelsea Derby cups and saucers are much decorated with what is called the 'French spring' or 'Chantilly' pattern, a tiny cornflower or other small blossom. It blue or pink and occasionally black, just touched with gold. This was no doubt an imitation of French china made at Chantilly.

This is generally, but not always met with in finer cups and saucers rather than of plain.

I am sure my readers will sympathise with me when I tell them we had in our family a complete tea and coffee service of this finer shade and with the 'French spring'. It was sent out to Australia as a wedding present to the son of the house and it arrived like a shattered box of biscuits, only two saucers escaping the injudicious influence of the ship's crew. One of course it was packing our best knowledge in it was considered as

The pattern was most dainty and charming and usually two being the Chantilly spring in black with a touch of orange rose colour and gold and a wide band of intricate gold round the edge.

From about 1815 we meet with what was called the Derby, a few patterns and the number of feet some without tea and coffee which is I think the original use of Derby Derby.

The Derby and Chelsea Derby figures are somewhat rare and command high prices. Mr



see, a white band in the middle, also round the rim and encircling the foot, but there is much gilding on the white and encroaching on the blue.

Note particularly the handles, which are formed of serpents and are a very distinctive feature.

The mark is No. 4 on the list of marks, and is of a reddish puce colour, probably showing date about 1790 to 1795.

The cup and saucer belongs to a variety of the much-admired Derby Japan pattern, and is in the rich red and blue tones of old Satsuma; the mark is also No. 4 in much more decided puce colour.

In Fig. 37 you see cups and saucers which are excellent examples of Crown Derby of the period between 1785 to 1810.

The one on the left with the coffee cup has a design of roses and leaves, and a slight wreathing intertwined with the roses, of the Chantilly sprig in blue.

It is not to my mind quite so pretty as the one to the right, the decoration of which is entirely composed of a wreath of the same tiny sprig, in blue and pink and delicate leaves and tendrils of gold.

They are both of nearly the same age as the vases, the cup and saucer to the right being probably as old as 1785.

Derby china is usually though not invariably marked.

I only give you the oldest and most important



CROWN DERBY VASES AND CUP AND SAUCER  
(Fig. 36)



CROWN DERBY TEA CUPS AND SAUCERS  
(Fig. 37)





marks. There were very many more varieties, especially in the later years, but these four are enough to start you on your studies.

No. 1 is the mark thought to have been used before Duesbury bought the Chelsea works, though this is not certain. No. 2 is certainly *after* that period, for the Chelsea anchor you see is involved with the D. No. 3 is the first Crown Derby mark. No. 4 has the crossed bâtons below the crown and three dots in the outside angles. Experts differ as to the exact date when this last alteration took place, but the consensus of opinion points to its having been in or about 1782.

These four marks are found in infinite variety, some fairly straight, some very crooked, but no two specimens exactly alike.

They are found in blue, puce, gold, light brown and occasionally in green. Then there is vermilion, which is a later mark; probably it began about 1808 or 1810. If you see a mark which appears to be dirty vermilion, look closely to see if the crown is jewelled or not; if it *is*, probably the dirty red is really puce, because the crown was not jewelled in the later years.

One often meets with china said to be Crown Derby that is not so really. It is very generally marked—not invariably, of course, there are innumerable exceptions—but the larger quantity *is* marked, and we are greatly helped in deciding the authenticity of specimens by examining the pattern books.

L

I possess two tea and coffee services that have proved something of a puzzler.

One which is unusually handsome is of a deep, glowing mandarin orange colour. This is well thrown up by the contrast of white circular compartments. All over the orange and also over the white parts is a close pattern in gold, with the addition over the white portions of an interlacing pattern in the mandarin orange.

The design certainly is in the style of the Derby factory, but nowhere in their pattern-books is there anything resembling this peculiar orange colour. Indeed in all my researches I have not met with a single piece of china of this hue. Perhaps its production presented some difficulties, or was extremely expensive, otherwise one would have expected to see often anything so strikingly decorative as is this set.

The other service is almost the counterpart of the orange one as to shape and also largely as to design, but instead of orange the scheme of colour is apple green, and the gilding is not quite so pronounced; the white compartments are panels instead of plaque-shaped, but the fine interlacing of green and gold creeping wreaths is exactly similar. From the form of the milk jugs, I should judge them to have been made about 1800 to 1805.

I am unable to trace the history of these two sets, which is a great pity, as records of this kind so often clear up difficulties. The orange one came from Alsace, but it is, I think, without doubt of

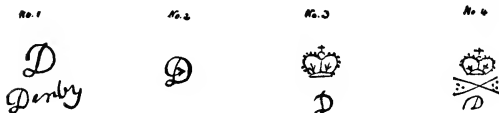
English make, so it must have been taken out there first.

The green set came from another branch of the family, and I am only acquainted with its history since 1815.

I should like to believe them both to be Crown Derby, but the absence of a mark in both cases and the singular colour of the mandarin orange somewhat staggers my comfortable hopes.

In the Schreiber collection you have an admirable opportunity of studying Derby china in all its different aspects and comparing one period with another—the Derby, the Chelsea Derby and the Crown Derby.

Close by these cases are those containing china from Chelsea before the factory came under the influence of Duesbury, so that you have every assistance in getting a definite idea of the Chelsea style in its pure simplicity, of Chelsea as it was affected by the Derby influence, and Derby as it was influenced by its connection with the Chelsea factory and workers.



## CHAPTER XVII

### OLD WORCESTER CHINA

THERE is a fashion in the collecting of china, as there is a fashion more or less connected with everything in this world, and old Worcester is, and has been for some time, the most desired porcelain to the collector.

Unfortunately, to buy it is beyond the purses of most of us, even small pieces of quite an ordinary kind commanding high prices; when one hears of a small mug fetching £9 5s, and a teapot £189 in the auction-room we "feel out of it," but throughout this little book I write more for the possessor than the collector. Some of you probably have a small specimen, bought at a time when Worcester china was "not much accounted of," like the silver of King Solomon, and it has been religiously preserved by forbears, who were far more careful of their possessions than we are in the present day, when the multitude of our belongings, and the hurry and rush of life, prevent that reverential care for household goods characteristic of the housewife of the 18th and early 19th centuries.

The Worcester works were started some six

years, or perhaps more than six years, later than those at Chelsea, and owe their commencement to the enterprise of Dr Wall and Mr William Davis.

The latter was a chemist, and undertook the mixing of the necessary ingredients which formed the body of the china, and also overlooked the arrangements, chemical and otherwise, of the colouring and painting departments.

It appears that in 1751 a kind of company was formed, consisting of 15 members, amongst whom appear the names of Dr Wall and Mr Davis. Mr Church gives us particulars of this amalgamated partnership, from which it appears that the different sums paid by each partner to the common stock amounted to £4500.

It is said, but I think proof is wanting to this assertion, that the opening of the Worcester factory was in some measure due to political causes. Jacobite feeling ran high at that time—it was but six years since Culloden—and it is supposed that the Hanoverian party encouraged and perhaps aided pecuniarily the growth of the factory, hoping that the employment of the large body of men necessary to run the works would aid them considerably in the elections by drawing to them a considerable number of votes.

The works were started at Warmstry House in 1751, and extraordinary precautions were taken to secure absolute secrecy as to the ingredients of the paste, their proportions, and other potting and decorative secrets.

At first the china made and now so highly valued was all under glaze blue and white, and a fairly close imitation of the oriental porcelain then arriving from the East in large quantities. The tone was a deep Cobalt blue, unmixed with any purplish shade.

In Fig. 38 you will see two large jugs of this early period of the kind known as the cabbage leaf pattern.

They are remarkably fine specimens and of an unusually large size.

The ground is white and the decorations blue, somewhat oriental in character, especially in the bigger of the two, which is not clear in the painting; the blue has a tendency to run, a difficulty often experienced by the early English potters.

The cabbage leaves stand upwards in low relief in white, and on the smaller of the two a face or mask, as it is called, is under the lip. Its height is  $9\frac{1}{4}$  inches, and the mark is No. 2.

The larger one carries mark 11.

There is still a good deal of this blue and white Worcester to be picked up by the patient hunter. No doubt vast quantities of this useful sort were made, tea and coffee services, jugs, and bowls, etc.—and from such large stores a considerable amount remains, moreover, it is not this kind of Worcester that commands the highest prices—that distinction is reserved for the highly decorated examples, decorated with flowers and exotic birds,



OLD WORCESTER EWERS

(Fig. 38)



WORCESTER "TEA-PARTY"

(Fig. 39)





and with groundwork of *gros bleu* and salmon scale pattern in all tints.

In the deed of partnership referred to above we see the name of Richard Holdship, who was an engraver. His skill was early enlisted in the works, where he engraved subjects for his brother Josiah to apply to the paste by means of the newly discovered process of transfer printing. You will find this process described in the chapter on Spode, so I will not introduce it here.

Some contend that it was first used at Worcester—certainly Robert Hancock and Josiah Holdship were very skilful in its use, but who was really the first to introduce the process will now, I suppose, always remain a debated point. It was at Worcester very generally carried out in black, and such pieces were called “jet enamelled,” but red and lavender and a kind of puce were also used.

Whoever introduced it, the new style was adopted with enthusiasm at Worcester. Among the best known examples, are the “Tea Party,” “the King of Prussia” mugs, “the Marquis of Granby” mugs and jugs, and similar pieces depicting George III. and his Queen and William Pitt, etc.

Robert Hancock seems to have been responsible for many garden subjects. “The King of Prussia” mug is a design probably well-known to all of you. These mugs (with a difference) were also made at Liverpool. It is not, however,

difficult to know from which factory any example comes, for there is a great difference in the design and also in the colour of the printing.

As to colour the Worcester ones are black, whilst those from Liverpool are often in deep rose colour and in puce.

The Worcester specimens show Frederick in full armour—three-quarter length—with a cloak and wig but no hat, whereas in the Liverpool mugs the hero is in full Court costume and wears a cocked hat. The Worcester examples show the initials R.H. and an anchor, a sort of play on the name of Holdship.

This anchor helps to differentiate to some degree between Holdship and Hancock who were both distinguished engravers and both worked at Worcester.

It is thought that Robert Hancock came from Battersea and it is probable that he brought with him the secret of transfer printing, which was certainly known at that time in the Battersea enamel works.

“The King of Prussia” mugs, of which there are three sizes, are much valued, and it is difficult now to find genuine ones. Beware of imitations.

Fig. 39 is one of the best known designs in Worcester transfer printing, and it has a double interest as showing the style of furniture used at that time. The design is considered to be by Hancock; he made somewhat of a speciality of garden and Watteau-like scenes such as this.

Somewhere about 1765 when trouble was probably brewing at Chelsea, a party of designers and enamellers from that factory came to work at Worcester, and from that time began to be made the extremely richly decorated and coloured pieces, which now fetch such incredible sums.

Dr Wall died in 1776, and I think we may say that the best work was done before his death.

This rich style of work which had then been produced for some years showed ground colours of great brilliance. They are very varied, deep, full Royal blue which partakes of a mazarin blue tint, powder blue which on the contrary has a greyish shade, apple green, deep green of a laurel tone, canary yellow and turquoise blue.

This last colour does not seem so common as the others, but is particularly charming. There is a dainty specimen—a small covered bowl—in the Franks collection at the British Museum; it has alternate panels of fluted white and plain turquoise blue, on these latter branches of apples are painted. Across the fluted white panels and appearing to lose themselves behind the blue portions are delicate wreaths of foliage.

In the same case is a charming little sauce-boat, a good example of the bright canary ground, with a white panel ornamented with roses and leaves, which pretend to hide themselves away underneath.

A very few specimens are found with a ground-work of a kind of maroon or wine colour—this

was a speciality of the Chelsea works and its composition had always been kept secret ; perhaps those workmen who migrated to Worcester introduced the colour, but not being possessed of the *whole* secret, the pieces turned out were not so beautiful as they should have been, at any rate it could not have been considered a success for we see very little of it.

The most common colour as a groundwork was a Royal blue and after that I think we see most green pieces.

The variety which now commands the highest price, is that with a scale pattern ground—this decoration (resembling the scales of a fish) all over the groundwork at once enhances the value of a piece. It occurs oftenest on Royal blue and powder blue, and less often on green.

To this period belong the magnificent vases, dishes, plates, teapots and sugar bowls, etc., which we see but seldom outside museums or in Christie's rooms. With regard to value, those which fetch the highest prices are those which show the scale pattern and which have flowers and exotic birds—especially the latter in the reserved white spaces.

A further much esteemed kind is found in jars and *compotiers*, where there are bands or panels of open trelliswork.

You can study every kind of Worcester china in the Schreiber collection, and in many cases the marks are reproduced on a card by the side of

the pieces, so that comparison is made easy for us.

There is there a duplicate of my mask jug, Fig. 38, but it is a little smaller and altogether not quite so good, which puffs me up with unholy pride.

After Dr Wall's death in 1776, the original company continued the works till 1783 when the factory passed into the hands of Joseph and John Flight; from 1793 to 1807 Mr Flight took a partner of the name of Barr, and it became Flight & Barr; from 1807 to 1813 it was Flight, Bar & Barr; from 1813 to 1829 there was another change to Barr, Flight, & Barr; from 1829 to 1840 it was simply Barr & Barr.

In the year 1783 a Mr Chamberlain had set up other works, which continued to exist as a separate concern till 1840, when the two factories amalgamated under the title "Chamberlain & Co."

All these successive owners left their marks on the china—sometimes their actual names.

Naturally the later made china presents little interest for us, and everything made after 1793 is less excellent—at least in design—than that made prior to this date, though the workmanship always remains excellent.

The marks are so numerous that I shall only give you a few of the most important, so that you may not feel too confused.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5 appear on pieces made between 1752 and 1800. The crescent appears in the

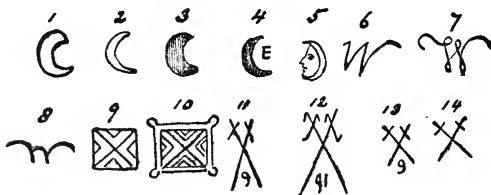
Warmstry arms and as it was carved on the panels of the old rooms of the house which formed part of the original works, it is natural that it should be found among the marks.

You must remember, however, that it is easy to mistake the C. used as the Caughley mark for the Worcester crescent. 6, 7, and 8 are early marks also, but whether this W. stood for Wall, Worcester, or Warmstry is not known; 9 and 10, called the Chinese square mark, are often found on the richly decorated pieces with a ground-work of blue, or green salmon scale.

This square mark, being considered so desirable, is forged more often than any other!

11, 12, 13, and 14 are all imitations of the Dresden marks and appear constantly on Worcester china.

Of modern Worcester china there is another factory which began its existence in 1800, under the management of a nephew of Mr Chamberlain, named Grainger; this firm still trades under the name of G. Grainger & Co., and produces excellent work.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### LOWESTOFT CHINA—PART I

IT requires some courage to enter on so fiercely contested a subject as that of what is and is not Lowestoft china. When experts of great knowledge and experience cannot agree, I feel I am a striking example of the unpleasant adage about the audacity of fools and the becoming modesty of angels. My humble ambition is, however, simply to give you in condensed form the latest discoveries made by the learned, and the conclusions at which they have arrived.

Books on this particular subject are expensive in consequence of the necessarily numerous illustrations, and not always found in lending libraries, so a few facts from them will perhaps be welcome to those who may be the fortunate possessors of a possible piece of Lowestoft. So vehemently has the controversy raged that it has been difficult to see daylight at all on the subject, some experts averring that *no* china was made at Lowestoft, others equally firmly claiming that tons of beautiful porcelain emanated from the one small kiln in the little factory.

Mr Hayden, in his delightful "Chats on China,"

says: "What are we to think of a factory which we may term the Mrs Harris among china factories, inasmuch as some people with no less scepticism than Sairey Gamp's friend, believe that it did not exist at all."

From this error the public is now rescued by the finding on the site of the works of the veritable moulds used, and some portions of china vessels, etc., but this relief to our puzzled brains is only partial.

We can now say with certainty that such and such things were made there, but that only takes us a short way—where was all the richly coloured "so-called Lowestoft" made?

On that subject I shall speak presently, but now let us study what is proved to have been made at the Bell Street factory, by the discovery of moulds and fragments, and also by other pieces which by inscriptions proclaim their home.

There can be no doubt (see Gillingwater's history of the town) that in 1756 one Hewlin Tuson discovered some fine clay on his grounds near Lowestoft. He sent some of it to one of the china factories near London, presumably Chelsea or Bow, to see whether it would be available for china production.

Trial was made, and it proved to be capable of producing something rather better than Delftware. Tuson's attempt to start a business with the clay failed, but others, working on the same idea, established some works in a small way in Bell Street.



The factory was in being less than fifty years, and a little thought will lead one to the conclusion that the china must have been made from material found near—the expense of importing it from a foreign source would have crippled the resources of a richer firm than that of Bell Street.

The first discovery of moulds, etc., was in 1902. Messrs Morse occupy the site of the factory with their brewery. Being necessary to make some alterations, an opening was made between two floors, the upper one of which had been laid down sixty years earlier. The intervening space was found to be filled with fragments of china and portions of moulds. In the following year, during further repairs, there was found, among other things, the mould for the sauceboats shown in Fig. 40. Nothing was discovered of hard paste or of earthenware.

Only a very few fragments, with varied colours, were found ; almost all bore blue and white decoration.

These discoveries gave a death-blow to the theory that the richly enamelled china, with scale and lattice borders, garlands of flowers and heraldic devices, ever had birth in the Lowestoft factory.

These sauceboats, Fig. 40, have been in my family prior to 1800—as nearly as I can reckon since 1785—and they had always been considered to be Bow until the last discoveries at Lowestoft in 1903, when lo and behold there was the mould in which my old friends were made.

Mr Spelman, one of the greatest authorities on the subject, in his masterly contribution to ceramic literature entitled "Lowestoft China," has an illustration of a similar sauceboat, and all three have what the learned consider a distinguishing sign of the factory—a blue line round the top of the handle where it joins the body of the piece.

They are blue and white, the blue very full and deep, somewhat inclining to indigo and resembling in tone the plate in the British Museum showing Lowestoft Church.

There is, too, a white decoration in low relief and an oriental kind of landscape partially obscured by some bunches of Brobdignagian fruit.

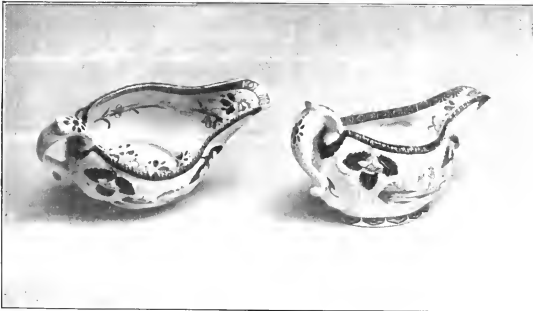
Both my pieces also show a kind of small surface pitting with tiny blackish specks, regarded as an indication of Lowestoft by most authorities, though personally I cannot consider that of much importance, as so much other china shows the same peculiarity.

With regard to marks, apparently none were used, at least none that were really peculiar to Lowestoft, though some of the fragments found carried the marks of other factories. Imitation being "the sincerest form of flattery" was often used by the old potters, but not as a means of deception.

Several numbers, especially 2, and various uncertain marks appear on some of the pieces, but these were probably the private marks of the men



" SO-CALLED " LOWESTOFT  
(Fig. 41)



LOWESTOFT SAUCE BOATS  
(Fig. 40)



engaged in the factory, and the numbers might have alluded to different sets, but on this subject we have no information that can be relied on.

This absence of marks increases the difficulty of identification. Before the finding of the moulds, we could only say—with absolute certainty—that specimens inscribed with some allusion to the town were genuine. These are naturally very few. We find some mugs and inkpots with the legend, "A trifle from Lowestoft," and there is the plate in the British Museum with views of the church and beacon, and a flask inscribed as above.

Most of these authentic specimens are blue and white, and bear no resemblance to the highly decorated china which so long passed as Lowestoft.

Mr Crisp, another great authority on the subject, shows us in his instructive catalogue of the pieces in his possession some which are very simply but gracefully decorated in colours, but the ornamentation is sparingly applied and the colouring simple.

One has the French sprig which I showed you in the chapter on Crown Derby, and a mauve scroll surrounds "A trifle from Lowestoft." Another has an intertwined scroll of black with a turquoise ribbon, a black scroll enclosing the usual inscription, and the mug itself is barrel shaped. A third, resembling slightly what for so many years was called Lowestoft, is a straight white mug, with a border in pink scale and

lattice pattern, a mauve scroll surrounding the usual words, and a bunch of pink and mauve roses.

A fourth, an extremely dainty specimen, has an unusual band of sharply pleated ribbon of red and mauve, again the mauve scroll, and the same words—literary effort never seemed to achieve anything else in that line—and on the side a bunch of rather strange flowers.

Mr Spelman shows us a remarkably pretty circular pilgrim's bottle, fluted from the outside to the centre, marked as usual on the neck, "A trifle from Lowestoft, 1769." It has a considerable decoration of roses and a waved ribbon border, but this time the ribbon is red. This bottle resembles more nearly what I designate "so-called" Lowestoft than any other assured specimen.

In the great finds of 1902 and 1903 there were no coloured chips, and yet you see certainly, though perhaps only occasionally, coloured pieces were made. These facts add again to the various difficulties with which we are surrounded, but then if all was plain sailing the study of curios would be a dull affair; indeed no study would be needed.

The china tea bottle seen in Fig. 28 in the chapter on tea caddies has always passed as a Lowestoft piece. It came from Yarmouth, and I think it very likely is so, though there is nothing to prove it.

You will see the decoration is very slight, though the design is elegant, and it shows the usual rather scanty ornament, though in a more refined style than one sees on the mugs and ink-pots.

The initials are those of an ancestress of mine, and it was probably made at the time of her wedding. Birth tablets and marriage plates were undeniably a speciality at the works, and I dare say other articles were treated in the same way; we have proof of this in several instances, such as the Curtis cup and the Calder cups and saucers.

