

OBSESSION:

THE MYRNA & BENZION SCHKOLNE COLLECTION OF EARLY ENGLISH POTTERY, VOL. I.



MYRNA SCHKOLNE

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Introduction

What title to select for this, my collecting memoir? *Captured in Clay* first came to mind, but, on reflection, *Obsession* seemed more fitting. *Addiction* might have been more accurate, but then again that word is loaded with nasty connotations. By my teenage years, collecting was my pleasure and passion. As a child, I carefully assembled things that seem absurd from today's perspective, but although my family was far from impoverished, I, like most children then, had few material possessions and a lot of time in which we were expected to amuse ourselves. Fancy chocolates in those days were sometimes wrapped in pretty foil wrappers, and when one of these metallic treasures came my way, I carefully smoothed out the wrinkles in the foil and added it to my collection. I collected flowers, which I pressed, and butterflies, which I clumsily mounted, as well as marbles—the colors were so pretty—and my stamp collection taught me how the globe was divided in those days. Already then I was intrigued by beautiful old objects—a miniature painting in my home, the silver in my grandmother's cabinets—but there was not much to see in the sterile environment of Port Elizabeth, South Africa, where I spent much of my childhood.

When I was ten, my family went to live in England for three years to allow my father to further his medical training. Had that not happened, I might have remained ignorant of the

treasures of bygone centuries. When we arrived in London in 1961, the Portobello Road street market was in full swing. For a few months before moving onto Liverpool, we lived in Bayswater, a mere stone's throw from Portobello, and my mother would take me with her to the legendary Saturday antiques market. In those days, the outdoor tables dripped with silver wares that literally dangled from every possible spot. One pound sterling bought an ounce of Victorian silver, and Georgian was somewhat more. My mother liked silver, but I was irresistibly drawn to color. I had absolutely no money of course, but at some point I acquired a few pennies that bought a little handle-less china cup of sorts, green with pretty pink flowers banding the top, and I treasured it for many years.

By the time I was thirteen, we were back in Port Elizabeth. This so-called Windy City (truly the nicest name that can be applied to that dreary coastal sprawl) was settled by the English in 1820, but it seems nothing pre-Victorian ever reached its shores. I would catch the bus to the center of town to check out Vigne and Howard, the local auction house, but I found little of interest. One time, an elegant elderly gentleman approached me there and told me he was my great-uncle Jacob. I must have been about sixteen at the time, and he must have been in his late eighties. Because of an argument in my mother's family, I had not known I had a great-uncle, but I later learned

that Jacob collected and dealt in Africana, so the collecting bug was in his blood too. I was doubly blessed genetically because my beloved paternal grandmother, Jessie Karpas Bloch, also enjoyed old objects and all that was beautiful, and my most precious childhood memories are of her loving presence.

Being a teenager in Port Elizabeth in the 1960s was quite different to the teenage experience elsewhere. There was no television in South Africa then, and entertainment was confined to the rare treat of going to see a movie, which necessitated catching the bus to the city center. I was a very conscientious student and spent what little spare time I had either listening to the radio—even plays were broadcast on radio then—or reading library books. My mother continued building the silver collection she had started in the UK, and I took an avid academic interest in her purchases. At the local book shop, I discovered books that taught me about silver and opened my eyes to all sorts of other antique objects. I requested G. B. Hughes's *Collecting Antiques* as a sixteenth birthday gift from my aunt and uncle. That book included a well-illustrated chapter on Georgian Toby jugs, and I was hooked. How I wanted an early Toby jug!

At that time, my mother bought the odd antique furnishing from a lady by the name of Ada Polovin, who dabbled in antiques out of her home. Ada (always “Mrs. Polovin” to me) was a diminutive lady with a great eye and grand sense of style, and she was totally wasted in a dismal dump like Port Elizabeth. Going with my mother to the Polovin home was a rare treat because there was no knowing what might be there. Ada owned the first and last

Toby I was to ever see in Port Elizabeth. It was a Victorian jug, complete with its much glued-together original lid, and I requested and eventually got it as a gift for, I think, my eighteenth birthday. I remember being allowed to choose between the Toby and a cassette tape player, both being of about equal value. Although I chose the Toby, I knew it was not the early jug I craved, but it was a beginning, and I kept looking.