Besides the various undoubted pieces of which I have spoken, there are these birth and marriage tablets, but we can only accept the porcelain ones, as there is no proof that earthenware was ever made at Lowestoft, and for that reason we must discard any tablet (even with local allusions) that is made of pottery. Probably these, though ordered through the Bell Street firm, were really made in Holland. Undoubtedly there were many that passed from the factory, the porcelain ones made there and the pottery examples of Dutch manufacture. Mr Crisp possesses several, and what makes them extremely interesting is that, in the case of the birth tablets, he has traced the birth entries in the Lowestoft registers.

With regard to characteristics of this factory—in the assured specimens the following peculiarities may be looked for.

In the glaze there is a decided tendency to a bluish tinge, and, what is certainly marked, it lies rather thickly on the angles of rims and wherever there is a junction, such as the place where a handle or knob was put on. This is very distinctly seen in the specimens in Fig. 40.

I have already mentioned the fact of lines being painted close to the top of the handles, where they join the body of the piece.

A third peculiarity we must admit is the general roughness of the work; the designs are often very graceful, but the potting is frequently defective.

Some experts lay great stress upon the way in which the glaze generally covers the whole of the bottom of the jug or cup, and even invades the projecting rim of the teapot lids; this rim is called the "flange."



## CHAPTER XIX

### LOWESTOFT CHINA—PART II

I NOW come to that part of my subject which deals with the "so-called" Lowestoft, and it is with great diffidence that I approach this much debated controversy, so much do I fear being rent in pieces by possessors of this beautifully decorative china.

I call it "so-called" Lowestoft because it was considered for over one hundred years, at anyrate by most people, to have been made at that place, and others who rejected that theory accepted another, which was that it was made in the East and sent to Lowestoft in its white state, to be there decorated in the works.

The immense quantity known to be in existence staggered the supporters of the theory of original production; the little factory had but one oven, and the works only lasted 64 years, how then was it possible to account for such an enormous output?

The fact that all this richly enamelled china was of true oriental hard paste did not shake the faith of these supporters, because though the inscribed pieces and all others that from one

reason or another we may confidently pronounce to be Lowestoft, are all of soft paste, a large number of admirers of the china stood out boldly with the statement that hard paste porcelain was made there.

This error was exposed when the moulds and fragments were found under the floors, for not a single piece of hard paste china was found, except two or three small portions of oriental china which had evidently been used for copying purposes. The habit of procuring specimens of oriental porcelain and using them in the painting rooms as copies was common to all china factories of that time.

From whence then came these vast quantities of the "so-called" Lowestoft? Many theories have been advanced, and the one obtaining the most credence was that it was all brought over from the East and painted in Lowestoft. We now know that this is incorrect, but in support of this theory there is a very singular teapot in the Victoria and Albert Museum. It is marked "Allen Lowestoft." Now Allen, whose Christian name was Robert, was manager of the works, and remained so up to their close in 1802.

The decoration represents the Crucifixion, certainly not an Eastern conception, but the draughtsmanship is distinctly oriental and the paste of course hard, and even could we believe it to have been decorated in England, we are confronted with the signed statement of Abel Bly

(one of the oldest workmen employed) that nothing passed through the factory that was not made and painted there.

After the closing of the works R. Allen set up for himself with a china shop in the town and a small kiln, and no doubt he drew his stock from the same source — wherever it was — as the original firm. There was no intention to deceive ; it was simply his custom to add his name to much, or all, that left his shop.

It is obvious, however, that there must have been some circumstance that connected this special kind of china—much of it bearing heraldic devices belonging to well-known Norfolk and Suffolk families—with Lowestoft, and I think Mr Solon has arrived at a correct solution of the problem. He points out in his "Old English Porcelain" that the firm owned or had interest in one or two ships, and carried on a small trade with Holland in Delftware, and that they gave orders for the making of tablets such as the Quinton one.

Rotterdam was the centre of a china trade ; it is therefore probable that the Lowestoft firm conceived the idea of buying from the wholesale importers in Holland and selling at a profit in England.

It was customary for the Dutch merchants to order special articles to be painted for them, with armorial and other devices, and it was natural that the Lowestoft factory should work on the

same lines, and that they, too, should order large consignments of china, some with special coats-of-arms for their distinguished customers and some only profusely embellished with flowers, scale and diaperwork, etc.

In 1770 the business had assumed such proportions that they opened a business in Cheapside—I quote from Mr Solon :

“Their agent, Clark Dunford, inserted in the London papers an announcement in which he advertised ‘a large selection of Lowestoft china.’ We possess no information as to what may have been the exact description of the goods advertised under that name, but we may safely surmise that it was something superior to ‘A trifle from Lowestoft,’ or any of the articles we know to have been the staple production of the works. It seems that a more attractive exhibition might have been formed in the showroom, by a stock of Chinese porcelain imported by the Lowestoft company. It is recorded that the ruin of that company was caused by the wreck of one of their vessels, carrying a cargo of porcelain, and the burning by the French army of the warehouse they had established at Rotterdam.

“The idea that the enormous amount of ware required to load a vessel and to fill a large warehouse in Rotterdam, not to speak of the one in London, could have been supplied by a one oven factory, is too ludicrous to be entertained for one moment and it may be dismissed without further

comment. It has been suggested that the Lowestoft painters may have decorated ware imported from China in the white.

‘By reason of the ubiquity of the porcelain decorated in the accredited style and the small number of hands employed at the factory, such a suggestion is equally untenable.’

It is evident from this that Mr Solon is of opinion that all the “so-called” Lowestoft came direct from China *via* Rotterdam in a completed state, and that such pieces as the Crucifixion teapot and the countless articles embellished with coats-of-arms were all made to special order.

Study Fig. 41 carefully. The colouring of the pieces is extremely brilliant, and the painting considerably raised—note that each article has bands and sometimes panels of rose colour in scale and lattice pattern often inclining to puce, or a vivid Venetian red merging into burnt siena.

I have three different sets of this china; they all are different, but the variety is not very great. They all show the same central idea carried out with some unimportant differences. There are nearly always roses in the design—have we not heard from our youth up about the “Lowestoft Rose”?

These roses are sometimes their natural colour, as in the six-sided dish on the second shelf, but quite as often depicted in shades of mauve, and mauve and pink roses dwell amicably together, as in the custard cup in the middle of the top shelf,

whilst other small flowers, not easy to place in horticulture, are dropped on the background with and without stalks.

Observe the basket shown well in the two largest dishes. This has always been called the Lowestoft basket, and specimens with it are much prized, but it is really a decidedly Eastern shape, and it is represented in glowing Venetian red.

The bowl to the left of the large dish is of a totally different pattern, though roses figure largely in it—the decoration consists of festoons of roses divided by puce scrolls, from which depend tablets of green and red, with tassels, after the fashion of a Cardinal's hat.

The green in this china is vivid, and the leaves often entirely detached. There is but little gilding, only sufficient to give a slightly lusted appearance in parts.

The custard cup has the special knob to the lid and the twisted handle that lovers of the china firmly believe to be a sign of Lowestoft manufacture; it also has the slightly raised pattern in white which certainly was used at the works, for we see it in the undoubted specimens in Fig 40.

There are those willing to mount the scaffold if desired in defence of the theory of the Lowestoft rose. It is true that roses are seen in well-known genuine pieces of white and blue, and also on a few coloured specimens that are beyond suspicion.

Two reasons are assigned for this—the Tudor Rose represents the arms of the town, and a

Frenchman named Rose fled from his country shortly before the Revolution and took service as artist at the Bell Street factory. For many years it was believed as an article of faith that in the decoration of tea and coffee cups, jugs, mugs, and teapots, etc., he invariably placed a small rose at the base of the handles as a kind of signature.

It is certainly beyond dispute that he worked for the firm, but it is equally certain that he did not and could not have painted the thousands of roses attributed to him.

I am as averse as any one can be to believe all my beautiful china—I have some three dozen pieces (so many years worshipped as Lowestoft)—to be really nothing of the sort, but facts are stubborn things, and the pill, however bitter, must be swallowed.

A friend of mine, a collector in a small way, rated me soundly a while since, for believing what she called a “modern fad.” I brought the discovery of the moulds before her notice, and the crushing blow that not a single fragment resembling our china had been found among the hundreds of chips under the factory floor.

She waived all this aside as of no moment, and after a somewhat heated tirade on my simplicity, tinged (as she hinted) with blatant conceit, she wound up thus: “I have always understood that my china is Lowestoft, and I shall always call it so, whatever experts may say!”

To this truly feminine declaration I remained

silent, which, as is usually the case, inflamed her wrath. "Look," she said, snatching up one of the coffee cups, like that one seen to the left on the top shelf, "here is the rose at the root of the handle, everyone knows that is the sign manual of the Frenchman." With that she swept out of my house full of scorn, but she will come back, for, in spite of her valiant bearing, I know I have implanted a small but horrid doubt in her mind.

I hope I shall have encouraged you to study this subject for yourselves. Solon's "Brief Description of Old English Porcelain" contains the chapter from which I have quoted.

"Lowestoft China," by W. W. R. Spelman, is a most enlightening and useful book, but somewhat expensive and rare.



## CHAPTER XX

### SPODE EARTHENWARE AND CHINA

I THINK writers on the subject of English ceramics somewhat neglect to give due prominence to the work of the Spodes, which seems to be regretted, as undoubtedly there is so much to be found in private houses, as well as in our public collections.

The first Josiah Spode made only earthenware though in a variety of kinds, shapes and colours—the second was an extremely successful potter, and began the manufacture of porcelain with a mixture of his own containing felspar and bone-ash, and in 1805 invented what he called opaque porcelain.

You see, therefore, that there are three totally distinct wares associated with the names of the three Josiah Spodes.

The first Josiah must have been a man of extraordinary abilities and with the commercial instinct strongly developed for his beginnings in early life were humble, and he had no family influence to push his interests; nevertheless he prospered and gradually but surely mounted the ladder (so difficult to climb) of commercial success.

He was employed in 1749 as a factory hand, or perhaps as an apprentice, by Whieldon a well-known potter, who was at one time associated with Wedgwood.

Mr Jewitt gives an illuminating extract from Whieldon's account-book, which throws a light upon the rate of wages for skilled labour in the middle of the 18th century. "1749, April 9. Hired 'Siah Spode, to give him from this time to Martelmas next 2s or 2s 6d if he deserves it; second year, 2s 9d; third year, 3s 8d, paid full earnest 1s."

The thrifty master, you see, only offered the magnificent sum of 2s 6d if he *deserved* it. Apparently he did, for the next entry is "1752, Feb. 22. Hired Josiah Spode for next Martelmas per week 7s. I am to give him earnest 5s, paid in part 5s."

Two years later he gains another 6d per week. "1754, Feb. 25. Hired 'Siah Spode per week 7s 6d; earnest £1 11s 9d, paid in part 10s."

These figures read strangely in the present grasping days. Josiah was a skilled, experienced, and artistic workman, yet he was content with 7s 6d per week. Somewhat different to certain unemployed in 1908 who refused 5s a day to clear away snow.

In spite of these meagre wages, Josiah steadily rose and flourished—presumably he must have had a little capital, for in 1770 he took over the works of Turner and Banks at Stoke-upon-Trent,

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and it was there he produced in large quantities the blue and white willow pattern earthenware, and also the plates and dishes with landscapes and architectural subjects in two shades of blue, which we associate with his name.

All this ware was decorated by the process called "transfer printing" which I will briefly explain.

The honour of the discovery of "transfer printing" is claimed by several and very likely, as we see so often in other discoveries—such for instance as the making of Sheffield plate, which was apparently almost simultaneously done both in France and England—it sprang into use in two or three places at nearly the same time.

The consensus of opinion gives the glory to John Sadler of Liverpool, who was at first an engraver.

One day, watching some children at play, he noticed that they were decorating pieces of broken pottery with some waste sheets of his copperplate printing.

This gave him an idea and he began experimenting with prints taken from engraved plates. The secret as to how a bowl or jug could be engraved from a rigid copper sheet, was at first strictly kept, but naturally it occurred to other ingenious minds that paper or some other pliable medium must be employed, and very shortly the mystery was one no longer.

According, however, to Mr Burton, whose

opinion carries so much weight, the introduction of "transfer printing" to earthenware and china, is due in the first place to the process being already in use at the Battersea enamel works as early as 1752 — see chapter on Worcester china.

It is impossible now to be sure who was the first discoverer of a process that revolutionised the whole system of potting decoration, and as I said before, it is probable that several individuals struck upon more or less the same idea, at the same time. It is clear and without any possible doubt, that it was used very early indeed both at Battersea and Worcester.

Large quantities of ware thus decorated, were turned out by Josiah I. and also by the second and third of the name who were his successors.

In Fig. 42 you see a good example of the first Josiah's blue and white earthenware and the second Josiah's porcelain. To take the supper tray first. It contains four dishes with covers and a central one uncovered; this last was probably intended for salad or perhaps junket.

The design is "transfer printed" and is in two shades of blue, with white flowers sprinkled here and there—a favourite arrangement with the first Josiah. The handles are formed of heads, of some strange and impossible beast, a kind of cross between a cat and a bulldog.

The tray is of mahogany, with deep straight sides, furnished with two substantial brass



SPODE SUPPER TRAY AND VASES  
*(Fig. 12)*



SPODE DOLL'S DINNER SERVICE  
*(Fig. 13)*



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handles. I imagine the whole thing to have come into being about 1785.

These supper trays are now very scarce and valued accordingly ; as you can see, one of the corners of the dish on the left has lost a small piece, otherwise the set is perfect, but the old tray is feeling the effects of his ripe age sadly and is so perished with dryness, that it is necessary to treat him with the utmost respect and circumspection. I never trust his handles, but empty him for removal of his dishes and clasp him tenderly, one outstretched hand under and one over, for the straight sides creak ominously, if he is inconsiderately touched there.

It is quite easy to distinguish between hand painted and "transfer printed" articles. In the latter you will often see an irregularity where the pattern joins, such as on the border of a plate, or in a continuous festooning round a jug. In the latter the handle will interfere with the application of the pattern and you will be likely to find a flower or arabesque cut in half.

We will leave the vases for the moment and go on to Fig. 43 which is a doll's dinner service belonging to a friend and is also of the first Josiah's time.

Almost all the little pieces are marked SPODE impressed, as was the habit of the firm in early days. Doll's tea and dinner services are much prized because of their rarity ; naturally enough such fragile toys, handled by eager little fingers,

were only too readily broken and I think it is extraordinary, that after considerably more than a hundred years, this set, though a good deal cracked is almost perfect as to the number of pieces, especially as their owner tells me that in her childish days, she was allowed to take culinary dainties in these dear little treasures—such desecration makes one shiver.

You can see on the soup tureen the design of a castle and landscape; the knobs to the covers are also very typical.

The second Josiah was a wonderfully successful man and even managed to leave business with a large fortune instead of finishing a useful career in the sad manner of Cookworthy and Chamberlain, to whom belong the honours respectively of finding china clay in Cornwall and working it into such beautiful specimens of hard paste or "true porcelain." Cookworthy, unable to find money for increasing expenses, retired a disappointed man and Chamberlain, worn out in pocket and heart by the struggle to get his patent, died an exile, in South Carolina.

The first Spode never made porcelain at all, his work was entirely in pottery; it was Josiah the second who began the manufacture of fine china, which he commenced very shortly after his father's death in 1797.

We will return to this presently, but I wish now to tell you of the particular kind of earthenware that the second Josiah invented in 1805



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and to which was probably due the accumulation of his large fortune.

This ware was of a very superior quality, which we can but describe as something between china and pottery. He called it opaque porcelain, and the description seems accurate.

Immense quantities of this special kind of earthenware were shipped off to the Continent and did considerable damage to the French trade—so much so, indeed, that several large French firms had to be closed.

At this time one of the Spode marks was "Spode's New Fayence" on a kind of scroll, and another also belonging to this special opaque porcelain was a square plaque, with Spode printed across it and stone-china underneath.

To the class of the "New Fayence" belong the large dinner services that we meet with so frequently, partly "transfer printed" and partly painted in enamel colours; some with exotic birds and flowers in a somewhat oriental style, and some less ornate, showing designs inclining to a sprinkling of reddish flowers—unknown to any horticulturist—on a white ground; this ground sometimes ivory white, but more often inclining to a slightly greyish tone. With the red flowers are mingled purple ones and bright green leaves. The edges of these services are often a dark chocolate colour, and the whole design shows a very slight decoration (usually outlining the flowers and leaves) of gold.

The general effect of the whole somewhat resembles a feeble imitation of the old Satsuma china from Japan. All the same it is very rich and decorative, and the effect on a dinner table is distinctly handsome.

Now to return to the vases in Fig. 42. They also belong to the second Josiah's time and are good examples of the very fine and beautifully potted china associated with his name. As I said before, he began to make porcelain immediately after the death of his father in 1797, and it at once proved a success. The characteristics of this china are perfection in potting and in decoration in every particular. When you take a piece in your hand, it has a peculiarly smooth and satiny feeling to the touch, and one is at once impressed with the delicacy of every detail.

In these three vases the extreme beauty of the workmanship cannot unfortunately be shown in black and white.

The largest is 9 inches high. They are of a deep Royal blue, the flowers are painted on white panels, but no white shows, as the background is all stippled over in a warm grey. The great charm of these vases and what makes their value is the mottled appearance of the sapphire ground work, the beauty of which can only be seen in a strong light, when it presents the appearance of thin blue enamel over gold.

On this almost iridescent ground is a curious design in gold. Two doves hold in their beaks

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a ribbon which supports a basket of fruit; up above are Cupid's torches crossed and on each side are cornucopia. Perhaps it is intended to represent peace and plenty.

I have turned the middle vase so as to show this design, but it can only be seen with a magnifying glass.

These vases are marked "Spode" in script, and the colour is red, a style of mark reserved for the best pieces.

A good deal of this pottery and china is not marked, and the authenticated marks, though differing considerably, are not complicated.

On all the older earthenware "Spode" in various printed types is *impressed* on the ware, sometimes in the centre of a piece, but occasionally, in the case of plates and dishes, the mark is under the rim.

The opaque china had the marks alluded to before, and the fine china had "Spode" painted in red and very frequently in rather fine handwriting, slanting upwards. Naturally this one varies.

Immense numbers of tea and coffee services came from Spode's, and they are all finely and richly coloured, and some of them show much gilding. It is said that they took the Crown Derby style as their model, and there is certainly a very strong resemblance between the work of the two factories. I fancy, however, that if you were told to shut your eyes, and then a piece of

Crown Derby and a piece of Spode were put into your hands, you would detect a difference—there is something peculiarly smooth about the feel of Spode. The variety of pieces of every shape, colour and style of decoration that came from the factory is marvellous, and the brilliancy of the tones is very great. It has been likened to Rockingham, but to that I cannot altogether agree.

Rockingham china is most beautifully potted and finished, but the crudeness of the colouring, though much admired by some, to my mind spoils the beauty of it. There is a special tint of Reckitt's blue, a raw spinach green and a crude magenta and Solferino pink, that I find it impossible to reconcile with the evidence of good taste.

It is possible that the two tea and coffee services of mandarin orange and apple green to which I alluded at the close of the chapter on Worcester may be Spode; it seems quite probable, especially as that factory showed such an immense range of colours.

The second Josiah reigned at the works twenty-nine years and died in 1827.

After his death the firm became Spode, Son & Copeland, and in 1833 the factory became the property of William Copeland alone. After this date from the curio point of view it loses all interest, though much beautiful work has been done there, especially the production in 1845 of the beautiful Parian ware.

## CHAPTER XXI

### OLD WEDGWOOD WARE—PART I

ALMOST every one, however small their knowledge of ceramics, has some acquaintance with the distinctly English earthenware, with all its beautiful varieties, named after Josiah Wedgwood. It is true that many of us who have not studied the subject, are under the impression that Wedgwood made porcelain, whereas his productions were entirely earthenware, though the delicacy of it and the constituents of its paste produced a substance somewhat resembling porcelain. Another common and very natural mistake, is to suppose that all the output from his factory consisted of that blue ware of different shades with raised designs in white on it, so familiar to us all.

The proper name for this is "Jasper" ware, and there is so much of it and it has become so distinctly associated with the name of Wedgwood, that to the uninitiated it seems that this invention and this only, is what has given glory to the name of Wedgwood.

This "Jasper" ware is still made very delicately and well at the existing Wedgwood factory, and

we find, alas! coarse and really sometimes repulsive imitations of it all over the country, odious biscuit-boxes and atrocious jardinières, of a crude, hard blue and blurred outline in the white that would make the original inventor shudder. These are cheap and nasty, but to make really good specimens, it is impossible that they should be sold cheaply, the cost of production being so great.

All real Wedgwood, even of the modern kind, is good, delicate and rather expensive, except the very roughest kind meant for kitchen use.

Josiah Wedgwood was already a hard worker and had established his reputation by his Queen's ware, his agate and his tortoiseshell productions before he invented this elaborate variety which he called "Jasper" and which was undoubtedly the child of his deepest love.

His life is an interesting one, showing how absolute determination and sheer grit will overcome all obstacles, even when they are the difficulties caused by ill-health and natural infirmities. One has, too, such a liking for his character—he must have been a lovable man from all one hears about him—upright and just; the single blemish in his business life (and I suppose if one had proper commercial instincts, we should see nothing to cavil at) is the fight which he maintained with Champion of Bristol concerning his patent. Indeed it must be admitted that Wedgwood's reason for opposing the grant was

not a selfish one, his contention being that the products of the earth should be free to all and that Champion had no more right to them than any one else; Champion triumphed, but his triumph cost him too much, both in pocket and health, and he left England a ruined man, to die in S. Carolina.

Wedgwood lived up to his convictions and was always ready to help others, showing no greediness to keep his discoveries to himself.

Probably his great financial success even in face of enormous outlay, was due to his sound business instinct in keeping the "useful" and the "decorative" sides of his enterprise clearly apart, and though assuredly his affections were given to the latter, he never allowed that partiality to obscure his commercial acumen, which showed him beyond a doubt on which side of the business financial success rested.

The huge expenses consequent on the employment of such men as Flaxman and Webber, etc., as designers for the Jasper ware, to say nothing of large salaries to engravers and gem-cutters, would have ruined him, if the shopkeeper's instinct, with which our Gaelic neighbours twit us, had not enabled him to see that money was to be made alone out of the "Queen's ware" and other useful kinds.

Josiah Wedgwood was born of a long line of Staffordshire potters in 1730—there is in the British Museum a puzzle jug which was made by his great uncle in 1691.

His parents seemed to be in easy but by no means affluent circumstances. Seeing that the little Josiah was the youngest of 13 children and that it must have taken some money to bring them all up and place them out in life, it is not surprising that he had but little education until he was old enough to see the necessity for repairing the omission, when he strove to make up for lost time.

When he was but nine he lost his father, and was apprenticed to his eldest brother, Thomas (a potter), as a "thrower"—that is, one who waits upon the potter at the wheel. This apprenticeship, however, seemed not to be of the usual kind, and was probably only a temporary family affair, for it came to an end in two years, when the child caught smallpox—then such an awful scourge—which left him delicate, and with an affection of one knee which many years later necessitated amputation.

This crippled leg was so great a cause of suffering, and was altogether so inconvenient to him, that a man of less resolute character would have sunk under the burden and become a helpless and hopeless invalid.

There was, indeed, a long period of illness and inaction, and it was probably this apparent misfortune that in reality proved an advantage to him, as it enabled him to repair the educational neglects he had perforce suffered.

We do not hear much of the next few years—in his industrious and dogged way he must have



saved money, for in 1751, when he was just of age, he entered into partnership with the noted Whieldon.

Whieldon was famed for his cauliflower, agate, and tortoiseshell ware, and Josiah turned his attention to improving and varying the different productions.

During this period—in 1758 the connection came to an end—he perfected the beautiful green glaze, which we all know in old-fashioned dessert services, and which is still a favourite, and holds its own after 150 years; nothing looks better than this brilliant malachite colour in proximity to cut glass, rich coloured fruit, and good damask.

In 1759 Wedgwood took a factory for himself; indeed two, for he amalgamated the "Churchyard" and the "Ivyhouse" works. This, however, did not satisfy his commercial energy, for later on he started the large factory which he called "Etruria." A most important step in his commercial life was when, having successfully carried on his own business for some years, he took into partnership his own cousin, Thomas, and Thomas Bentley.

Of the cousin we hear but little; it seems likely that he was a kind of glorified foreman or manager, but the connection with Mr Bentley, and with it a devoted friendship that only death severed, had far-reaching effects, for Thomas Bentley was put in command of the ornamental side of the business, and he organised and supervised showrooms in London to display the decorative pieces from

Etruria. These showrooms were at 13 Greek Street, Soho. The house still exists, or did so a very short time ago.

In "A Critical Review of the Public Buildings, Statues, and Ornaments in or about London and Westminster, 1783," quoted by Mr Clinch in his interesting account of Soho, we read: "The man of taste will easily overlook and even thank us for the irregularity of introducing him into the exhibition rooms of the well-known Wedgwood in Greek Street, Soho. . . . a prodigious collection of impressions from antique cameos and intaglios, bas-reliefs, medallions, portraits, figures, vases, and encaustic paintings in every variety of shade and colour are here exhibited for sale, composed of imperishable materials which are not susceptible of injury from the keenness of chemical solvents."

The "Queen's ware" obtained this name after Wedgwood had presented Queen Charlotte with a breakfast service of the cream-coloured tint, which ever after was called "Queen's ware."

It was usually a very pale buff in colour, but the tint varied considerably.

The ornamentation usually consisted of delicate bands of colour round the edges, though occasionally larger designs were employed. One very pretty set in the Victoria and Albert Museum has canary bands edged with black; a common pattern consists of a sort of feathering of gold

between Royal blue lines, the whole pattern occupying the width of an inch and a half.

It was of "Queen's ware" that the celebrated dinner and dessert services for the Empress of Russia were made which cost £3000. These services had views of celebrated places—never two alike—and Wedgwood stated that the enormous cost of producing them was only just covered by the £3000, leaving no margin for profit.

I possess a solitary piece of "Queen's ware" which I acquired as the reward of impertinence. It is of the well-known feather pattern of which I spoke above.

I have a friend who possessed a whole breakfast service, which I had known intimately for many years. On a visit to them rather lately I missed my old Wedgwood friends, and anxiously asked after their welfare. The answer was, "Oh, those old dishes, they were all cracked and broken and we sent them to a jumble sale."

I raved and stormed, and my friend, the kindest and most generous of beings, instead of telling me to mind my own business, which I richly deserved, instituted an exhaustive search and discovered one uncracked and precious dish, which was presented to me, and I call it "the reward of impertinence."

Queen's ware is extraordinarily light, so markedly so that even if it is not marked, and you took it in your hands in the dark I think you would at once recognise its origin.

Occasionally instead of the banding you meet with pieces rather finely, though sparingly gilt, and a design inclining to the oriental style. A cousin of mine has a dessert service of this kind, the pattern being in Pompeian red and black. The groundwork is of a singularly deep cream or buff, and the whole pattern is outlined in gold.

## CHAPTER XXII

### OLD WEDGWOOD WARE—PART II

THERE were so many different kinds of earthenware produced at Etruria, that it becomes quite puzzling to consider them all. Perhaps after "Queen's ware" and before "Jasper" was invented the black basaltes took the most prominent place; he must have made a great deal of that, for teapots, coffee pots, and other pieces are still often met with. Another production was a kind of red pottery, something like deep terra-cotta, which he called Rosso Antico, but in this variety he was not so successful as earlier potters, especially Elers.

A great speciality of his was agate knife handles. It was quite a fashionable craze at one time to have a set of agate-handled knives. One meets with them occasionally, and I find them more interesting and valuable than pretty.

Silver lustre also came from the Wedgwood factory, but there does not seem to have been much of this made. Another variety was "Pie-crust" ware, which according to some writers was invented to give the appearance of pastry to a dish intended for a pie when flour was scarce. I fancy

this is only a fanciful idea, and that the "Pie-crust ware" was made in the same way as cauliflower and pineapple pieces; in the first instance to show the ingenuity of the potter, and it was continued because it had caught the popular fancy, and so turned out a monetary success.

And now we come to the "Jasper" begun by Wedgwood about 1775. There are two varieties, one being, as to the groundwork, coloured throughout, and the other where the fine white body was only coloured on the surface. This latter variety is called "Jasper dip."

There are many different shades in the ground colour, and, as you know, it is ornamented with delicate figures, bands and festoons, etc., in white, raised upon the coloured surface.

Blue in various tones is most commonly employed as a background, but there are other less well-known shades, black pink of one or two tones, mauve of a slightly pinkish hue, a delicate sage green and canary yellow; this last is very rare and much valued. Every kind of article was made in "jasper"—vases of every kind and shape, chiefly classical, *jardinières*, *comptoirs*, wine coolers, tea and coffee services, cups and saucers, basins, jugs, plaques and cameos.

These last two are a great feature of Wedgwood's work. They are of every size and colour, though mostly blue; the subjects are either classical, or are portraits of important people, such as Franklin, Sir Isaac Newton, and Royalties, etc.

The manner in which the white designs were produced over the coloured background was (in a few words) thus: the two parts were separately modelled, fired, and afterwards cemented together, but to understand the labour and delicacy of execution required, it is well to read "The Life of Wedgwood" by Meteyard. It will tell you particulars of much that can only be glanced at here.

Mr Church thus speaks of the origin of Wedgwood's classical designs :

"He began his artistic work in cameos and intaglios by copying from sulphur, glass and plaster casts of engraved gems of antique Roman and Greek origin and of the Italian cinquecento. Later on he worked more directly from the originals themselves. English and foreign draughtsmen and modellers, such as Hackwood, Flaxman, Bacon, Stubbs, Webber, Dalmazzoni, Devere, Angelini and Pacetti, worked for Wedgwood, not only in adopting antique designs, but in producing original works."

It seems rather unfair that the fame of these numerous artists in connection with Wedgwood's work should have been almost entirely swallowed up in the overpowering name of Flaxman.

The small cameos, some tiny enough to be set in rings, are very attractive, and when used as buttons, shoe buckles, patch boxes, or arranged as chatelaines, they look their best when surrounded by glittering cut steel points.

I possess two ; one of the double colour scheme,  
O

mauve and sage green, which is so much valued. The design is of great beauty, and the extreme delicacy of the drapery, showing the mauve tint through the white, is beyond praise. There is a border of sage green on which is a marvellously executed wreath of conventional oak leaves.

Wearing this as a pendant one day, I encountered a dealer in an omnibus who, with the eyes of a hawk for a bargain, espied it under my fur coat. He had the impudence to pester me to sell it to him, until at last exasperated, I threatened to stop the omnibus and give him in charge. It was a few years ago when there was a "boom" in Wedgwood; just now it is out of fashion for a time and does not realise the large prices it did at that time.

My other small specimen, though pretty, is not so valuable, the background being of the more usual full blue. The subject is, however, very pretty and graceful, being—at least I imagine that to be the subject—Aurora in her car.

Fig. 44 is a particularly fine vase and belongs to the best period about 1785. The colour is very pale blue, rather an unusually pale tint, and the raised design in white depicts Blind Man's Buff, a favourite subject with the great potter. It is 10 inches high and has the delicate double curve in the handles so typical of Wedgwood.

It is a specimen that gives an excellent idea of the "Jasper" ware, both as to form and design. I should like to have shown you some of the





WEDGWOOD JASPER VASE

(Fig. 41)



cameos, but they are too small to come out well in photography.

I think most people have heard of the celebrated Portland or Barberini Vase in connection with Wedgwood's name, but the story of his reproduction of it is so full of interest, as showing his tenacity of purpose, extreme patience and determination to overcome obstacles, that I venture to repeat it here.

The original Vase was discovered between 1623 and 1644, during the pontificate of the Barberini Pope, Urban VIII. This is the reason that it is so often called the Barberini Vase. It was found in the sarcophagus of the Emperor Alexander Severus who died A.D. 235.

In 1770 it was bought by a curio-hunter and resold later by him to Sir William Hamilton, the husband of the beautiful Emma Hart.

He brought it to England, and we read in Mrs Delany's autobiography a most interesting account of how, after protracted secret negotiations, it passed into the hands of the Duchess of Portland for £1,800.

Thus you see it ceases to be the Barberini and becomes the Portland Vase. In 1786 it was put up to auction with all the other objects belonging to the Duchess' Museum at her death and was bought by the Duke.

The story goes—and there is no reason to doubt its truth—that Wedgwood, being extremely desirous of copying it, attended the sale and bid

against the Duke up to £1,000. At that point the Duke, exasperated at the pertinacity of this thwarting competitor, asked Wedgwood why he was so anxious to possess the Vase. Wedgwood explained and the Duke assured him that if he would cease to bid against him he should have the loan of it to copy for any reasonable time. Wedgwood naturally agreed, and it passed into the Duke's hands for something over 1,000 guineas.

It is a marvellous production and is now in the British Museum, where in 1845 a madman shattered it to fragments with a stone.

Until that catastrophe no one knew with certainty of what it was made; some thought one thing, some another, but when smashed it proved to be of glass—the groundwork appears to be black, but when held up to a transmitted light it shows a deep, clear sapphire tint.

Fortunately by the exercise of wonderful skill and unwearied patience, it has been so perfectly mended, as to show no injury unless very closely inspected.

On receiving the Vase, Wedgwood at once set to work at his copy, but it was long before he could satisfy himself.

Webber was the modeller he employed and he remained many months studying the subject in Rome and presumably seeking seal and gem engravers who should work up adequately the modelled design.

At first fifty copies were made, which were all subscribed for beforehand at 50 guineas apiece.

This made a large sum, but his biographers tell us, that large as it was, it did not cover the huge expenses of the undertaking.

The first fifty copies were all numbered and now these numbers are sought after eagerly—they were made with a black "Jasper" ground, and of course the serious defect is that they were opaque instead of transparent and showed no lovely blue in a transmitted light; it seems strange to have spent years of labour and thousands of pounds to produce what is after all *not* a copy.

Certainly the examples with a black ground are the most pleasing and approximate more nearly to the original.

Later on specimens were made in blues of different shades, but they have not the charm of the original fifty.

With regard to marks on old Wedgwood they are few and simple and present no difficulties to the amateur. The most usual is WEDGWOOD impressed; occasionally the name is in small type, thus—Wedgwood and sometimes we meet with Wedgwood & Bentley, one under the other in capital letters; this mark, however, is not common. Pieces marked Wedgwood & Co., and Wedgewood with an *e* are always spurious.

The same mark is still used in the existing factory and it requires some knowledge and

practice to distinguish the old from the new ware.

Those accustomed to handle both, recognise the old by a peculiar warm, soft feeling ; I cannot describe the difference better than that, though it seems rather vague, but if you will hold two pieces of the different periods in your hands, I think you will recognise the truth of what I say.

Mr Church in terse and explicit language dilates upon the beautiful exactitude and finish of everything that came from the factory in the great Josiah's time.

“The ‘potting’ was so good that every part and piece was in complete correspondence with every other, while no more material was used than was necessary to secure solidity. Plate rested perfectly on plate, lids fitted perfectly to kettles, basins and teapots. The colours of the wares were refined and uniform, the firing complete, the glaze thin, and the forms of the ‘useful’ ware showed an exact adaptation to their uses. The spouts and lips of milk-ewers, and jugs, and teapots, permitted of their contents being poured out with neatness, the handles could be held, the lids did not fall off.”

Wedgwood was a thoroughly conscientious man and was intolerant of bad or scamped work ; nothing imperfect ever left the factory—he was wont to go round on a voyage of discovery every day and if he saw a faulty piece he broke it at once with his stick (always carried as an aid to

the wooden leg) exclaiming, "This won't do for Josiah Wedgwood!"

No successful potter had more sincere admirers and more constant imitators than Josiah Wedgwood and some of these imitators, notably Adams and Turner, were personal and dear friends of the master of Etruria. They used all three to meet and discuss colours, substances and designs, and submit new ideas for the consideration of all three. It is, therefore, no wonder that their work should show so much resemblance and make it difficult to distinguish one from another. I must not here enter upon the slight differences shown in the work of these three potters, but it is easy to study in the Victoria and Albert Museum where Wedgwood's imitators, or rather their work, occupies a case adjoining his own.

One great point and a simple one to mark is the style of the edgings and bandings. Adams' in no way resembles Wedgwood's but are often some arrangement of concentric circles, whilst those of Turner show an equally distinct characteristic.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE WILLOW PATTERN

ALMOST all of us, even if we do not ourselves possess any specimens of the old willow pattern, have been accustomed all our lives to see it from time to time ; no pattern is more familiar to our eyes.

I well remember the interest of marvelling over the strange design so guiltless of all perspective and so independent of all considerations of time and space, as I struggled with the rice pudding and bread and milk, considered proper for the youthful denizens of the nursery, served in the willow pattern bowls.

The original story, supposed to be that of unfortunate lovers, comes from China, but the best specimens in our country were made at Caughley in Shropshire.

The oriental design was introduced by Turner in 1772, and it achieved at once a lasting success ; the old pattern is still popular, though now generally used in the rougher kinds of dinner and tea ware only.

There are very many varieties of the pattern, as would be naturally the case when the design



was, originally at any rate, painted by hand by a great variety of artists, and through a period extending over many centuries.

Experts profess to be able to say what factories produced each variety, but that shows a delicate amount of discrimination beyond the scope of this modest book.

In some pieces you only see the lovers escaping over the bridge, in others there are three figures, the last being in hot pursuit of the two first. Again, in some there is a temple up in the skies and little figures (presumably the lovers) are seen entering, whilst a boat, sometimes with a mast and sometimes without, is seen hovering in dangerous proximity.

Sometimes the trees, of a strange horticultural variety, seem to grow apples or oranges in great profusion, but without leaves and the fruit is all seen full face, whilst not a single ball is obscured in the slightest degree by its neighbours. The willow tree is sometimes almost, and sometimes quite, lost to view, at others it waves immense and threatening leaves, which, transplanted into real life, would be each about 100 feet long.

In the original design, as far as we are sure of it, two birds are seen flying overhead; these are the souls of the faithful lovers; in others there are no birds, but three junks up in the sky, which does not seem to favour the idea of the solitary boat in other pieces being that of the escaping lovers.

There is, too, very considerable variety in the

borders and in the trellis, and connoisseurs of the willow pattern lay great stress on these details as proofs concerning factories and dates.

In a lecture on pottery given many years ago by Mr Allon, and quoted in Chaffers' monumental work, he furnishes us with the following graphic description of the well-known design in language that one never forgets :

“ Who is there who has not daguerreotyped on his brain every line and dot of the *immortal blue willow pattern* ; so called from its astounding willow, with its four bunches of triple Prince's feathers for foliage, and its inconceivable root growing out of an impossible soil ; its magical bridge, suspended like a leaping squirrel, between Heaven and earth ; its three Chinese mermen working themselves upon their tails, in some inscrutable way or other, into the funny little temple in the corner ; the allegorical ship that sails in mid-air, over the top of it and just under the baseless floor of an aerial blue villa, through which it threatens to thrust its mast ; its two nondescript birds, which would defy even the anatomy of Owen, billing and cooing in their uncouth Chinese fashion, beside the strange blue tree with round plum-pudding leaves, a permanent puzzle to botanists, and which grows out of the top of another temple with three deep blue columns and beneath which a mysterious stream flows, and which sublime landscape for millions of ages and upon tens of millions of plates, has represented to

the world the artistic ideas of the Raphaels of the Celestial Empire."

It is curious and interesting to see that we may collect a dozen or more specimens of the design, even from its original home in China, and never find two alike.

It is true the finest examples of the English variety are those made by Turner of Caughley, but the popularity of the pattern soon produced imitators, and Wedgwood, Spode, and many others adopted it—indeed, I think hardly one potter of the day omitted to make some tea and dinner services of this favourite design.

Of the many diverse renderings of the legend that known as the Caughley Turner keeps nearest to what is called the "story" pattern, so named because it shows all the constituents of the original love story.

The salad bowl to the right of the lower shelf in my illustration, Fig. 45, from the perfection of the pattern I take to be one of Turner's designs, though it is not so old as his time. I should fancy its date would be about 1815.

You will see the lovers are on the bridge, apparently carrying lanterns, whilst they are closely pursued by the enraged father, who also carries something in his hand, probably the evil looking prong still used in the East for capturing thieves—there is the boat, the tree of enormous fruit in close layers, the whole as flat as a banner and uncommonly like the German tin trees of our youth

—the willow waving streamer-like leaves and the birds flying on high.

The quart mug just above is old Nankin, and the design is quite different. Instead of the two birds representing the souls of the lovers, there is a flight of birds forging forward in the form of a loop. This arrangement is again visible in the eight-sided Nankin plate (one of 63, and none exactly alike) to the left. In the mug there are two lovers on the bridge, and four more figures presumably about to institute a man-hunt. There is the temple in the sky (on the side not visible), but the solitary boat is about to go through the bridge.

The willow is not seen, but several extraordinary horticultural specimens are present, and doubtless are meant more or less to represent it.

The fruit tree is certainly unique, and presents to our astonished gaze 71 gigantic oranges, all turning well developed noses to the spectator.

Another curious feature is the solid water in the foreground, which, like an enormous worm, is exuding through an opening resembling the main pipe in our London water supply.

The eight-sided plate has no fruit tree at all, and two lovers tumbling on their noses on the wrong side of the bridge, whilst the father leisurely studies the weather in the doorway of the pagoda, and the usual junk appears above.

The central dish of the upper shelf is one of a complete set of 7 of old Nankin of a full deep blue, and having a diaper border.



A GROUP OF WILLOW PATTERN  
(Fig. 45)



ENGLISH POTTERY  
(Fig. 46)



It is 17 inches long, and is the largest of the set. Its great peculiarity is that there are no lovers and no bridge. The temple is there and the birds, the pagoda, the fruit trees, and the scared looking willow.

Here the boat seems the great feature. There is no trellis, which is so strongly marked in the mug, and in so many of the different oriental designs.

The pale looking coffee cup in the centre of the top row and the saucer in the bottom one, are of quite a different blue, and show very badly in the photograph. The colour is peculiar, a kind of light cobalt, and it seems to be a shade of which the secret is lost, modern attempts to produce it not being successful.

This set was always considered to come from Caughley, but it seems to me open to doubt. Caughley china is generally marked, which is not the case here.

To the right of the pale saucer is a much darker one which belongs to an undoubted Caughley service. The teacup (handleless) and the coffee cup on the right and left of the pale one on the top shelf belong to the same set, which is quite complete, and every piece is marked with S., which stands for Salopian.

This is the type of Caughley willow pattern the best known to the public; the blue is very full and deep, the pattern very much covers the pieces, and there is a good deal of gold about it. This

set must be an early one, as the teacups have no handles, and the saucers do duty for both tea and coffee, according to which was in use for the moment, I suppose. The border is what is called the butterfly border, from the presence at intervals of a conventional butterfly of curious form.

The vegetable dish of Nankin on the left of the top row is a very precious old friend. The willow story is but slightly developed, but it has the butterfly border, and two pig heads as handles. The knob on the cover seems to represent a pineapple.



## CHAPTER XXIV

### POTTERY ENGLISH AND FOREIGN—PART I

To give even a perfunctory glance at our chief English potters, to say nothing of the foreigners, would occupy a book, and that a large one, so I shall content myself with naming the best-known ones and giving a little account of the pieces I possess myself.

The study of pottery is one by itself and the quaint old shapes and extraordinary decorations are a delight to the eye.

Pottery was made in England and on the Continent long before china was attempted—Wrotham is credited with making slip ware very early in the 17th century. Usually this ware is a dark reddish colour and the "slip" decoration is trailed all over it in whatever pattern is desired from a thin pipe, very much after the manner of the cakes of the present day which have mottoes and good wishes executed on them in white, or pink sugar.

The slip ware ornament is not extinct even yet and you see it in country markets and on cheap-jacks' stalls, adorning baking dishes and dairy tubs.

There were important works at Lambeth, the productions of which are called Lambeth Delft. This factory must have started early, for it seems to have been in full working order in 1668.

Then comes the Fulham factory—dates fail us here, but we know John Dwight was settled there sometime before 1671.

Here he made ware resembling what we now call *Grès de Flandres*, a heavy, thick grey stoneware, splashed with bright dark blue. Dwight tried with more or less success to make porcelain and he certainly succeeded in a limited sense, for he has left some specimens of a rough kind of ware, strongly resembling imperfect china, but his fame rests on his pottery and we seem almost to have a personal knowledge of him, from the pathetic memorial tablet on which is written: "Lydia Dwight, dyed March 3, 1673." She looks to be about 6 years old in her portrait, which shows her little dead figure resting on an elegant cushion and holding a bunch of flowers.

The Elers brothers, who left a strong mark on English pottery, came over from Germany either with, or directly after William of Orange came to these islands.

A good deal of obscurity hangs over their work, which was exceptionally good; unfortunately they marked nothing, but it is certain that it is to them we owe the fine red stoneware, which in their specimens is so wonderfully finished and perfect.

John Astbury obtained their potting secrets

by feigning to be an idiot and getting employed about the place. So odious and mean a trick, makes one regret that he started a business on his own account, made much good pottery on his stolen knowledge and "flourished like a green bay tree," even as the wicked man in the Psalms.

Salt-glazed ware is a very attractive kind and made its appearance about 1690. It is usually quaint and strange and far from pretty, before painting in enamels was introduced.

The origin of this discovery of salt glazing is disputed. The following account is so picturesque that I would vain believe it to be true.

The story runs that a farm servant was preparing a strong brine with which to pickle pork, in an earthenware pot over a hot fire: the intense heat caused the pot to become red-hot and the brine boiled over; when all had cooled, the astonishing discovery was made, that the earthenware had acquired a hard brilliant glaze, which subsequent washing and hard usage failed to crack or destroy.

Another account states that the invention came to the Staffordshire potteries through the Elers brothers. It is said that they astonished all the inhabitants of Burslem, near which town their works were situated, by the enormous volumes of smoke which rose from their kilns, when large quantities of salt were thrown in to cause a superficial vitrification of the clay—this was done when the kiln was at its greatest heat.

The first salt-glazed articles were ugly in colour, but in 1729 Astbury remedied this defect and produced a much whiter body.

There are in the Franks' collection three fine specimens that are a perpetual joy to me—first a teapot in the form of a crouching camel, though most certainly the head and neck forming the spout in no way resemble that surly but useful animal; they seem rather to belong to some strange cross between a fish and a serpent; he bears on his back a kind of elephant's howdah; and still more remarkable, he has an uncertain pattern—partly floral, partly geometric—meandering about his body, of which the ribs are marvellously well developed.

There is a second teapot even more strange; the spout is still the camel's head and neck, but instead of a body there is a cottage, which resembles the doll's house of our youth, with windows arranged in prim regularity on each side of the door, which is approached by a well defined flight of steps.

Nothing is forgotten, even a chimney exists in the form of a knob to the lid. The raised patterns were managed by means of moulds, these being constructed in many cases of several originally separate pieces, causing seams to show, which were utilised by the ingenious potters later on as panels, into which many other kinds of decoration were introduced.

On some pieces different schemes of ornamenta-

tion are applied together, and we have mythology and domestic life jostling one another in the same panel.

The first coloured specimens were very rough. I wish I could give you an illustration of my third favourite ; it is the quaintest possible group of a lady in a pew, supported on each side by a gentleman ; her eyes are exactly like the stones boys introduce as eyes to a snow man ; the whole piece is of the most artless simplicity.

Later on the beauty of the enamelled examples, the painting of which was extremely rich, is very great. The idea of this painting in enamels evidently came from the elaborately decorated china which at this time was extensively imported from the East.

Some of Astbury's pieces are very beautiful, and the painting is almost like an old illumination.

Should you be so fortunate as to possess a piece you may like to know that one characteristic of salt-glazed ware is a kind of pitting of the surface, something like the skin of an orange.

The best period was up to 1780 ; after that, though it is supposed that it was still made until 1820, the era of decadence had set in.

I have given rather undue prominence you may think, perhaps, in this little account to the salt-glaze ware, but the reason is that I think no other early pottery is quite so interesting.

To come to later times, we meet with Wedgwood

and the various other Staffordshire potters of his time. Of Wedgwood I have already said much; Adams, Palmer, Mayer, Neale, Wood, Davenport, and many others I should like to speak of, but space forbids; John Turner divides with Adams the honour of being the closest imitator of Wedgwood, but his pieces are nevertheless distinctive to a close observer.

The central piece on the top of the cabinet in Fig. 46 is almost certainly the work of Turner of Lane-end (not to be confused with Turner of Caughley), though there is no mark whatever. It is to my mind an ugly piece, but it is delicately and beautifully potted. It is very large, and holds six pints.

The groundwork is oyster white, with a decoration in lavender blue, consisting of branches of vine, grapes, and leaves mingled together.

John Turner died in 1786, so if it is his work it was made before that date. One of his favourite designs was that of the vine in some form or another, and the texture of the white part resembles the peculiarity of his jasper, a peculiarity impossible to describe, and known only by the touch.

The two jugs to the right are "bamboo" or "cane" colour—the two names mean the same thing—and the raised pattern is in the same tint. These are possibly the work of Mayer of Hanley, as this peculiar tone of "bamboo" without any white is rather distinctive of his factory. These two jugs are possibly, however, again the work of

Turner, for they show his rather peculiar manner of *mixing* his designs.

There is the vine under the lip and brim and a conventional arrangement of acanthus round the body, divided at intervals by four masks, which appear to be those of fauns, judging from their ears. The handles are rather unusual and handsome, having on them fine busts of a man, representing probably Pan—he clasps in his right hand a rude instrument of music and in his left a sickle.

The little jug on the extreme left below is extremely dainty. It is cane colour with reliefs in white; the lip is composed of a very fine mask of Bacchus, all round the rim the cane-coloured foundation is fluted, and on it is an extremely delicate wreath of vine leaves and grapes. I am a poor hand at mythology, and am not sure what the main subject represents—it seems to be some strange beast presenting a bowl to a cupid—perhaps Bacchus again in another form, offering the cup to love. This small jug is certainly by John Turner; when I say certainly, I mean that this tradition has been handed down from one who certainly knew, for he was intimately connected with Turner, Wedgwood and Adams.

The tall straight-sided jug is a very fine specimen of Doulton's. Its lovely colouring is its great charm; the groundwork is an uncertain blending (peculiar to the Doulton factory) of raw siena and neutral tint, which is divided

diagonally across, and in each compartment is a Maltese cross, blue and white alternately, somewhat blurred in the true Doulton manner. Two bands of deep blue and two of whitish fleurs-de-lis surround the top and bottom.

This was bought, together with the little one to the right of the lower row, for a wedding present about forty years ago, when the Doulton potters first turned their minds to the production of ornamental ware. Up to 1870 the output had been principally such utilitarian things as drain pipes and very coarse and large kitchen necessaries.

The little one is very pretty in light brown, with ivory white and grey decoration. See how simple and yet graceful is the spiral folding on the two bands in relief thrown up by the tiny grey stars.

Doulton's pottery is almost always marked, as are these two. What a boon to the inquiring student.

The other two jugs are of no special interest, but I included them in the illustration because they are old Welsh, but from what part I cannot say; though I have made many inquiries, no information is forthcoming further than that they were brought by my great-grandmother from Wales.

Mason's ironstone china is really earthenware, and it was in 1813 that Miles Mason took out his patent for making it; so that these quaint 8-



sided jugs of many colours, with lizard handles of vermilion and emerald green, are not so old as many of their possessors fondly imagine.

A full set of these jugs numbers 12 sizes, I believe. I only possess two, the largest and the smallest; the former stands  $9\frac{1}{2}$  inches high, and the baby is only  $4\frac{1}{2}$ .

They are very decorative from their extremely brilliant colouring and the oddity of their octagon shape. The decoration is all deep blue and red, except the queer lizard handles—green creatures turned up with scarlet.

These jugs, too, are always plainly marked Mason's Ironstone China, sometimes with *patent* added. On the jugs the mark is impressed, on the dinner services often painted in blue or red.

Dinner services of Mason's ironstone china are still to be picked up. They are very handsome and are somewhat in the style of old Imari (Japan). There is no very strong resemblance, but the comparison gives you some slight idea of the style; there were many other patterns as well, but I think the deep blue and red, with this very distant resemblance to oriental, is the most distinctive and certainly the most attractive.

I have left myself no space to speak of Liverpool ware or of the various lustres that make such a gay display on dark shelves. I must hope for another chance of telling you something about these two large groups of decorative pottery.

## CHAPTER XXV

### FOREIGN POTTERY—PART II

MY small collection of foreign pottery is not inherited, but acquired, with very few exceptions, in many a pleasant Bohemian holiday, wandering in out of the way corners of the earth, still unknown to fame, and as yet happily far from the hordes of tourists who spread over the Continent like a swarm of locusts.

It is a cheap collection to make, and one that I recommend to those with slender purses, but I warn you not to lose time in starting, for every year there is less and less pottery made, and the old beautiful bowls and jugs of every colour of the rainbow and every conceivable form, are being rapidly replaced by the ordinary utilitarian enamelled iron.

I began my collection as a schoolgirl when I spent my holidays abroad, and I have steadily enlarged it year by year. Now, however, I find on every succeeding Continental visit that it is more and more difficult to find treasures.

In Spain two years ago not a single piece could I discover, every peasant, however humble, being well provided with enamel ware. This was

grievous, for I was in untrodden ways, and expected to find riches. At the present time I think Germany and Southern France present the best hunting-ground. Italy, where one would expect to glean a rich harvest, seems particularly poor in specimens.

I have one room in my flat with two walls completely covered with pottery of all nations, arranged on dark-stained common deal shelves, and most decorative it is.

And then how great is the pleasure of gazing on these treasures and remembering the circumstances under which each one was acquired, and the burning anxiety as to how it was to be entombed in trunks already packed to repletion and gaping in mute protest.

I have never returned to England without having my handbag well stuffed with some lately acquired gem, too precious to be packed, or more likely, no room possible in any box, by any amount of strenuous squeezing—nothing left but the ever elastic handbag.

My last effort in that way conveyed the Marseilles soup tureen which you see in Fig. 49, and within its capacious maw it held all my collars and a pair of bedroom slippers.

Of all my purchases I think the most oppressive was a pair of cider jars from South Brittany, one of which you see in Fig 49.

As they are 13 inches high, and of a generous bulk, nothing but a crate would hold them, but

nothing daunted, I carried them one in each hand all the way home. The difficulties one encounters in acquiring and conveying to the home-nest these desired treasures adds greatly to the joy of possession.

The pottery-covered walls are a perpetual joy as we sit at dinner and look at them, punctuating our recollections with "shall you ever forget how heavy that was?" or "do you remember how nearly we lost this one?"

The pursuit of any hobby such as this adds an immense zest to a holiday.

In Fig. 47, looking from left to right, you have another English piece that has intruded itself after the fashion of the travelling Englishman among foreigners. It is a good specimen of the "Jolly Brewer," a well-known piece, but not often found of this unusual size. The design, and also the thing itself, is supposed to have come from Rockingham, which is still celebrated for its brown ware, and we are most of us familiar with the humble but excellent Rockingham teapots, which, after silver, make better tea than any others.

It was made somewhere about 1790 to 1795, I should say, not earlier.

Its history is a curious one. In 1866, when making the London, Chatham, and Dover railway this was dug up in George Street, Blackfriars. It holds a quart, and is uninjured except for the loss of its handle, which should be at the back, and which was broken off by one of the workman's picks.



FOREIGN POTTERY

(Fig. 47)



FOREIGN POTTERY

(Fig. 48)



It seems rather a strange find, for even should it not be Rockingham, but Fulham ware, the works at the latter place being far older, it is curious to find anything of that comparatively late date embedded in this way. I imagine that it must have been forgotten in a cellar, and that in some building operations that cellar was filled in and thus kept it hidden. Standing next to it is a Flemish milk-boiler—bright emerald green lined with canary yellow. With its two ears and lip it is very ornamental, and was acquired, after much bargaining, for the sum of threepence, in the market-place at Ypres.

Then comes a very interesting piece, also Flemish, which, with the superb soup tureen on the right, I have acquired by inheritance. They both came from Mechlin, and are dated 1829 underneath, the figures being deeply “pricked” in.

As you see, the central piece is a money-box, and I wonder they should make so ornate and really handsome a piece, simply to smash it up in the end, as there is no other way of getting at the money.

The groundwork is the colour of wash leather, the centre surrounded by six female masks, the hair being coloured, a reddish brown. The festoons are the same tint, but the great attraction of the piece lies in the birds—doves, I think they are—four of them hopping round the top.

The soup tureen is a really splendid piece and does not belong to the class of peasant pottery ;

it is of a much more finished description and must, I should think, have been expensive.

Like the other Mechlin piece, the groundwork is wash leather colour, the festoons are bright dark green, cinnamon and maroon—round the foot is a simulated cord also in green and dotted round the lid are little sprigs in green and orange—the knob is green and again the cord is repeated near the top and round the edge of the cover. Observe the handles, how gracefully they are twisted.

It is a most effective piece of colour and was a thing of beauty this year filled with daffodils.

Next to it is a powder blue jug, from near Ravenna.

On the lower shelf at the left is one of a pair of vegetable dishes from the Taunus country near to Schwalbach—price 7d., quite expensive, as foreign pottery goes generally—the moment there is a lid the price swells.

It is bright orange of the mandarin shade, with decorations in light yellow and green. It is curious how these crude shades harmonize instead of screaming at each other as they do in our cheap and nasty ware.

Now comes one of a set of Brittany soup plates. Mark the lady's costume; though the figure is so strange and out of all proportion, the dress is accurately correct, the ground is white and the edge has canary and cobalt stripes.

The centre piece is rather interesting, because



a little difficult to get, perhaps alas! in these degenerate days, impossible. I acquired it after much chaffering and three separate visits from a fisherman's wife at Chioggia, an island near Venice. It is the receptacle in which the fishermen take their fresh water—a meagre supply—wherewith to dilute their cheap chianti. It hangs on their backs by cords, which pass through the double loops on each side. The colour is again that of wash leather and the height 11 inches.

Next comes a very gaudy plate from Zell in Germany and the way I got it was extremely funny. I bought it at a sort of queer little "hole-in-the-wall" shop—a mere den—in a Black Forest village. Three or four were placed, with no kind of security against marauders, on a shelf by the cottage door—the owner was absent, so I lifted down the plate expecting his immediate return. The half door was inhospitably closed, so I clasped the plate on my knees and sat down like a tramp on the doorstep, awaiting developments. After 20 minutes the proprietor arrived; my German being sketchy and the old man quite deaf, negotiations hung fire. I invited him to name a price, he shook his head—I turned the plate round where the sum was plainly marked—again he shook his head and I saw the poor old man was nearly blind as well as deaf. Things seemed at a standstill, but he contrived by sundry nudges and nods, to make me understand I was to pay him whatever I saw marked there,

which I did, quite honestly, to our mutual satisfaction.

The last piece is a burnt siena jug also from Germany, bought with great difficulty in a little chandler's shop, where I discovered it full of a mysterious and horrid grease, so I had to buy grease and pot and all together, adopting the simple plan, in the presence of total want of comprehension on both sides, of seizing the article and offering a handful of coins; as the good woman only took five pence for the jug with the fearsome grease thrown in, I think I was not much the loser.

In Fig. 48 you see on the left of the top row, a quaint powder blue jug (German) with a heart in orange in front and three stripes round, two of white and one of green. I always use this as supplementary to the meagre silver milk jugs silversmiths seems to consider large enough for the tea table and I have the proud conviction that no one else has anything in the least like it.

The jug next to it is from Picardy and is of the brightest possible green, with a lip curving over on both sides. The centre one, rather large, is German, groundwork Venetian red, ornamentation yellow. The coffee-pot next to it, with a kind of forlorn-looking bent spout, is South Brittany ware, emerald green and quite plain. It was bought in Quimperlé, so was the jug next to it, of brilliant butter colour.

On the bottom shelf to the extreme left is a

bowl from Lunéville in Alsatia. It is of a superior kind, with delicate painting of roses and harebells; on the top of it is a little green casserole from Bruges. This shape seems to be peculiar to Belgium; I have others from there, but have never met with them elsewhere. The handle is rather like a magnified rat's tail.

Then comes the companion soup plate to the one in Fig. 47. This time we see the gentleman, and he is in the national bragobras, which are like immense knickerbockers. These used to be quite generally worn in my childhood, but now they are seldom seen except on the old men, who still wear them in conjunction with shaggy coats of sheepskin, with the fleece left on.

Then we come to a treasure I greatly love from sentiment and association. It is a water *cruche* from Centra France, ground white, adorned with blue lilies sprawling about it; the spout is quite unique, for it is decorated with a blue lily turned inside out.

There is a small lid, for in that part of France the flies are a veritable plague. The reason of my great interest in this piece is that it was bought in Cahors, at the shop where Gambetta was born, and his father's name is still over the door. The same kind of goods are still sold as in the days when the little Léon doubtless often ran to the pump opposite with a similar pitcher to this.

Next is a plate showing the Gallic cock strut-

ting in all his glory. He was bought at Quiberon, for ever interesting as the scene of the massacre by Hoche of 711 *émigrés*, whom he ordered to be shot on the beach.

The last on the right is a very big teapot of Zell pottery. Next to it to the left is one of the gems of my collection. It came from Turkey, from a little village close to the Dardanelles. I have two of them, but this is my favourite. It is a lovely turquoise blue, studded, as you see, with excrescences which catch the light ; the dark markings are black splashes, thrown on anyhow.

To the left again is a powder blue handled mug, from Switzerland, and the small bason on which Gambetta stands is of no special consequence, being one of an ordinary kind of soup bowl.

In Fig. 49 we have first the large cider jug of whose journey I told you. I bought it in a wayside cabaret in Brittany. In these primitive drinking places cider is served to you in shallow cups, which hang on a dresser.

The colour of this cider jar is very attractive, light bright green with the handle of lemon yellow.

You seldom see a good specimen of this kind now. Finding strangers like them, they still make some hundreds, but in fancy tones to suit the supposed taste of tourists, so that all originality has fled. Next to it stands a Marseilles covered bowl, with its characteristic cerise edges and large apple as a knob to the lid ; beyond

again a huge green receptacle in which to wash potatoes. That was bought in the market-place at Oudenarde—that, too, was brought home in my hand, to the utter disgust of my travelling companion.

On the lower shelf at the two ends are old Brittany plates. We can trace them back 90 years, but they may be much older than that. They are souvenirs of a beloved country doctor, whose life consisted in spending and being spent for others, tending the sick, comforting the sorrowful and reclaiming the fallen.

It was in driving about all over the country with him on his errands of mercy that I picked up many of my Brittany pieces, but these 2 plates had belonged to his grandmother.

In the centre you see a Swiss kitchen bowl of burnt siena colour, with flowers roughly painted in white, green and blue and a legend in German which runs thus, "All depends on the blessing of God." I have several of these, the wording sometimes religious, sometimes amatory. On the left of the bottom row is a bright sunflower milk-jug, then a Quimperlé sugar basin, and next to it, also from Quimperlé, a thing the use of which I know not, unless it be for bonbons. It has a pear for a knob, and I like extremely the funny little round handles.

The covered bowl is from Thun in Switzerland where one finds delightful rough pottery. There is a superior kind which you often see brought  
Q

over here, but it is to me ugly and in bad taste. I much prefer the cheap kind meant for kitchen use.

The last of all is from Nevers; it is, I think, meant for sugar. The Nevers pottery always has deep blue edges, in the same way as the Marseilles and Strasburg wares have cerise.

I hope I shall have inspired you to start a pottery collection; it is so engrossing, and—delightful item—so cheap.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### OLD DRESDEN CHINA

IS not this a charming little shoe, it is a very good and dainty specimen of old Dresden. Most of us associate the idea of Dresden china with delightful little figures of shepherds and shepherdesses, in looped-up dresses of the Dolly Varden kind and with Louis XV. heels such as this; sometimes with and sometimes without lambs, the latter being of the curly variety such as we loved in toys many a year ago.

All kinds of figures were made in Dresden at the same period that produced these elegant little men and women, but one peculiarity of them all is, that, with very few exceptions, they represent some elegant employment, some graceful love scene; or perhaps the pretty little figures are executing some decorous minuet, or twanging delicately on a lute or harpsichord, but very seldom are they doing anything vulgarly useful, or of everyday occurrence.

The first that we hear of the celebrated Meissen or Dresden factory is about the year 1706. It was established at that time by Augustus II. King of Poland and Elector of Saxony.

In speaking of Dresden china, the names Meissen and Dresden are used indifferently and though the factory is at Meissen, Dresden being the capital of Saxony, the porcelain has gradually come to be universally spoken of as Dresden. This duplication of names is at first puzzling to the beginner of the study of china.

I had not intended speaking of any Continental china at all, but altered my mind to the extent of including a short notice of Dresden, because there is a good deal of it in private houses in England, not usually very fine or striking pieces but just isolated cups and saucers, an occasional figure, and very rarely a fine vase.

Moreover, it is well to be able to distinguish between the old and the new ; modern Dresden is to my taste very dainty and pleasing, a good deal of tea and coffee china, toilet sets, and dessert services, are sold over here, usually decorated with sprays of flowers, absolutely true to Nature, not the conventional flowers that we are accustomed to see on porcelain.

These designs are, of course, reproductions of old ones. It is very usual to find a bunch of several different kinds of flowers, rather to one side of the piece whatever it may be, with two or three light blossoms waving beyond to break the line, whilst isolated flowers are scattered here there on the white background. The borders (also copies of old ones) are lightly gilded, generally in a flowing pattern not in plain bands.



The modern mark is usually the word Dresden, with a crown above, and very often "Meissen" is impressed as well. The old mark of the crossed swords is also used, but a little practice will show you a considerable difference between the antique and the modern.

Another reason for my giving you a chapter on Dresden is, that it is hard paste or true porcelain, and it is good to study on that account, because with a piece of old Dresden in your hand, you can closely observe the difference between it and the soft paste of English china, with the exception of Plymouth and Bristol.

Böttcher is the first name we meet with as director of the factory and up to the year 1711 he was making there a kind of fine red stoneware. According to Mr Chaffers it was in 1711 that one Schnorr, a wealthy resident of the Erzgebirge, when riding at Aue near Schneeberg, noticed that his horse's feet were continually clogged with a soft putty like white clay. The picturesque part follows—it seems that at this time there was an outcry against the heavy expense of hair powder, made from wheat, and this white earth seemed a possible substitute. It was dried and experiments made by various people, Böttcher among others; he found it extremely heavy and being a chemist, he analysed it and found to his astonishment that it contained the *Kaolin* which he needed for the porcelain which he had been attempting to make for some years.

The clay was procured and sent in casks sealed by dumb persons : the workmen were sworn under fearful oaths to keep the secret, and these oaths were nailed up in conspicuous places all over the factory. These rules for enforcing (or at least attempting to enforce) secrecy existed down to 1812, when by arrangement they were permitted to be infringed in order that Brongniart from Sèvres should be permitted to visit the Dresden factory. So runs the story, and it is no doubt in the main correct.

Böttcher carried on the works with varying success till 1715, when he succeeded in making the delicate pure white porcelain which is now so difficult to obtain. He died in 1719, and it is supposed—though absolute confirmation of the theory is absent—that up to the time of his death nothing but this white porcelain, undecorated with colour, had come from Dresden.

At some period prior to this date there had been unsuccessful efforts made to produce coloured porcelain, but in 1720 Hörold was made director, and under his management good painting on the paste was accomplished.

It was about 1730 that Kändler superintended the making of the figures. He was a sculptor, evidently of great talent, and he turned his attention to the production of figures, groups, and those wonderfully modelled wreaths of flowers, clusters of fruit, and swinging cupids, executed in the round, which we associate with the Dresden factory.

Frequently these wreaths and bunches of flowers and fruit are applied on a surface thickly studded with small raised flowers, a piling of ornament on ornament that cannot be regarded as true art.

I have seen a specimen belonging to a friend thus covered with forget-me-nots, and having for a knob to lift the lid, a group of little apples, at which canaries, perched on the cover, are pecking. It is far from pretty, but of great value, for it bears the mark of a date somewhere about 1750, and the years between 1731 and 1756 produced the best Dresden work.

If you will study the marks I give at the end of the chapter you will see it is No. 5.

In 1750 the factory was placed under the directorship of Count Bruhl, who was evidently what we should now call a "crank," for we read that after Frederick the Great took Dresden, in Brühl's house were found 1500 suits of clothes, with wigs and snuff-boxes to match each suit!

This is a large statement to swallow, and even if you divide the number by four it remains a prodigious quantity of clothes for one man, to say nothing of the wigs and snuff-boxes; truly china-making must have been a paying concern in those days!

Some indirect confirmation of Brühl's love of finery is supplied by the fact that one of the best known and esteemed groups of Kändler's designing was one representing Brühl's tailor and his wife mounted upon goats, carrying all the paraphernalia of their business with them!

The plain white china was the most esteemed of all the Dresden productions, at any rate at one time, and we read in the *London Magazine* of May, 1753, that this special kind was only made for the King and the Royal Family, and was not sold at all. Whether this really was so or not it is now impossible to say. I have not met with any confirmation of the statement. We know that a complete service belonging to the Duke of Brunswick was valued at £10,000.

The prohibition (if there was one) against common folk using this make of china was probably withdrawn later, for occasionally we meet with it in private collections, but it may very naturally be that it has found itself among its present comparatively "low" surroundings by the process of gradual but painful descent, not entirely unknown to other aristocratic things, animate and inanimate.

A friend of mine possesses five magnificent jars of this description with covers, and he can trace them back nearly to the time of their manufacture. I should like to know exactly how they passed into the hands of that family, who, as far as they are aware, had no connection with Saxony.

The paste is intensely white, inclining to a bluish tinge rather than to ivory, and the jars, which are tall and wide at the shoulders, have wreaths of flowers and fruit held up around them by cupids. There are also broad bands of open

lattice work round the centres, over which the wreaths are festooned.

There is a set similar, but not nearly so fine, in the Schreiber collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum. As a child I was present at a domestic tragedy connected with my friend's jars.

In those days china was not understood and valued as it is now, and the owner's wife evidently did not know of its great rarity and value, for she permitted a "cook-general" to dust these priceless treasures.

One fatal day when the drawing-room was "turned out," a horrid phrase, alas! too often literally carried out, the door opened with a nervous bounce to admit the "cook-general," who abruptly announced calamity—"If you please'm I bin and broke one of them white pots." On the scene that followed I refuse to dwell.

I think the kind of Dresden most familiar to the public is that of figures, candlesticks, candelabra, and vases, brilliantly but most softly coloured. The figures are indeed very familiar, and resembling greatly those of Chelsea, and when we want to give the idea of a peculiarly dainty and elegant figure we often say she is like a Dresden sheperdess. There are also plenty of male figures, who seem to represent men in gala dress and the most elegant idleness, who never have and never could encounter the rough and tumble of general life.

Besides these figures, which are certainly very

pleasing, there are vases which, however beautiful in workmanship, are not so attractive. They are so encrusted with flowers, fruit, bows of ribbon, cupids, and what not, that there seems no rest for the eye.

Unfortunately, they are too delicate to wear well, and all this projecting ornament is sadly easily chipped and broken.

The illustration I give you in Fig. 50 is of a beautiful and dainty specimen of old Dresden. It is, you see, quite in the Watteau style. One could not imagine any fair lady who wore that shoe doing anything of a utilitarian kind.

It is strange to think how long this fragile little shoe has travelled about in our hard and busy world. When it was made our George III. had only reigned ten years, and in France Louis XV. was dragging out his long and disastrous reign.

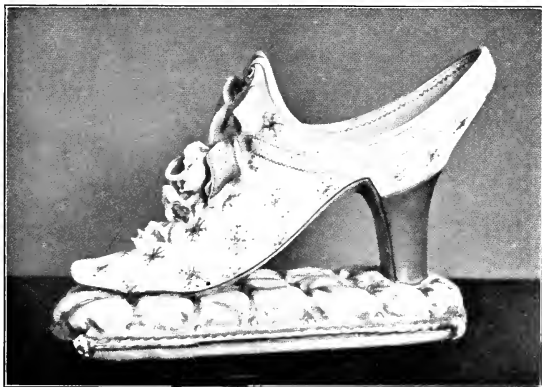
The cushion on which it rests is buff colour, and is fastened down with gold buttons, the whole being surrounded by gold cord.

The shoe itself is lined with pale pink, and the band and bow are the same colour. The heel is light brown, and the groundwork of the upper part is bluish grey. The stars with which it is spangled are most graceful and elaborate. The centre of each is a kind of old gold, outlined and marked in the centre with red. The four nutlike ornaments round are bluish green, with terminals of cherry colour. Between these four nuts occur



FOREIGN POTTERY

(Fig. 49)



DRESDEN SHOE

(Fig. 50)

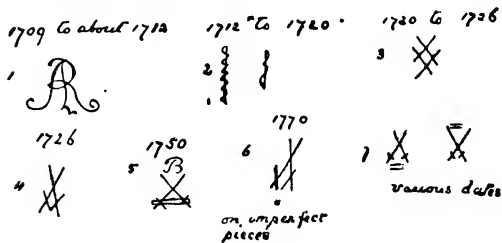




small star-like leaves, fixed on tiny round bright blue balls, joined to the stars by a touch of the cherry colour.

Those were romantic days, and I should fancy that some lover, in an access of sentiment, had the pretty toy modelled from his mistress's slippers, so that he might seem to have something of hers constantly before his eyes.

The marks of old Dresden are simple. I have given you a few of the most usual, and have put approximate dates to them, but you must always remember that these marks often overlap each other, that is, you may find No. 1, for instance, later than 1712; for though another mark was used, it does not invariably mean that the earlier was *entirely* thrown aside.



## CHAPTER XXVII

### OLD DRINKING GLASSES

OLD glass is a somewhat wide subject, but in this chapter I shall confine myself almost exclusively to considering glasses used for drinking.

From the excessive fragility of glass of all kinds, it is natural that we should not have inherited many specimens, and that silver, copper, and even china, should have survived better the passing of the ages ; still, probably in most houses of the upper and middle classes there will be found at least one old piece to awaken the interest of its owner in the subject.

I shall say nothing of the different constituents of glass, for it is dry reading, and will not help you to take an interest in any specimens you may have, but it is well to know that there were in the 18th century (we have not much reliable information as to date prior to that) factories at Bristol and Nailsea. These two were close together ; also at Wrockwardine in Shropshire, and in Newcastle, and there were also the important factories of Cork and Waterford in Ireland. You will sometimes hear these last two classed together under the title of Waterford glass.

The Waterford factory is a little older than that of Cork, and was started in 1768. It existed barely a hundred years, and its final downfall may be traced to a strike of the workmen, following a most successful show of the Waterford glass in London at the great Exhibition of 1851.

There is, I think, more Irish glass existing among ornamental specimens than English, and there are still very considerable quantities of the deeply cut sort that we associate with the Irish factories.

Most experts think, and I share the feeling, that a pale bluish green tint distinguishes the glass from Ireland, and especially that from Waterford, and it seems to me that another characteristic—though I trust you will have no opportunity of verifying this—is the strange way in which it breaks; it falls into small fragments, so that mending is seldom possible. I witnessed a catastrophe of this kind a short while since to an undoubted piece of Waterford glass having the beautiful hobnail cutting; the name explains the style of ornamentation.

With regard to drinking glasses it is not easy to distinguish from whence they came. There is but little scope for a study of the different characteristics of the English and Irish makes; these are much better seen and compared in such pieces as sugar basins, ewers, compôte dishes, sweetmeat holders, preserve dishes, fruit baskets, spirit bottles, etc., and I hope on some future occasion to say

something of these various specimens; I only aspire in this little notice of drinking glasses to give you a few notes to help in arriving at some rough idea of the age of your own treasures, and of what locality produced these fragile survivals of a past time.

Now, let us first consider wine glasses. We may divide them into four classes—(1) the drawn, (2) the air twisted, (3) the opaque twisted, (4) the cut.

The term “drawn” denotes glasses made, both bowl and stem, from one piece. From the bowl the glass was gradually “drawn” to form the stem: usually there is what is called a “tear” in the centre of the top of the stem at its junction with the bowl; this is an imprisoned bubble of air.

Next we come to the air-twisted variety, very beautiful and sparkling. This was done by pricking several holes on one side of a lump of glass or metal, as it is called; it was then covered with a thin film of glass and the lump pulled out, and made to revolve as the stem was formed. This produced the charming effect seen in the big glass in the centre of Fig. 51. The opaque twisted variety is such as you see in the second glass on the left.

The process by which these twists were formed was involved.

A cylindrical mould was made, and lined with small rods of opaque glass, separated by others of

plain. The whole thing was heated, and molten plain glass was poured into the middle. The hot rods stuck to the filling, and the whole was taken from the mould, re-heated, and the rods at one end being pinched together by tweezers, the mass was quickly revolved and drawn out to the proper length.

It is this style of glass that is the oftenest fraudulently made in the present day, and passed off on unsuspecting purchasers as genuinely old; especially is this the case when red and blue threads appear in the stems. A few—but very few—genuine examples exist with ruby and sapphire threads introduced and most charming is the effect, but so rare are they, that one offered for sale should be regarded with some suspicion. Some consider this to be a speciality of the Bristol factory. Cut-glass is such as you see in Numbers 1 and 7 in the illustration.

Now study Fig. 51 carefully. Number 1 is cut at the lower part of the bowl and on the stem, and I judge it to be about 120 years old because of the width of the foot, and also that it is folded underneath.

Drinking glasses of the 18th and first quarter of the 19th century, have the foot wider than the bowl, a wise precaution in those hard drinking days, when hands were not always steady.

The folded underfoot is also a sign of antiquity, though this is now well understood by "fakers," and the newest possible specimens present this

peculiarity. Number 1 also shows the roughened surface under the foot, showing where the glass was released from the "pontil." After the beginning of the 19th century it became customary to grind down this roughness.

Number 2 is an unusual and beautiful specimen, with a sharply waisted bowl and opaque twisted stem, date probably 1750 to 1760. Number 3 is much more modern and extremely elegant; the stem is partly air-twisted and partly cut, which gives it a singularly brilliant appearance. How beautiful a set of these glasses must have looked in olden days when they showed on the polished mahogany without any intervening cloth. The date of this specimen would be somewhere in the early years of the 19th century. Number 4 is a thistle whisky-glass. This shape was introduced in Scotland about 1780, but judging from shape and touch, I should not fancy this is older than 1810. It is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches high and charmingly cut about the lower part of the thistle. This form has evidently remained a favourite in Scotland, for I had—sent me from there last year—a degenerate successor to the thistle glass, in a species of nickel with the legend inscribed outside, "A wee drappie," the thing being intended as a match-holder.

The big glass in the centre was probably made as a kind of show glass, and put as an ornament on a tavern sideboard, in the same way as we see a gigantic glove or boot displayed in a draper's or



OLD ENGLISH DRINKING GLASSES

(Fig. 51)



TWO SIDES OF A JACOBITE GLASS

(Fig. 52)





shoemaker's window, as an earnest of what is to be found inside.

It is, however, possible that it is really meant for use, for our ancestors of that date were hard drinkers and thought nothing of consuming a whole bottle at a sitting—do we not indeed hear of “three bottle men”?

This is a remarkably handsome glass, standing 10 inches high, the bowl ogee-shaped and the stem (of a somewhat unusual form, made to give strength without clumsiness) has a fine double air-twist.

Number 9 is a beer-glass engraved with convolvulus; each one of the set is differently decorated. They are not old, having been made only in 1840 for a wedding present. Glasses of this capacity and shape seem to us somewhat unsuited to beer, being but small; but they were meant to hold the extremely strong amber-toned ale, which is now not made at all—it was home brewed usually and of a subtle and treacherous strength.

Number 8 is a great treasure; old tumblers seem to have survived the passage of years with difficulty.

I fancy this one is of Bristol make, it has my great-grandmother's initials on it, and its date must therefore be about 1790. The shape as you see is wide and squat, and the base very thick and clumsy compared with the glasses of to-day, whilst the centre of the bottom is hollowed underneath,

something in the manner of the "kick" in a wine bottle. The initials are surrounded by a wreath, which is tied with a true lovers' knot, and that circumstance makes me think it may have been a wedding present, which fixes the date at 1788, but of this I have no proof.

The decoration is both engraved and cut, and besides the band round the top, the whole tumbler is powdered with stars.

Number 10 is one of a set made for the author's great-grandfather on the other side, date 1799. They are very beautiful in make and shape, though absolutely plain and of a remarkable thinness, both as to bowl and stem, nevertheless the set of 12 exists unimpaired.

The bowl when struck emits a most deep and musical sound like a fine church bell and dies away slowly and mournfully. This peculiarity is not, I think, ever found in the glass of the present day.

Very likely these glasses were used as "rummers" for grog or punch and I should hope, considering their size, that a toddy "lifter" was used to deposit only a suitable quantity in these vast glasses.

These curiosities of the past resemble a small wine-glass with a long stem, with a bulb at the end which was pierced with a small hole. The "lifter" was put into the punch bowl, or large glass, and a finger was placed on the end; when full the "lifter" was placed over the small glass

for the lady, the finger removed and the liquor ran out.

The small glass, Number 6, is certainly *not* a drinking-glass, and so has found its place here under false pretences, but I have included it because it is difficult to say *what* it is and it presents to me an unsolved conundrum.

Its height is under two inches, it is decorated spirally and it is most singularly thick. It could only have held (for any purpose) a very small quantity, and after reading Mr Hartshorne's splendid book on glass, it seems to me that perhaps we have here what was known as a "mortar."

This is what he says :

"Mortar glasses were small vessels like salt-cellars, to contain grease and a wick. They served the same purpose as rushlights in Sussex. With the present lack of information as to the appearance of mortar-glasses, such as Mansel made for 1s 4d a dozen, (this is in allusion to an account of Mansel's productions earlier in the book) it is possible that the small circular cups, fluted or plain and with folded edges, now answering the purposes of salt-cellars, may have been originally made as 'mortars.'"

These mortars evidently resembled the night-lights of our youth; at least their purpose was the same, and they were made for the rich of silver. We read that on the fatal 30th of January, King Charles I. had in his room "a great cake

of wax set in a silver bowl, that then as at all times burned all night. This was the king's mortar and it may be remembered, that on rising by its light 2 hours before the day on the morning of the 30th of January he appointed what clothes he would wear. 'Let me have,' he said, 'a shirt on more than ordinary, by reason the season is so sharp, as probably may make me shake, which some observers will imagine proceeds from fear. I would have no such imputation. I fear not death! Death is not terrible to me. I bless my God I am prepared.'"

Did ever glass mortar help to light so pathetic a scene?

My little glass seems to resemble Mr Hartshorne's description; it has the folded edge and the spirally fluted body. If it is not one of these, the only other purpose for which I can imagine its use, is that of a pincushion violet glass, a rather quaint little trifle which was popular at the end of the 18th century.

Number 7 is a Jacobite glass. It shows the rose with two buds emblematic of James II., his son and grandson, but of this variety I shall speak in the next chapter.

Occasionally you meet with small glasses without feet, now rather rare; they are "coaching" glasses, and when the coach drew up to have the horses changed, the inn waiter came out with a tray of these, which sat on their faces, and a bottle of strong waters. Each passenger filled his glass,

drank it off at once and returned it in its former position to the tray.

There are, too, toastmaster's glasses. These were strongly made and small in size, for in those days the toastmaster was expected to drink up the entire glassful to each toast, so it was necessary to have them of small dimensions.

I should like to show you some curious objects that one would least expect to meet with in glass drinking vessels, such as flutes, yard-long drinking glasses, glass boots, etc. But my space is filled and they must be reserved for another opportunity, when I should also like to introduce you to the very attractive coloured glass of Bristol, Nailsea, etc., in which all kinds of strange things were made, even rolling pins and lace bobbins.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### JACOBITE DRINKING GLASSES

OF all the glasses of the 18th century, probably none have so great an interest for us as those which relate to the Jacobites. No matter what our political views on past history may be, it is a cold heart indeed that does not thrill a little, to think of the long drawn out hopes and fears that began immediately after the flight of James II., and continued to rise and to sink through the various vicissitudes of the Stuart fortunes, till their sun set on the melancholy moor of Culloden ; not that the intrepid Jacobites, by any means, admitted that to be the end, far from it. There were other risings contemplated, and most certainly Charles Edward was in London in 1750 or 1751, though the date is not known with absolute certainty.

The fragile objects we are about to study, are naturally associated closely with the Jacobite clubs and societies, which began in 1710 and continued, though in a moribund condition, to 1869, even still surviving (to a certain sentimental degree) in the "Order of the White Rose," the members of which put wreaths of white roses on the statue of

## JACOBITE DRINKING GLASSES 251

King Charles I., and on the tomb of Mary Queen of Scots on various occasions.

I shall speak of these clubs later on, but now let us consider the glasses. It is a moot point whether the Jacobite or the Williamite glasses were the first to appear; probably they arrived almost together, for it is a curious phenomenon how often the same idea strikes several different minds simultaneously.

It is likely that there were but few Williamite and Hanoverian glasses, because their party being in the ascendant and entirely (at any rate outwardly) victorious, it was unnecessary to encourage drooping spirits with these incentives, nor had they clubs of that secret kind which fan the flame of political unrest, such as the Jacobites created and fostered.

Fervour to the cause was doubtless greatly kept alive by these societies and clubs—the convivial meetings and the feeling of personal insecurity, added largely to the loyal and romantic enthusiasm that for so long fed the hopes of the unhappy Stuarts. Whatever the cause, there are very few Williamite glasses.

In the North of Ireland, aggressive anti-Jacobite feeling reigned and to please these hot spirits an extraordinarily coarse toast was composed which ran thus:

“To the glorious, pious and immortal memory of the great and good King William, who freed us from Pope and Popery, knavery and slavery, brass,

money and wooden shoes." There is a great deal more of the same kind and it ends by threatening those who refused to drink the toast, that they should be "damned, crammed and rammed down the great gun of Athlone."

A few glasses were inscribed, "To the glorious memory of King William," being a slight extract from the verbose toast just quoted.

It seems that Williamite glasses did not appear until long after the King was dead, so although there might have been a few isolated examples, there is some reason to suppose that the Jacobites were the first to use these emblematic glasses.

There are but few that allude to the Old Pretender (I use this uncivil term for brevity); one or two are found with his portrait, others with his initials, J. R. There is one in the British Museum without initials, but from the appearance of the portrait, it must be that of the *Old Pretender*; the wig is most curiously depicted, and resembles an old woman's frilled night-cap. The wreath surrounding the bust is of lilies of the valley and thistles; underneath is inscribed, "Cognoscunt me mei" (my own know me), on the opposite side is a crown with another wreath, and at the foot of the wreath, "Premium virtutis" (the reward of virtue).

There is a second one close by which certainly alludes to the *Young Pretender*; there is a good likeness of him in armour, with the hair arranged as it was worn about 1745, a motto "AB obice



Major," allusive to Victory, and a crown, whilst various flags and other military emblems are strewn about. The stem is finely cut, whereas the first one mentioned has a thick opaque twist.

It was not until shortly before and for long after the rising of 1745 that the great efflorescence of Jacobite glasses took place, co-eval, no doubt, with the formation of the secret clubs and societies with which to fan the flame of enthusiasm.

The larger number were undoubtedly made after the rising which ended so calamitously on the fatal field of Culloden, in the execution of the brave and the true on Tower Hill, and the weary wanderings of Bonnie Prince Charlie in the Highlands, like a hare hunted in the mountains, where, but for the devotion of Flora Macdonald and the splendid loyalty of the Highlanders, the poor fugitive, with a heavy price set on his head, must have either starved in those barren regions, or been given up to follow his friends to the scaffold.

It is belonging to the political unrest following this period that we have the largest number of glasses.

The emblems on them are many and varied; the most common is the Stuart rose with two buds, which doubtless points to James II., his son and grandson.

If you look at Number 7 in Fig. 51 you will see these emblems on a glass of the simplest and least incriminating kind.

Some timid spirits had the rose and buds *under* the foot of the glass ; occasionally there is a bird ; the meaning of this is obscure—perhaps it is a poetical allusion to the loyal love which, in imagination, crossed the water to the object of its adoration. Sometimes there is a star, an emblem easy to understand ; sometimes the word, “Fiat” (that it be done), or “Redeat,” or again “Radiat,” in a few cases a forget-me-not, often a thistle, or an oak leaf.

The meaning of these two last is probably that the thistle points to Scottish Jacobites, and the oak leaf to English. Some, however, are of opinion that the oak leaf refers to the escape of King Charles II. after his concealment in the Boscobel oak.

In other specimens we have “Audentior ibo,” which roughly translated seems to encourage the drinker in his views—“I will go more boldly.” Some uncompromising spirits burnt their boats by boldly engraving on their glasses, “God bless the Prince,” etc. And Mr Bate mentions one design of a beautiful conception, representing a stricken tree, with new branches sprouting from it and inscribed “Revirescit.”

The very great variety of designs and the mingling in different ways of the emblems is no doubt due to the fact that the members of the clubs and societies each brought, or at any rate provided, their own glasses.

It is a question *where* the majority of the

incriminating glasses were made. It seems likely that a few only were made at Bristol, and Mr Hartshorne is of opinion that the larger number were made at Newcastle-on-Tyne. This locality was conveniently removed from the seat of government and was near to the Border, so that in case of political "accidents" the makers could destroy all dangerous proofs of their occupation and hastily cross into Scotland.

In Fig. 52 you see represented the two sides of a fine goblet, having on one side a portrait of Bonnie Prince Charlie and on the other a rose and two rosebuds.

In Fig. 61 you see again this glass and next to it a larger one, also with the rose and buds, an oak leaf and a star; in this illustration to the right and left are a pair of wine glasses showing again the star, the emblematic rose and, most interesting of all, the word "Fiat," you will see that to the extreme right of the left hand glass.

The reason for the scarcity of genuine Jacobite glasses is obvious. Their number was always limited and it is probable that not unfrequently, after a convivial meeting, there was some danger feared from the Hanoverian spies and the whole set was broken. Then again—as enthusiasm for the exiled family abated and domestic peace and comfort (sworn foes to rebellious agitation) reigned under the Georgian rule—the tell-tale drinking glasses were considered to be out of place and

seekers after positions and emoluments under the new dynasty were far from desiring to have these reminders of their former sentiments, rising up like unpleasant ghosts before their eyes—hinting perhaps, that they or some near relation had been “out” in the Forty-Five.

A few years ago, eleven glasses of the kind we are now considering, were found at Oxburgh Hall, a splendid old mansion belonging to the Bedingfelds; they are now to be seen at the Victoria and Albert Museum, so that it is easy to study the subject, for those who possess none of their own, and truly if they do, the fine examples to be seen there enable happy possessors to compare, to study, to measure and to gloat generally, after the manner of the true curio lover.

Decanters are not often seen; there are some, however, in the Victoria and Albert collection, and there are two, together with eleven glasses that belong to the Chastleton Manor collection and of which there are photographs in D. Wilmer's instructive book on “Early English Glass.” Chastleton Manor is a house full of historic interest and has never changed owners; it has been in the possession of the Jones family since it was built in the reign of James I.

The subject of Jacobite clubs and secret societies is a fascinating one from its extreme obscurity. It is difficult to find authentic information concerning them, for, being more or less secret, no dangerous records were permitted,

members' names and the hours and place of meetings were veiled in obscurity. The few documents we have only speak of them as ordinary or social clubs with no allusion whatever to politics.

When I was a child I had a passion for the memory of Prince Charlie, fed on "Waverley" and "Redgauntlet," and my father, who was an enthusiastic antiquarian, took me to a dingy house in Tottenham Court Road, and told me that it had once been a Jacobite club. I gazed open mouthed with awe and delight. It was a tobacconist's at that time, and at the door stood a life-sized wooden Highlander. Years ago the old house was pulled down, but the public spirit of Mr Catesby has saved for us the Highlander of our youth, who still takes a pinch of snuff with undiminished dignity at the door of his new home.

When his treasured existence was threatened, Londoners—especially the students of University College Hospital—raised such an "unco' kippage," as Mrs Flockhart says in "Waverley," that a perfect riot was threatened until Mr Catesby stepped into the breach and saved the situation.

Whether it is true, or only an interesting supposition, that this old house once concealed a Jacobite club I cannot say. I am unable to find any proof of the story, but then, from the secret nature of such meetings, it is hardly likely that I should do so.

There must at one time have been a very considerable number of them about the country and I took the following list and extracts from "The Legitimist Kalender" for 1895.

"The Manitoba club, founded 1746, consisting of the descendants of those Jacobites who suffered transportation for their share in the '45.

"Denbigh Wrexham—

"The Cycle of the White Rose, founded 1710—lapsed 1850 or 1860.

"Preston—

"The Oyster and Parched Pea Club, founded about 1771.

"A Jacobite club is said to have existed in London as late as 1846 and in that year to have celebrated the century of the battle of Culloden (April 16, 1746) with a meeting at the Mourning Bush in Aldersgate Street."

The longest lived of all the clubs mentioned above and others not noted here, was "The Cycle of the White Rose," and there are some distinct records of its customs, but nothing that touches upon its political aspect.

I have particulars concerning it from Mr Hartshorne's able book and he received them directly from the fountain head, a descendant of the last lady patroness. There seems little doubt that the word "Fiat" (that it be done) was the password of the club; this is not certainly proved, and it does not appear on the badge, but there is much to lead one to feel sure, that it was

the Cycle word. This is—condensed—what Mr Hartshorne has learned from his patient research.

“This club was founded at Wynnstay on the anniversary of the birthday of the Chevalier of St. George, 10th of June 1710, and its influence appears to have extended throughout the greater part of the disaffected region, in the border counties of England and North Wales.

“The earliest existing list of members is of 1721 preserved at Gwernhayled; the old books, with later names of members and relating to the business of the club, are at Nerquis Hall, Flintshire; they were kept by several members of the Wynne family.

“The ‘Cycle’ appears to have been reconstituted in 1724, when the following rules were drawn up, and in which the political character of the club is of course studiously concealed.”

In Rule 2 we read: “every member obliges himself to have dinner on the table by 12 o’clock at noon from Michaelmas to Lady Day and from Lady Day to Michaelmas at one of the clock,” and under 6: “and there to dine and to determine upon all points relating to, and according to the sense and meaning of these articles.”

There is some hidden meaning here and we feel a wish to get to the bottom of it.

“The gradual change of the ‘Cycle’ from a political to a purely social body, had in fact long been completed in 1780, when the new era was marked by the election of a lady patroness. This

honour, was conferred on Lady Williams Wynne and entailed on her successors, ladies of Wynnstay, and a gold badge or jewel was made, enamelled on both sides in green, 'true blue,' and white, to be worn at Cycle functions.

To the new era also belongs the flat circular button, a little less than an inch in diameter. On the smooth gilt surface is a wreath of oak leaves and acorns, within a dotted border all in relief. As late as 1864 a motion to wear white waistcoats was 'carried.' Of the Cycle coat nothing is recorded.

"In its last character (social) it continued until 1869 when the club was broken up and the jewel given to Lady Williams Wynn."

It was the picturesque habit at the Cycle and other clubs, and also in private houses, for the secretly disaffected to stand on their chairs, with one foot on the table, when the toast of "The King" was given; but they all managed to wave their glasses over a bowl of water, placed on the table, thereby signifying "The King over the water." One recognises the truth of Thornbury's charming old ballad, "The White Rose."

"Then all leap'd up, and join'd their hands  
With hearty clasp and greeting,  
The brimming cups outstretched by all  
Over the wide bowl meeting.  
'A health,' they cried, 'to the witching eyes  
Of Kate, the landlord's daughter,  
But don't forget the white, white Rose  
That grows best over the water.'



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“Then hats flew up, and swords sprang out,  
And lusty rang the chorus,  
‘Never,’ they cried, ‘while Scots are Scots,  
And the broad Firth’s before us.’  
A ruby ring the glasses shine,  
As they toast the landlord’s daughter,  
Because she wore the white, white Rose  
That grows best over the water.”

I must not linger longer on this elusive and fascinating subject, but I may mention that the Cogers’ Club which still exists (though its political significance has long vanished) in Salisbury Square, possessed until late in the 19th century some curious and interesting relics, being the tobacco - bag, snuff - box, pipe, and small oak chest of Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat, who was executed on Tower Hill after the rising of ’45.

The very singular and romantic manner in which these relics came to be in the possession of the Cogers’ Club is most curious, but alas! too long to relate here.

## PART III

### ON THE STUDY OF OLD SILVER, PEWTER, ETC.

THE study of old silver is really very fascinating, and though it needs a great deal of patience and good eyesight, assisted by a strong magnifying glass, it is not really difficult, infinitely easier, indeed, than getting even a superficial understanding either of old furniture, china, or pottery. The reason is simple; in almost all cases silver is dated, as you will find when you come to understand the alphabets. I can only give you the most elementary facts, but hope to interest you so far that you may buy or borrow some standard works on the subject, and gradually acquire enough knowledge to find out the age and birthplace of any piece you or your friends may possess.

The first thing to do is to ask your silversmith to get you the sheets of date letters, and these will give you the first dry bones of research.

There is so much to be studied about the marks on plate that facts, opinions, and controversies relating to it fill hundreds of volumes. It is only possible here to glance slightly at such all-important matters as date letters, makers' names, shapes of shields, etc.

To be as little confusing as possible I will confine my instructions to London silver. When you are a little accustomed to the method of dating from the London alphabets, you will pass easily to those of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dublin, and the various provincial assay towns.

As you probably know, it is compulsory that all silver articles should be stamped at the assay office of the city where they are made, or at that of the chief town in the country.

Several cities have the right of manufacture, and each has its distinguishing mark; these, together with the date letter, varying in each town. The lion, sometimes the sovereign's head, and the maker's initials or mark, constitute the hall marks.

The first beginnings of the Goldsmiths' Company of London were in the reign of Edward I., when we hear that all silver and gold workers in the dominion should be compelled to show their mark to the wardens of the craft. In the reign of Richard II., 1392, they were granted further powers, and their charter was renewed.

In 1462 a further renewal was granted them, and power to use a seal, to possess property in succession, and further powers over the gold and silver workers of the city.

The guild of the goldsmiths is a most powerful and wealthy one even now, and has its hall in Foster Lane, Cheapside. Unfortunately, the original building has long disappeared, and the

present one, built in 1835, is totally devoid of interest from an antiquarian point of view.

The plate enshrined there, however, is truly magnificent, and among other pieces is Queen Elizabeth's coronation cup and a grand ewer by Paul Lamerie.

It is a pity that it is so difficult to get an entrance to these city halls, for in almost all there are numerous most instructive and interesting objects. Without an introduction there is small chance of success; they are like the wicked described in the Psalms, they "keep themselves close."

The rules and regulations of the Company are very voluminous, and give one a good insight into the mercantile restrictions of those days.

I will transcribe a few lines from Cripps' "Old English Plate" :—

"Also it is ordeyned that no goldsmith of England, nor nowhere else within the realm, work no manner of vessel, nor any other thing of gold nor silver, but if it be of the verry alloy according to the standard of England, called sterling money or better."

"That no manner of vessel, or any other thing, be borne out from the hands of the workers, nor sold till it be assayed by the wardens of the craft or their deputy, the assayer ordained therefore, and that it be marked with the Lyperde's head crowned according to the acts of diverse parliaments, and the mark of the maker thereof."

Again, at the end of the rules, we read that nothing should be sold by any goldsmith until he had put his mark upon it, and until it had been assayed, the assayer's mark affixed, and until the warden had stamped the leopard's head crowned.

In accordance with this rule of the powerful guild, every maker was compelled to punch his initials or mark on a leaden table kept for the purpose at Goldsmith's Hall, and they were forced to use that mark, and no other, as their sign on all their silver work.

In very early times, when reading was a rare accomplishment, signs were very generally used, such as are occasionally visible in the city even now. Consequently we find among makers' marks on really antique silver all kinds of emblems and signs, such as a rose, a star, a bird, a half-moon in duplicate, a bell, a lamb, like the Golden Fleece, a grasshopper, a marigold, a fish, a cup, etc.

As education advanced initials were added to the signs, but enclosed in more or less ornamented shields, oval, rectangular, round, three-cornered, etc., but the early pieces have only the emblems. When few could read, what was the use of a name?

These marks, be they signs or initials, often prove most helpful in arriving at the age of a piece when the date letter has been obliterated or, as sometimes happens in small articles especially, entirely omitted. Small spoons frequently have no date letter.

The London marks are as follows:—First, the leopard's head crowned, except as early as 1515, when the head is seen uncovered; sometimes the beast resembles a lion and sometimes a cat, and varies considerably at different dates. After 1822 he is not crowned.

Secondly—The date letter.

Thirdly—The lion passant, which occurs first in 1544 or 1545. We hear of him in an old document of 1597, when two unfortunates, John Moore and Robert Thomas, were put in the pillory and deprived of their ears for "that they did put and counterfeit the marks of her Majesty's lion—the leopard's head, limited by statute, and the alphabetical mark approved by ordinance amongst themselves, which are the private marks of the Goldsmith's Hall."

Fourthly—The sovereign's head, first used in 1784, and continued up to 1890, when it was suppressed. The heads of George III., George IV., and William IV. all looked to the right, but the head of Queen Victoria turned to the left.

From 1697 to 1720 a considerable alteration occurred. It was deemed advisable to raise the standard of silver and to have less alloy in it, and so a new mark was instituted.

The leopard's head and lion passant were removed, and a figure of Britannia and a lion's head erased were substituted—the word *erased* in this sense means torn off, leaving a jagged edge. In 1720, however, these new marks were sup-

pressed, because it was found that the purer silver which was guaranteed by them was too soft for the wear and tear of use, and the old marks were reassumed. You must try to remember these last facts, so that if you find a piece of silver with Britannia on it you may know almost with certainty that it was made between 1697 and 1720. I say almost, because some silversmiths continued to work up to the higher standard for a few years; but very quickly in all cases the marks were as they had been prior to 1697.

As very few of us have silver older than 1716, I will start my remarks on date letters from that period, two years after the accession of George I. Silver of that time is now extremely rare and of considerable value.

Now, concerning the alphabets, kindly refer to the sample letters with dates over them at the conclusion of this little dissertation upon the study of silver.

The alphabets are not always of quite the same length, but in the more modern days they all conclude with U or V.

In 1716 it was of big Roman characters, in 1736, small Roman, in 1756 big black letter, in 1776 small Roman again, in 1796 big Roman, in 1816 small Roman, in 1836 big black letter, after that date being so modern there is no interest in it. The letters are placed upon shields, and these shields are often helpful in determining the age; for instance, in 1796 the alphabet is the same

as in 1716, but the shape of the shield is quite different.

It is very important of keep in mind that the sovereign's head was not put on till 1784, because if you have something with the mark and a big Roman date letter and shield somewhat obliterated you might easily be puzzled to know if it was George I., 1726, or George III., 1806, and the sovereign's head will decide for you—if absent it is George I., if present, George III.

Books on the subject are unfortunately very costly, but if my few hints make you desire to know more, I consider the most useful book of all to be "English Goldsmiths and Their Marks" by C. J. Jackson. Then comes "Old English Plate" by W. Y. Cripps. There is also a magnificent and sumptuous work entitled "Old Silver Work," by J. Starkie Gardiner. All these books are expensive, and not usually found in libraries, but "The Plate Collector's Guide," edited by Percy Macquoid, is very useful, and there are some most excellent articles on the subject by Arthur Butter in the early volumes of *The Connoisseur*. The one dealing with London plate appeared in the very first number, and there are some capital enlarged illustrations of the date letters and marks.

With regard to pewter and Sheffield plate I have given you sufficient hints for its study in the chapters concerning them.



BOOKS TO BE STUDIED

- English Goldsmiths and their  
 Marks - - - - *C. J. Jackson*  
 Old English Plate - - - - *W. J. Cripps*  
 Old Silver Work - - - *J. Starkie Gardiner*  
 \*The Plate Collector's Guide - *Percy Macquoid*  
 Hall Marks on Gold and Silver  
 Plate - - - - *W. Chaffers*  
 Old London Silver - - - - *M. Howard*  
 Old Pewter - - - - *Malcolm Bell*  
 Pewter Plate - - - - *H. J. L. J. Massé*  
 History of the Worshipful Com-  
 pany of Pewterers - - - *Charles Welch*  
 \*Old Sheffield Plate (this is the  
 most useful of all) - - - *W. Sissons*  
 \*Antique Plated Ware - - *Francis Pairpoint*  
 \*Sheffield Plate - - - - *H. N. Veitch*  
 \*Sheffield Plate - - - - *Bertie Wyllie*

*Big Roman*  
1716



*Small Roman*  
1736



*Big Roman*  
1796



*Big Black letter*  
1757



*Big Black letter*  
1767



*Small Roman*  
1816



## CHAPTER XXIX

### A GROUP OF OLD SILVER—PART I

ALMOST everyone has some trifles, even if only one or two spoons, which belong to the silver of the past and which have come to them by inheritance or gift; or perhaps they have been acquired with trembling joy from some curio shop, and it is surely worth while to ascertain with accuracy the age of the venerable possession.

Only last month an American friend of mine—they have always a keen nose for antiques—bought for 4s each some genuine spoons of George II., 1742, and George III., 1798, in the odd-and-end market in Copenhagen Fields. It was indeed a remarkable and glorious find, but I do not by any means recommend that arid spot as a good hunting ground for curios; it is far too keenly swept by the ravening hand of the Jew dealer to leave much for less voracious and experienced seekers; moreover, it is but seldom that anything worth having of any kind is exposed for sale there.

The ground is richly strewn with thousands of old boots, in various stages of decay; frowsy beds that make one shudder to contemplate; reach-me-

down clothes of surprising cheapness ; furniture, brand new, reeking of glue and varnish ; old chairs without legs ; bedsteads without lathes ; spectacles without glasses ; teapots without lids, and a variety of other things, the uses of which baffle the ordinary understanding.

Who buys these apparently useless articles? Someone assuredly, or they would not be there.

I have been there scores of times, but only once picked up a bargain. It was a Dutch brass kettle and spirit stand of extremely handsome design ; it had fortunately a hole in the bottom, so the housewives of the district despised it, and I was for once fortunate in being beforehand with the Jews.

To return to silver—spoons were in use from very early times, but they were of a fairly large size, and among the oldest are those fitted with a knife and made to fold up and carry on the person as a sufficient table equipment. When invited to dinner, except in very lordly mansions, the guest took his knife and spoon, exactly as a Sunday School child takes his mug to a country treat.

We hear very early in wills and other documents of spoons with seals, maidens' heads and apostles on them. These are now of great rarity and value. The Goldsmith's Company owns a complete set, the 12 Apostles and 1 representing Our Lord. Complete sets of these spoons do not seem to have been made after the middle of

the 17th century, but single examples were still common, ordered as christening presents.

Tea-spoons did not become general until quite the end of the 17th and beginning of the 18th century, when tea and coffee were general, in the houses of the rich, and even then probably they were few and precious.

One meets sometimes with quite small spoons of early Jacobean date, but it is likely that these were pap-spoons.

Forks were but very little used till quite the middle of the 17th century and then but sparingly. They were at that time 2-pronged and sometimes 3-pronged. Sometimes a fork and spoon were produced to use together; that is the handle belonged to the fork, and there was a spoon bowl which fitted on to the prongs of the fork, so that the implement was made to serve a double purpose. Solomon truly knew his world when he said there was nothing new under the sun. I have lately been presented with the latest and most up-to-date travelling knife, spoon and fork arranged something on this old-world principle.

Forks were still 3-pronged and sometimes 2-pronged—of steel generally—in the early 19th century, in old-fashioned and simple households. We have most of us read our “Cranford” and the account of the old lady’s visit to the bachelor farmer:—

“When the ducks and green peas came, we looked at each other in dismay; we had only

two-pronged, black-handled forks. It is true the steel was as bright as silver; but what were we to do? Miss Matty picked up her peas one by one, on the point of the prongs, much as Aminé ate her grains of rice, after her previous feast with the ghoul. Miss Pole sighed over her delicate young peas, as she left them on one side of her plate untasted, for they *would* drop between the prongs. I looked at my host; the peas were going wholesale into his capacious mouth, shovelled up by his large, round-ended knife. I saw, I imitated, I survived!"

I have a hazy recollection of seeing in my grandfather's house a set of knives with circular ends and green handles, which I was told were for eating peas, and like the lady above, I wondered how they were to be safely scooped up and conveyed to their destination.

There is a kind of rare spoon one occasionally sees, the uses of which puzzle the experts, though I think they generally consider them to be teapot spoons. They are—as to the bowl—teaspoons, but this bowl is perforated, presumably, for pouring the tea through so as to keep the beverage clear of small leaves. The handle is very long and quite straight, like a silver skewer, with a pointed end; it is thought that this may have been used to clear the spout of obstructing tea-leaves. Mr Jackson, however, is of opinion that there is quite as much likelihood that they may have been punch or toddy spoons, the liquid

being poured through the perforated bowls, which would catch the pips, and the skewer-like handle used to impale and remove the slices of lemon.

Tea-spoons interest us all, and it is remarkable considering their fragility, how many of very considerable age still remain to us.

I possess 3 of a set extremely dainty and elegant, but with no date letter. I know they cannot be older than 1784, for they show the sovereign's head, first put on in that year, and there is no mark to denote in which city they were made; simply the lion passant, the sovereign's head and R.F. which is the makers' mark. It is often the case with spoons and other very small articles that the marks are few.

Tea-caddy spoons are charming spoons, and it is nice to make a collection of them, combined, perhaps, with sugar-tongs. With patience and perseverance, it can be done without the expenditure of much cash. Caddy spoons, or ladles as some call them, vary greatly in shape. I have one, the bowl broad and squat (date 1794) with very delicate engraving on the handle and in the centre of the bowl surrounding a heart. I like to think this was a sweetheart's gift, it has my great-grandmother's initials on it, but I am not sure which side of the family it came from.

One favourite form in caddy spoons was a cockleshell, another a leaf, a little later on a jockey cap, and a coal or grocer's scoop. Some-

times the handles are wood, sometimes ivory, but more generally silver.

There is the finest possible collection of spoons of all sorts and kinds, at the Victoria and Albert Museum given by Mr FitzHenry, and till one has thoroughly studied it, the immense variety there is in English spoons alone, has never struck home to one's intelligence.

Sugar-tongs are often not marked at all; the reason for this I am unable to say—perhaps being fragile things and subjected to a good deal of strain, they have been often mended and so caused the obliteration of the marks.

I possess an old pair, in the form of scissors entirely unmarked—it has always been wedded to the sugar basin you see in Fig. 53, the date of which is somewhat uncertain and of which I shall speak presently. I gather, therefore, that the tongs are of the same age.

Some tongs simulate long-beaked birds, such as the crane; this shape and those like scissors were fashionable towards the end of the 18th century.

There seems to me always a peculiar charm about any curio connected with the tea-table, because we know, how, in those far-off days, our forbears must have sat round the little "pie crust" tables, with joy and sorrow in their hearts—just as we do now—human nature does not greatly alter.

The early days of tea drinking in England were stirring times. Think of the conversation over

the teacups in 1714, when Queen Anne died and the hopes of the Jacobites rose high ; then in 1715, what talk there must have been about the ill-omened attempt to reinstate the Stuarts on the throne, followed in 1716 by the execution of the gallant leaders, and the Lords Derwentwater and Kenmure and the remarkable escape of Lord Nithsdale—also ordered for execution—in his devoted wife's clothes.

Thirty years later, too, tongues must have wagged freely over the last hopeless Jacobite effort of '45, when Bonnie Prince Charlie's star set for ever on the bleak moor of Culloden.

Can we not imagine dainty Jacobite fingers handling my scissor-shaped tongs, their owner compelling them to be steady, whilst the fate of some dearly, but secretly beloved one—perhaps a fugitive from Culloden — was discussed by unfriendly lips.

Then let us make a jump over some years and imagine the breathless interest with which the tea drinkers of 1793 and 94 listened to the hideous tales of the French Revolution, related by some sad eyed *émigré*, who had made his escape to our friendly shores.

My great-grandmother was in Paris during that time and owed her life to the fact that the death tumbrel that fetched her and other victims from the prison to the guillotine, was too full to give her even standing room. She stepped back, on being told to wait for the next tumbrel and



during that short wait, Robespierre was dead, and and the counter-Revolution had set in.

That lady was the owner of the sugar basin and as I imagine also of the tongs and caddy spoon.

To come down still later, I fancy the little shovel-shaped caddy or the jockey cap, in the autumn after Waterloo being handled perhaps by Becky Sharp, or the exasperating Amelia, whilst conversation went briskly on, about the attempt to leave Brussels, after the memorable ball at the Duchess of Richmond's, or perhaps some silent tea drinker was full of sad reminiscences of the loved and lost on the cornfields of Waterloo, or in the blood-stained courtyard of Hougoumont.

In Fig. 53 the teapot is very elegant, eight sided and with a straight spout, not so old as some of the other pieces, but still of a respectable antiquity—1792 its date letter tells us, was the year of its birth and being later than 1748 it shows the sovereign's head.

The coffee-pot on the right is a particularly handsome one, with lions' paws forming the feet and their masks just above. This piece is much older, 1744 is its date. The form of the lid and the little pineapple for a knob, are typical of the period.

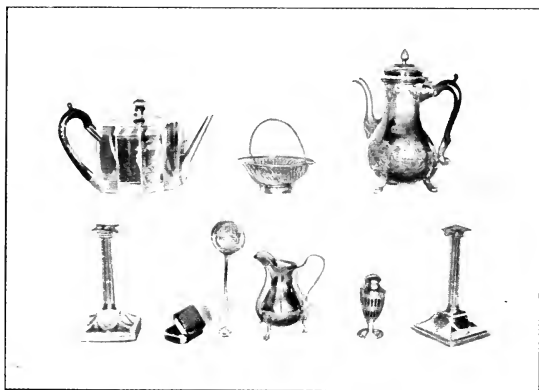
The sugar basin is a Dublin piece and has the mark of a harp crowned and the figure of Hibernia; this last was put on in 1730. The date letter is entirely effaced and the only clue to its age is the fact that the crowned harp is enclosed in a punch, which corresponds with its

shape. This was not the case according to Mr Cripps after 1785, so the piece must have been made between 30 and 85. From its appearance I should not take it to have been made earlier than 1775.

The cream jug is considerably older, as its shape and style denotes. Its date is 1732, the letter being big Roman in a square shield slightly pointed at the bottom; I explained this in my few remarks on the "study of old silver.

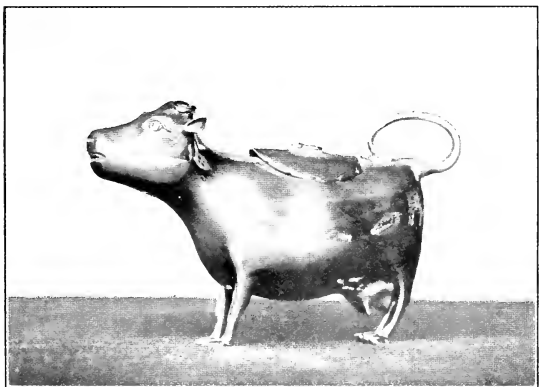
The candlesticks made at Sheffield in 1775, are good examples and are in good preservation after their 147 years of faithful service. A crown is the Sheffield city mark instead of the leopard's head of London. The old snuff-box is very old, but the marks are entirely gone. I fancy I can make out a thistle, which is one of the Edinburgh marks after 1759, but I confess it is perhaps because I wish to find it.

The marks were on the part upon which the lid closes, and constant friction has demolished them. I only know it belonged to my great grandfather and perhaps to his father before him and they came from Scotland. The sugar sifter next to it is of 1777, the marks distinct and good—lion passant and date letter. Lastly the muffineer—it is of Birmingham make, and carries the mark of the city, an anchor and date letter for 1780. It is as you see somewhat in the style of the sugar basin and they are both, I should think, of nearly the same age.



SILVER OF VARIOUS DATES

(Fig. 53)



COW CREAM JUG

(Fig. 54)



## CHAPTER XXX

### A GROUP OF OLD SILVER—PART II

IN Fig. 54 I am fortunate in being able, through the kindness of the owner, to show you a most rare and perfect cow cream ewer, 139 years old ; a great age for so slight a thing, as is this quaintly shaped little jug.

Its date letter declares its birth to have occurred in 1783 and though we may sometimes, but not often, meet with older pieces in private collections, the astonishing thing is the perfect condition of this specimen, even the delicate hinges to the little lid, have stood the wear and tear of 139 years. The cream was poured in through this lid, which is turned back by taking hold of a fly of elephantine proportions, seen in the middle.

This fly in real life would be about one-fifth the length of the whole head.

Its irritating attacks account, perhaps, for the bellow which is evidently proceeding from the cow's open mouth, and for the agitated twist of her tail. Observe how curiously she is poised on her four clumsy and ill-balanced legs ; the centre of gravity seems a little deranged, and it looks as

if the slightest touch would knock her suddenly backwards in a sitting position.

These cow cream ewers—especially those with a fly—are much valued, and when by happy chance one appears in the auction room, it realises a distinctly high price.

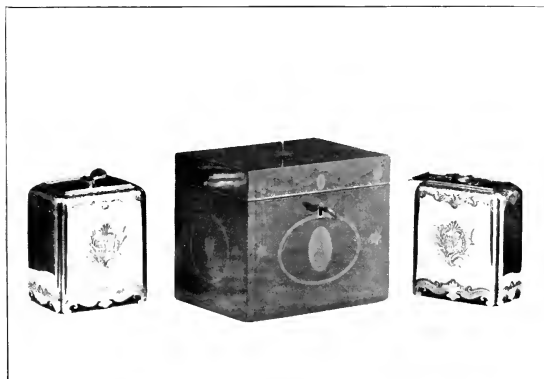
The tea-caddy, Fig. 55, shows the effect of what is now called the Adam influence. The Adam brothers were really architects, but they also turned their attention to designs for cabinet-making, chair-making and silver articles, anything indeed that had to do with the exterior and interior of the house, and we often meet with delightful trifles that sprang—if not from their brains—at least they were from their inspiration.

They built the stately Portland Place and Stratford Place and the Adelphi, and if you study the ceilings and decorations of these houses, you will see how they resemble the ornamentation of this caddy, though the characteristic husk festoons are lacking in this instance. This is probably because in 1791, the date of its making, the Adam influence was waning and new stars were rising on the horizon. Robert Adam, the most celebrated of the brothers, died in 1792 and Flaxman's and Sheraton's tastes were beginning to gain ascendancy.

As you see the caddy is oval; it is curious to note how from about 1770 to 1800, everything in decoration in furniture, china, silver, etc., all inclined to the oval form. The Adam brothers



SILVER TEA CADDY  
(Fig. 55)



A PUZZLING TEA CADDY  
(Fig. 56)





revelled in the oval shapes, as we can see in their charming ceilings and panels.

Fig. 56 represents an extremely uncommon caddy box and two silver cases for the tea. The whole thing represents something of a problem—they do not belong to me, but to a friend, who is unaware of their history, and I intend to ask permission to show them to a circle of experts, to settle if possible who made them.

They are entirely unmarked, at least so far as I can see, and this in itself is a most singular fact. We can only trace them back with certainty to 1780, but what is of extreme interest is, that the silver boxes are almost identical with a pair made by the great Paul Lamarie.

Paul Lamarie was one of a number of French silversmiths who settled in England to escape religious persecution in France.

He lived in Windmill Street and registered his name at Goldsmiths' Hall in 1712. He died in 1751, but he had been a close and continual worker, and during that time he made an immense number of beautiful pieces with his own hands. It appears that he worked for other goldsmiths, and had no separate shop of his own. He usually marked very plainly every piece that left his hands with P.L. within an oblong shield and with a crown above.

If I am right in thinking that these beautiful specimens are the work of this great craftsman, they must be of very great value, for examples of

Paul Lamerie's work are hard to find, but where is the mark? I cannot think I have overlooked it, and the astonishing thing is, that there is no mark of any kind, not even the lion. I do not think that the enclosing box is of the same date as the silver canisters; probably the original one became shabby or spoilt. The present one, extremely beautiful and delicate, might well be an early Sheraton piece of work; it has all the elaborate inlay so characteristic of his best work. The whole thing we know to have been in its present home for over 130 years, but beyond that we cannot trace its history.

In Fig. 57 you see a punch ladle and pap-boat; the ladle has a wooden handle which is somewhat unusual, the material used more often being whalebone; it has also a Queen Anne gold coin in the bowl. These punch ladles naturally accompanied the punch-bowl, a most important part of table equipment in the late 17th and in the 18th century, and even into the first quarter of the 19th.

To make good punch was considered a necessary and important accomplishment, and all good housewives had their favourite receipt for the concoction.

Sometimes in semi-public societies like our city companies you may see "Menteiths," but they are somewhat uncommon. They are really punch bowls, with the top edge serrated in such a manner that the toddy glasses can be slipped into the open spaces, their stems resting in the

notches and their bowls hanging down. The name came from an eccentric Scot of the name of Menteith, who wore his coat notched or scalloped round the edge.

The pap-boat in Fig. 57 is a very unusual and desirable possession, dated 1757. How many little ones in succeeding generations must have been fed from this pretty little thing. Its owner told me she always had her breakfast out of it in old days. She also owns several tiny silver saucepans deemed quite a necessity in "genteel" circles in the 18th century. Many items of food, and especially drink, were considered to be ruined if not cooked in silver vessels.

I should have liked to show you some examples of pomanders and vinaigrettes, but have no further room for illustrations. Pomanders, alas! one sees but very seldom. Where can they all have gone to? For nearly two hundred years few ladies of "quality" were without one, and yet they have almost vanished from our sight.

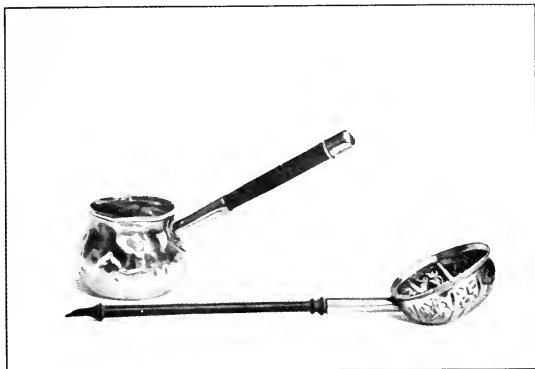
They were usually round or egg-shaped and were often so constructed that when opened they showed 4 or 6 little compartments, shaped like the quarters of an orange, and fell back on the hand like an open rose. Enclosed in each division was a paste of various deliciously scented aromatic gums, which had been pounded and blended together with wax. The pomander was carried on a chain round the neck or hung from a chatelaine.

They were in general use throughout the 16th

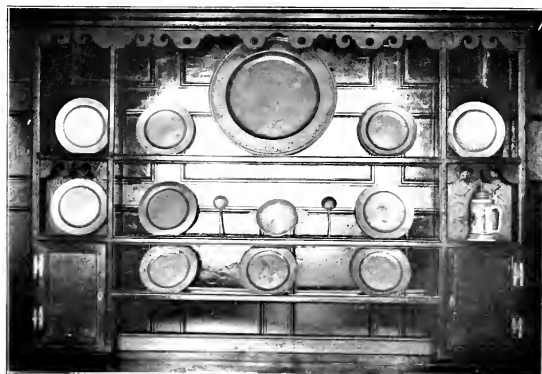
and 17th centuries, when they were regarded as a specific against the plague and noxious odours, and the fashion extended quite to the middle of the 18th century, dying out slowly at the last quarter.

In the pomander age it was quite a point of good breeding to be capable of fainting or "swooning," which was the correct expression, upon all suitable occasions, and should the arms or shoulders of an eligible admirer be handy at the moment, so much the better, and the swoon was continued till the distracted lover had tried every means—including the most endearing epithets addressed to the invalid—and more practical helpers had applied burnt feathers to the delicate nose of the sufferer.

Lovers of Scott's novels, which give us so correct an insight into the past, will recall several occasions when the heroines, at the most unpropitious moments, abandoned themselves to the luxury of a swoon. Edith Bellenden in "Old Mortality" was a past mistress in the art; on the first occasion, she had the temerity to sink upon the chair once honoured (as her grandmother frequently informed her friends and neighbours) by supporting the revered weight "of his most Sacred Majesty King Charles, when he took his *disjune* at Tillietudlem." We read: "Her complexion became instantly as pale as a corpse, her respiration so difficult that it was on the point of stopping altogether, and her limbs so incapable



PUNCH LADLE AND PAP BOAT  
(Fig. 57)



OLD PEWTER  
(Fig. 58)



of supporting her that she sank, rather than sat down. Jennie tried cold water, burnt feathers, cutting of laces and all other remedies usual in hysterical cases, but without immediate effect." We further learn that the astute waiting-maid was much alarmed, not at the prolonged symptoms, but at her young mistress' temerity in occupying the Royal armchair. "What if my leddy comes, and sitting in the throne too that naebody has sat in since that weary morning the King was here!"

I picture that armchair the counterpart of the one in Fig. 3.

The second occasion Edith chose for a similar display was even better chosen; it was on the eve of her wedding, and her former lover passed by the window. The effect was disastrous. "As she spoke she slowly raised her eyes to the latticed window of her apartment, which was partly open, uttered a dismal shriek, and fainted."

After all, there was method in her arrangements, for if she had not uttered the dismal shriek the lover might never have known that she was behind the window "partly open," and the romance would not have ended in so satisfactory a manner, with the right and appropriate wedding bells.

We are not told if this emotional lady carried a pomander, but I feel certain she did, just as the heroines of Miss Austen's novels carried vinaigrettes in their reticules, to be ready for all emergencies.

These pretty little trifles flourished from the end of the 18th century to about 1840. They were coeval with the reticule, which was really a very useless article; too small to hold anything substantial, it would just contain a housewife, the keys when at home, a vinaigrette (it would be dangerous to stir without that), sometimes a nutmeg-grater, tablets, and if a day was to be spent with friends, probably a tatting shuttle. I have one of these flimsy receptacles, made I should think about 1820; it seems to be constructed of cardboard, covered with scarlet leather, and lined with lemon-coloured satin; the handles also of leather.

Those were days when sandalled shoes were worn even out of doors—evidently walking was not “genteel.”

What strange difference 80 or 100 years makes in our habits and conditions; how ill-equipped we should now feel for a walk in the country with sandalled shoes, a low-necked dress, supplemented with a meagre silk or fur pelerine, according to the season, and oppressed with a reticule holding a vinaigrette and nutmeg-grater.

The shape of vinaigrettes varied greatly. I remember my mother had one in the form of a fish, which I was sometimes allowed to play with as a rare treat when my conduct had been unusually meritorious. It was quite flexible, and by turning back the head a grating discovered itself



across the throat, and of course behind the grating the refreshing vinegar.

Another of gold pretends to be a little notebook, with tiny flap and tongue. I have a third, which must, I think, be an early one, though from its shape it should perhaps rather be called a scent-bottle. It has the usual grating, and is very tiny, perfectly round, and made of turquoise glass, the height, including the silver stopper, being only an inch and a half.

Another small pocket companion was the nutmeg-grater, without which our grandmothers felt inadequately furnished. They are of all shapes, the most usual resembling (on a small scale) the penny grater of to-day.

A collection of either of these pretty little remembrances of the past may be made with little cost, and the hunting for specimens makes an object for walks in London or in provincial towns, these last being the best field for operations.

I have not said anything about magnificent pieces of plate, which are never likely to find their way into our domestic circle, and if you wish to study them there are plenty of splendid books devoted to the cult of these fine examples, and I greatly hope that our little gossips together about our "Antiques and Curios" may have whetted your appetites for more serious study.

Before closing this chapter, I must tell you of a splendid example we had in our family when I was a child, one which would indeed have ranked

as an extraordinarily valuable museum piece. Alas! I fear it has long since perished in the melting pot.

It was no less than a Queen Anne teapot, given to an ancestress of mine by the Queen herself. I was very young when it was stolen, but I have a fairly accurate recollection, I think, of its appearance, because (it being very small) we children were allowed sometimes to make tea in it for our dolls, as a great treat.

The thing I loved in it was a tiny kind of stopper to the spout, which was attached to the teapot near the lid by a Lilliputian chain. The pot was not larger than a medium-sized Spanish onion, quite globular and absolutely plain.

I cannot be positively sure of the exact words of the inscription, but as far as my memory serves me it ran thus—"To my deare waiting woman, Audrey Greene," and underneath, "Anna R."

It was known that a member of our family had been about Queen Anne's Court, but we have no records as to her exact position there; I wonder whether she was there as a subordinate under the iron thumb of the redoubtable Sarah?

It was stolen—the only thing of value—by some petty thieves and in those days they did not know the art of disposing of heirlooms across the sea, so I feel sure it no longer exists.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### OLD PEWTER

THOSE of my readers who have any genuine old pewter plate are to be congratulated, for it is now difficult to find, if truly old and in good preservation, the reason of its scarceness being in great measure that it is a soft metal easily bent and broken, and in past days the custom was to melt down all damaged pewter and re-mould it. This practice (especially carried on by travelling tinkers and pewterers, against whom the guilds waged perpetual war) has caused a dearth of really old pewter, and all made before the end of the 17th century commands high prices on sale.

Until one realises the fact of the perishable nature of pewter and the continual re-melting and making, it seems a puzzle what can have become of the vast quantities made, for in olden times many things—perhaps one may say most things—now made of crockery, tin and enamel, were then made of pewter, but the extreme ease with which battered, bent and broken utensils were turned into new and uninjured articles, makes the finding of old specimens a much greater difficulty than

it would be, if this easy solution of the "new lamps for old" problem had not been discovered.

It is comparatively lately that through such invaluable books as Mr Masse's and Mr Welch's, we have been enabled to study the rise, progress and fall of pewter, and to have a few glimmering lights thrown on our ignorance. Unfortunately these books are expensive and not easy to find in ordinary libraries, but they afford a rich study to those interested in the subject.

Not long ago there was an immensely interesting collection of pewter on view at Clifford's Inn and one saw there specimens very seldom met with.

The uses to which pewter was put were manifold, from mortuary wrappings to hair pins and communion tokens. There are still large numbers of pepper-pots to be found and also saltcellars and ink-pots, probably because these articles being small and light they were not so liable to be wrenched and broken; there are still candlesticks to be found, but not in quantities, and spoons (if genuine) are very scarce.

My readers are not likely to possess any specimen older than the 18th century, and should any be tempted to start a small collection you will be very unlikely to pick up anything older than about 1715, and even of that date, pieces are soon snapped up, if exposed for sale.

The larger number of pieces I have seen are not older than 1730.

There is, I think, nothing more consistently manufactured new and sold for old than pewter; this industry is industriously carried on abroad, though its home is not known with certainty. One may generally find spurious but most artistic pieces, encrusted with (apparently) the dirt of ages, in the old clothes and bric-à-brac markets held on the stones in the old squares of Rome, Florence Brussels, etc.

It is therefore necessary for a buyer to be very wary and study the subject carefully before venturing among these extremely attractive corners. My few notes, however, are mainly for those who already possess a few interesting curios, and not knowing much about them, want some simple hints.

Most British pewter is marked with a full-blown rose—a Tudor rose, it is called—having a crown above. The meaning of this mark is a little obscure, but is considered by experts to have been a license mark and also probably the mark of the London Company. However, we find it also on Scotch pewter, with the addition of “Edinburgh,” and even on Flemish ware, though in a slightly different form.

There is also the pewterer’s private “touch,” as it was called, and sundry small marks in imitation of silver hall marks, but no date letter.

The letter X is often found, and this denotes extra good metal.

There is a notice under the year 1697 in the

London Company's rules that "none may strike the letter X except upon extraordinary ware, commonly called *hard mettle ware*."

The rules of all companies were much alike, and one of importance was that every pewterer, whether belonging to a company or not, was required to adopt some sign as his special mark, which mark he was compelled to punch on a sheet of lead, kept for the purpose at all the companies' halls.

Had all these touch-plates and the dated records concerning them been kept, we should have had little difficulty in dating the greater number of pieces, but unfortunately in many instances they have been lost, and in London nearly all touch plates and records prior to the great fire in 1666 were consumed.

We can therefore only judge the age of older specimens and many of later date by their style, shape and use, and it is often a matter of conjecture only, aided by constant study and experience.

The Hall and Company of the Pewterers still exist in the city, but in a very different style to that of past times; they have no jurisdiction over the pewterers of to-day, who can make good or bad pewter at their own sweet will without "the leave of none!" If you have the opportunity of studying the "History of the Pewterers' Company," by Charles Welch, you will find it fascinating reading, because he transcribes for us

so many interesting and quaint items from their rules and accounts.

The Company possesses a number of audit-books, dating from 1451 to our own time, which give us all kinds of instructive and certainly very amusing information. In the brave old days the strictest watch was kept by the wardens, and they had power to enter pewterers' premises all over the country and impound bad metal.

Pewter is made from tin, copper, sometimes antimony is used, and lead, in differing proportions; the worse the pewter the more lead, the better the pewter the more tin.

Naturally unscrupulous makers endeavoured to increase their profits by using too much alloy and making the metal of different proportions to those allowed.

In the rules of the Company there were two recognised standards: (1) Vessels of fine pewter, which was tin and brass in certain proportions, but these proportions not clearly stated, Mr Welch says, because he opines it was probably a trade secret; and (2) Vessels of tin, to which 26 lbs. of lead was permitted to each hundredweight of tin.

Under date 1351, Mr Welch gives us an extract, which shows how justice overtook the fraudulent makers:—

“On Monday next, after the feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul, measures called ‘potels’ and 20 saltcellars of pewter were brought before

Walter Tusk, the mayor, and the aldermen, by the men of the trade of pewterers, who said that the potels and saltcellars aforesaid were false, and made of false metal by John de Hiltone, "peautrer," here present in court, in deceit of the people, and to the disgrace of the whole trade. And the said John de Hiltone acknowledged that he had made the vessels aforesaid; and that it might be known whether the same vessels were of good and befitting metal or not order was given to William de Greyngam, serjeant, to summon forthwith before the mayor and aldermen Arnold de Shypwaysse, Nicholas de Ludgate, etc., wardens of the articles of the trade of pewterers, that they might certify the mayor and aldermen as to the genuineness or falsity of the make of the vessels aforesaid. Who being sworn after viewing the vessels aforesaid said upon oath that the greater part of the metal of which the aforesaid potels and saltcellars was made was lead; whereas to one hundredweight of 112 pounds of tin there ought to be added no more than 16 pounds of lead. It was therefore adjudged that the said vessels should be forfeited to the use of the commonalty."

Beyond their commercial work the manners and behaviour of all were closely scrutinized. Thus we read that an apprentice had "unseemly hair," which was at once commanded "to be cut off"!



What would an apprentice of to-day think of such drastic measures?

Under the year 1628 we read:—

“On 30th April Richard Duxell was expelled from the court of assistants and the livery, having by the instigation of the divell committed a most notorious and hainous offence against Almighty God, and criminall against the lawes of this kingdome.”

I would fain quote more largely from this delightful book for those who cannot see the original, but must content myself with only two or three more.

In 1658 we read:—

“An order to be prepared against the next court for any women that use any uncivill language, or wilfully take place of there seniors at the table, there husbands to pay 10s.”

Considering the value of money at that time, this meant a fairly heavy fine of £6 or so.

At the time of the great plague in 1665 and the fire in 1666, we have all kinds of interesting items—two succeeding masters died of the plague in three days on October the 16th and 19th. No mention of the fire occurs till the 18th of September, 1666, when a meeting is mentioned as “being the first meeting after ye ffire,” and “since it hath pleased God to destroy ye said hall by ffire soe that at this time ye company are destitute of a place to meet in, as well as ye beadle of a habitacon, it was agreed that w<sup>th</sup> w<sup>t</sup> speed might be a

place might be prepared for their said meetings, wch might alsoe be convenient for to lay ye writings and books of ye company, and likewise for ye beadles being."

The hall was at once rebuilt in Lime Street, and there are further curious records relating to the difficulty of purchasing building materials, easily understood, seeing that the whole city was building at once.

At some gathering such as we now call a committee meeting they "impowered ye Mr Yt if a pennyworth of tymber, or any other matteriall of building come to his hands, or can hear on, for to agree contract for and buy ye same."

Then as furnishing commenced we have the following: "Paid Mr Young for twenty-four Turk work chayres kivering two forms for ye new parlor and mending ye bannrs."

Now as to the manufacture of pewter, it is made now in the same manner as it was formerly. It is cast and hammered; it is finished sometimes with a lathe, when you see some slight rings round the piece, and sometimes by hand. The hammering was very important, giving consistency to the metal and to a certain extent counteracting its original softness.

Moulds were used, and these being very costly things, in early times they belonged to the guilds and were "lent out" to the craftsmen.

In the records so patiently deciphered for us by Mr Welch, we read of many articles that

require some thought before we can see daylight, through the quaint spelling, and involved phrases guiltless of punctuation.

Here is a specimen list of moulds bought in 1425.

- I Holow Scharyder
- I C plat molde
- I C dysche molde
- I C Sawsyr molde
- I Holow dysche molde
- I Qware bolle molde
- I Trechor molde
- I Salydysche molde
- I Salsawsyr molde etc.

The first remains an enigma to me—what can a “Scharyder” be?

I have found it a useful plan, when trying to read old manuscripts, to try pronouncing them *quickly* in all sorts of ways and sometimes the meaning “jumps to the eyes,” as our French friends say. For instance at first “Senterbones” conveys no idea to us, but tried in this way, we find it resolves itself into “St. Albans,” as you will see if you read that delightful book, “The Verney Memoirs,” so full of information as to domestic and social life in the 17th century.

This plan, however, has given me no satisfactory result with “Scharyder,” nor does the author offer any suggestions. The “holow dysche” and “Sawsyr molde” explain themselves, but we are again brought up against a dead wall by

“Salydysche,” “Salysawsyr,” and by “Trechor molde.”

Can “trechor” mean trencher? that again presents difficulties, for a trencher is a kind of plate, and would not be made in a mould, moreover I fancy at that early date trenchers were simply pieces of wood. These lasted (in very conservative institutions) almost to our own times, as in the Bluecoat School, certainly up to 1815 at which date my grandfather told me he had used them.

The “Quare bolle molde” is also somewhat cryptic, but I think possibly it is strange spelling of “Quaigh bowl molde,” of which more anon.

Then we read of a “broad border dishe,” a “banquitin dische,” a “great trensher plaite”—this last I think probably referred to some dish for the joint, not to a plate as we understand the term, and a “lardg and one less biskitt plate.”

To hear of biscuits in those far-off days is a surprise.

“A pye coffin” is what we now call a pie-dish and I was at first puzzled by *beyondseewarre* which means, ware to be sent abroad.

You see in my illustration, Fig. 58, a portion of what was called a “garnish.” With the exception of the Quaigh in the centre of the lowest shelf and the tankard, which are both mine, the whole belongs to a friend and looks beautiful on the old Welsh dresser which is its home, the dark and sombre wood shows up so well the

subdued and softened silvery lights so peculiar to pewter, so different to the effect of copper, brass and silver, which take every reflection.

An entire garnish consisted of twelve platters, twelve dishes and twelve saucers. In 1487 we hear of the will of a lady of quality in which she bequeathed "a whole garnish of peautre."

The dish in the middle of Fig. 58 is valuable, for it is difficult to find genuine specimens so large, the reason being that their weight made them more easily broken and bent, so that they were recast in smaller sizes. This one measures 22 inches across, and seems to answer the description of the "broad border dishe" or the "banquitten dishe."

On the front of the rim are three letters on shields, "P.W.M." There are besides two deeply scratched capitals, "W.B," which I should guess to be the initials of the first possessor. On the reverse side of the rim is a small lion rampant five times repeated and no other mark, not even the crowned rose.

As to its date, there is little to go on beyond the shape of the rim, which is slightly raised. I judge it to have been made not earlier than 1750.

The other plates are all in date somewhere between 1680 and 1760, which leaves one rather a wide margin; one of them must be over 150 years old, for it was made (according to his touch) by John Holmes, who was working from 1749. It bears his "touch" of a lion rampant and birds.

The one on the top shelf to the left is Stephen Cox's work and has his "touch" of a squirrel, or some such beast on its haunches by a sheaf of corn—no date known, but apparently about the same date as the last. Both show the X signifying superior metal.

The two big plates on the second shelf, I should think, are later in date. They show a crowned rose with what is called "feather mantling" at the sides, a kind of spreading plume in appearance. The others are much the same in age, but there is nothing to settle the question definitely.

The spoons are great treasures, as from their comparative fragility and the rough usage to which they must often have been subjected, spoons are scarce. There is nothing to indicate date here, except the shape of the bowls and the rough six-sided handles. Probably they were made between 1680 and 1700—they have a crowned rose at the root of the handles.

The tankard is modern, it was bought at a corner of the picturesque Burgweg in Heidelberg, and is the usual style of student's tankard; it is, however, of elegant design and the lid is of fine pewter.

Ancient tankards are difficult to get, because the constant pull of the thumb on the lid soon twisted it out of shape and the cup was re-cast. The men who made tankard lids and other small pieces, were called "triflers" and it was a special branch of the art.

Now notice the quaigh between the two spoons. These quaighs are rare, and when found are so often minus the ears. When small, they were used for milk, and the larger ones for porridge.

This one came from Mont St Michael in France where I also saw some fine coffin discs.

As I mentioned before, pewter was used for peculiar purposes, one of which was the making of discs to bury with people of any distinction, especially they were used in priests' graves, and the name or the initials of the deceased and his age were inscribed upon them, after the fashion of our coffin plates.

I have seen two belonging to two successive abbots of the monastery at Mont St Michael. Occasionally pewter chalices are found, which have been buried in priests' coffins or in the leaden wrappings which answered that purpose.

The heart of the mighty Cœur de Lion was wrapped in pewter and found thus in Rouen in 1838.

In the Royal Berks Hospital, they still have in use a set of bleeding-bowls; the shape is much the same as that of the quaigh, but without ears and having a straight handle like a saucepan. Inside are graduated lines for measuring the fluid.

Communion plate is occasionally found of pewter but it is rare, because in the 13th century, it was forbidden to be used in England, as not being sufficiently precious for the purpose, but later the injunction was removed in favour of poor communities.

In Scotland one meets with the "tappit hens" now very rare and proportionately prized. They are, or should be found, in sets of three, and Mr Massé is of opinion that this singular name came from a breed of fowls with crested heads. The shape is peculiar, broad at the bottom, less broad at the top and tapering off in the middle, whilst the lid when provided with a knob, may have suggested the "tappit"—that is top-knotted.

It was the custom in the winter coaching days, to hand round a "tappit hen" with a small drinking vessel, which fitted into the top, as a "cheerer" among the travellers, when a coach drew up at the old hostelries to change horses, if time did not allow of their dismounting for more serious refreshment.

Two curious uses for pewter were communion tokens and beggars' badges. The tokens were confined to Scotland for they were the peculiar arrangement of the Scotch Presbyterian church. These tokens, which were flat pieces of pewter of varying shapes and quite small, were usually marked with the first letter of the parish name of the church, but later on, many had the minister's initials in preference to those of the parish.

These tokens were given out by the deacons and returned by the recipient at the conclusion of the service. They are very seldom found now, having been melted down and their place meanly supplied by paper tickets.



It seems rather strange and I have not met with any explanation of the fact, that apparently the general use of pewter lingered longer in Scotland than in England.

The beggars' badges were worn by authorised mendicants, called the "King's Bedesmen," commonly known as "blue gowns." These badges furnished with the owner's name and a permission to "pass and re-pass" were in use as late as 1849 certainly and perhaps still later. Readers of "The Antiquary" will remember the shrewd and sturdy beggar, Edie Ochiltree, who plays so important a part in the story. Sir Walter Scott was always singularly correct in all his historical research and local colour and it is therefore interesting to read his description of these privileged mendicants.

"He had the exterior appearance of a mendicant. A slouched hat of huge dimensions; a long white beard, which mingled with his grizzled hair; an aged but strongly marked and expressive countenance, hardened by climatic exposure, to a right brick-dust complexion; a long blue gown, with a pewter badge on the right arm; two or three wallets or bags slung across his shoulder for holding the different kinds of meal, when he received his charity in kind from those who were but a degree richer than himself—all these marked at once a beggar by profession, and one of that privileged class which are called in Scotland the King's Bedesmen, or vulgarly, blue gowns."

To revert to the more commonplace uses of pewter, it is curious to note that apparently there were very few tea and coffee-pots made, or perhaps being easily twisted and dented they have disappeared in the melting pot. I had a very old one, date about 1700 to 1720. It was ugly and extremely heavy, alas! it disappeared in my last house-moving, a domestic upheaval which usually causes the loss of a few trifles. You must not confuse Britannia metal with old pewter; Britannia metal, which closely resembles pewter of a superior kind, was an invention of the late 18th century. It is easier to work than pewter and not so easily bent and dented, hence no doubt its popularity during the 19th century.

## CHAPTER XXXII

### OLD SHEFFIELD PLATE

LOVERS of the antique are sure to be interested in "old" Sheffield plate. It is, alas! now unusual to find good examples, or indeed examples at all, that are genuine. Its manufacture—now a dead industry—extended over so short a time (little more than one hundred years) that comparatively little is now to be met with, and that little is jealously guarded by its fortunate possessors.

Another reason for its scarcity is that in course of time, and aided by frequent cleaning, the silver wore off, exposing to view the copper beneath, and owners, despising this shabby appearance, made away with the pieces in various ways, such as presents to servants, additions to the rag-and-bone man's store, and even to the dust-heap. True, a large quantity is sold in curio shops, but be wary in purchasing.

If the price asked is small, in all probability it is not the genuine article, but simply copper of an old shape covered with silver by the electroplating process.

Specimens of "old" Sheffield plate in thoroughly good condition, unworn and especially unrepaired,

will often command much higher prices than similar pieces in sterling silver.

The general public is apt to confound it with modern electro-plate, but they are absolutely different things. Sheffield having been the home of both industries makes a confusion in some minds.

Electro-plating is a process by which silver is distributed by means of electricity over a body of copper, tin, or other metal, and this method came into use in or about 1840, and proved the death blow to the manufacture of "old" Sheffield plate.

The latter was made from a sheet of copper and a sheet of silver, subjected to heat so intense that they became one solid sheet, from which the various articles were cut and made.

The discovery of this possibility was accidentally made in England in 1742, by one Thomas Bolsover. He was mending a knife made of copper and silver, and by mishap fused the two metals together. Finding that the adhesion was so perfect, he conceived the idea of making things of copper and silver and thus reducing the cost of constructing them of solid silver. He set up a small factory and succeeded fairly well, but his output was limited to such things as snuff-boxes, knife handles, buttons, etc.

This was the beginning, and other ingenious minds, as is usually the case, built upon Bolsover's original idea, especially Joseph Hancock, a cutler

of Sheffield. He produced tea-urns, tea and coffee-pots, candlesticks, cake-baskets, dishes and dish-covers and all the numerous varieties now so highly prized.

I am indebted to an interesting pamphlet by Mr W. Sissons on old Sheffield plate for information as to the technical details of the manufacture. As I can only transcribe a very small portion, it would be worth your while to get it, the cost being very small. See the name at the end of the opening pages on "The Study of Old Silver," etc.

A certain quantity of copper was melted in a casting pot, then run into a mould to form an ingot or block. From this was cut a thin plate, care being taken that it should be perfectly smooth and clean. Then a thin plate of silver was prepared, cut 1-20th of an inch smaller than the copper one, so that a small margin of copper was left all round. The two were then put on an anvil and struck with a stamp hammer all over, until they lay quite smoothly touching each other everywhere. Then a second sheet of copper was taken, the same size as the first; it was smeared with wet whitening on one side, and this side was placed upon the silver; the three were bound together with wire and placed in the plating stove, remaining there until the silver was seen to flush round the edges.

On removal from the stove and the separation of the whitened copper plate, the first copper and

silver sheet were found to be firmly welded together. Such articles as required plating on both sides, such as cake-baskets, wine-stands, etc., were made from sheets, which had been subjected to the same process on both sides.

The plate, now composed of copper inside and silver out, or with silver on both sides according to requirements, was cut the needed size, and if for the making of urns, teapots, or similar articles, the ends were cut and dovetailed to each other and then soldered with silver.

It seems that the engraving of the crest or arms, was not successful when done only on the welded sheets of copper and silver and sometimes betrayed the copper beneath, owing to the depth of the silver not being sufficient, therefore a small extra piece of silver was placed upon the original sheet, where it was needed for the initials, crest or other distinctive mark.

It was a very ingenious and delicate process requiring experienced manipulation. I quote from Mr Sissons :

“ All articles excepting dish covers have the silver shield added after the cutting of the flat sheet, before turning up or shaping. A copper scale is usually employed fitting the shape of the metal, with a hole cut out where the shield has to be rubbed on to the body and marked all round, thus enabling the workman to put it in the exact place required. A piece of silver is then cut the

required shape and the edges bevelled off for about one eighth of an inch all round. This is called tapering off and enables the operator afterwards to hammer the joining, so that it cannot be perceived. The article, with the shield, is then dipped in vitriol and water and carefully cleaned with very fine brick dust, the shield is laid on the metal and taken to a hearth. The fire is made of charcoal and the heat increased by the workman working the bellows with his foot.

The article is laid on the hearth over the fire until it is red hot, care being taken not to get it too hot for fear of blistering the plated metal. At the critical moment the workman takes a bright steel instrument bent over at the end and rounded, but with no sharp edges, and commences rubbing round the outer edge of the shield first. Meanwhile he keeps the article red hot, constantly dipping the rubber in water to keep it cool, gradually working the rubbing tool over the whole surface of the shield, until it is quite bedded and adhering to the metal. Care must be taken that no air or other substance, remains between the shield and the metal.

“The article is then allowed to cool, and is dipped in vitriol and water. The same process is repeated to insure all the sheet of silver being fast in every part of the surface covered. In case any air has got under the shield and has raised a blister, this is pricked, and the rubbing tool worked to and fro until the mark has quite dis-

appeared. It is then placed on a bright steel stake and well hammered all over till it is impossible to trace the joining of the shield to the metal. No solder having been used, it would look to the uninitiated impossible for the two metals to be united ; nevertheless it is so, and if the workman is an expert, as he must be, it is impossible to perceive the joining. On a large tray the shield is about four inches by three, hence it is seen how careful and skilful the man must be. . . . It has been said that if a careless workman filed through the rolled plate to the copper it was impossible to cover the bare place over again, but this is another instance of persons stating what they do not understand. It is frequently done, for however careful a workman may be, he is sure now and then to make a slip and cut through the silver to the copper. In some instances the metal will blister. For most diseases there is a cure, and so in the silver trade. The process is called French plating. It is done in this way: The workman takes a tool much like an engraver's wriggler, and works it over the spot to be plated, making it rough ; he then takes a leaf of very fine sheet silver much like goldbeater's skin, and having placed it on the defective spot, makes the article nearly red hot and rubs the piece of sheet silver on in the same way as before described in the process of rubbing a silver shield on the article. It is not usual to add silver shields to very small articles." . . .



Marks are rare on "old" Sheffield. None of the specimens in Fig. 59 and Fig 60 are marked, with the exception of the salvers; they carry an S, which I take to be perhaps the mark of the Sissons firm, though their usual mark was a Bell. The list of marks includes six arrows crossed, a pine-apple, a hand, an orb, a ball bisected with two kinds of hooks attached below, a churchwarden pipe, a portcullis, etc., but it is very unusual to meet with any of these marks. The early specimens seem to have carried no mark.

The kettle in Fig. 59 is very old, and probably belongs to the earliest period, somewhere from 1750 to 1760. Its shape is unusual and rather clumsy, and there is no attempt to hide the welding together of the two metals at the edges, or to ornament it in any way.

Among the first improvements—absent in this example—was that of putting a silver wire round the edges so as to hide the section where copper would show, and also at the junction of the ornamental mounts with the body of the piece. It was George Cadman who first used the silver wire, and who first applied silver edges and mounts.

The spirit lamp to this kettle is of the utmost simplicity, being simply a box to hold either oil or spirit, with a rough hole at the top through which the wick protrudes. The handle is copper, pure and simple, but I remember in my grandmother's time it was covered by a spiral sheath of faded crimson velvet.

The teapot to the right I should judge to be about 1780 in date, having regard to the gadrooned ornament round the base, and also that there is no applied ornament. There is no exact manner of telling the date of "old" Sheffield plate, because, unlike solid silver, it carries no date letter; indeed, generally, it has no mark at all, therefore you must judge approximately of its age by studying the different forms, style of ornament, and absence or presence of certain things, such as the thin silver wire round edges.

The cream jug and coffee pot are later pieces, as shown by the heavily embossed edges and the pattern of the coffee pot. I should think they may have been made about 1800.

The candlesticks are early 19th century, but the round trays must, I think, from family records, date back to 1790. One shows its back to display its pretty little ball feet. It is on these trays I found the mark S.

The wine-stand on the top shelf is a beautiful perforated example—date probably 1790 to 1805.

The inkstand in Fig. 60 is not an early piece, I should think it might have been made about 1815 judging from the ornamentation. It is generally believed that the richly embossed edges and ornaments, belonging to this period, are of solid silver; this, however, is not so, they are formed of thin silver and filled with lead, or solder. When these mounts were ready the article on which they were to be applied was



OLD SHEFFIELD PLATE

(Fig. 59)



OLD SHEFFIELD PLATE

(Fig. 60)



heated, and the mounts pressed on with a piece of cork, they were then soldered on, after the body of the piece had been carefully smeared with whitening so that the solder should not run over the heated surface.

The saltcellars are very good examples, date perhaps 1800.

The small oval tray is old and belongs to the teapot shown in Fig. 59. The two small articles placed on each side, are the two different parts of a perforated wine strainer, used to decant port.

Do not clean old Sheffield plate more than is absolutely necessary, and for the process use only plain whitening.

I may tell you that the interesting little book by Mr Sissons is called "Old Sheffield Plate." It is published by Pawson & Brailsford, Sheffield, and is by far the most useful book on the subject that I have met with.





JACOBITE GLASSES  
*(Fig. 6d)*





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