At the age of seventeen, I left home to study at the University of Cape Town. Cape Town then had several fine antique shops that stocked a good selection of Georgian and Victorian decorative items. Alas, I still could not find that early Toby jug, but it was not for want of scouring the city. Antique shops were my recreation. By the time Ben and I married in 1972, I already had a piece of furniture for our new home stashed atop the wardrobe in my lodgings, as well as several smaller items that we still own today.

By the 1980s, Ben and I had settled in North Carolina. Despite having endured the costs of emigrating, medical training, and starting a family, we had a few spare pennies in our pockets for our first English vacation, so in 1985 we packed up our three children as well as a lot of baby gear and spent an idyllic two weeks in England. It was on that trip that we bought our first pearlware figure. Exactly what it was is debatable, because our first pearlware purchase was a Toby jug, and I am not sure if a Toby is a figure or a jug or both, but hot on its heels I bought a pearlware figure of Winter.

As the decades have rolled by, I have acquired an extraordinary amount of knowledge about my understudied collecting field. I have handled and photographed figures in major collections worldwide and have published extensively. Along the way, I have been privileged to meet many collectors, and again and again they have become my good friends. Their different approaches to collecting intrigues me. Collecting is a very personal, very intimate endeavor, and how we collect and display our treasures is rather revealing.

Odd though it sounds, I believe that in some mysterious way the objects we treasure share with us a little of their souls. A collection is always greater than the sum of its parts; all the objects are tied together by the spirit that imbues them. News of a collector's death consistently pierces my heart because it is essentially a double death: when a collector dies, a collection dies too, and it becomes a mere accumulation of objects seeking new homes. Our figures belong to our children and ultimately they will be in our children's hands for a while before finding new homes on the next steps of their eternal journey. The collection, on the other hand, will live on in these pages for future collectors to enjoy, and, I hope that what I have gleaned will advance their pleasure and knowledge.

What makes our collection different from all others is that it reflects my journey through the pottery world. Each object is a small piece of my life. Each evokes memories of the path I traveled to acquire it, and I have noted these experiences

within this, my collecting "biography." My personal story is not sequential, but then the figures are, of course, the focus of my work.

Myrna Schkolne,
December 2017



CHAPTER 1

Drink and Drunkenness

Extract from "PUNCH cures the GOUT, - the COLIC, - and the 'TISICK." James Gillray, published by Hannah Humphrey, London, 1799. Courtesy the National Portrait Gallery.

SINCE THE DAWN OF HISTORY, men have fashioned vessels in the likeness of human beings, and after 1760, the Toby jug became the quintessentially British ale container. From that time, tavern shelves displayed these vessels, some of which are thought to depict notable characters of their day.

The origins of Toby jugs are enmeshed in the legend of one Henry Elwes, who supposedly drank two thousand gallons of beer from his favorite brown jug before succumbing to the excess in 1761. Elwes's prodigious consumption was such an accomplishment that a ballad paid tribute to it: *The Brown Jug* by the Rev. Francis Fawkes tells of a drinker named Toby Fillpot, who died, was buried, and whose body turned to clay; a potter used the remains to make a brown ale jug. The ballad, first published in the year Elwes died, was illustrated with a print of a bellicose Toby Fillpot, complete with a tricorn hat, pipe, and foaming ale jug. Inevitably, Toby became an earthenware object, and a new British tradition was born.

The most common Toby model (dubbed the "Ordinary") shows a stout seated gentleman, a tankard in hand and wearing a long frock coat, knee breeches, and a tricorn hat, while other models resemble individuals whose identities often remain a mystery. The crown of Toby's hat is removable and serves as the jug's lid, but over the centuries these lids have nearly always been lost; the tricorn hat forms a convenient spout. ❀

The Brown Jug

DEAR TOM , this brown jug, that now foams with mild ale,
(In which I will drink to sweet Nan of the Vale)
Was once Toby Fillpot, a thirsty old soul
As e'er drank a bottle or fathomed a bowl;
In boosing about 't was his praise to excel,
And among jolly toppers he bore off the bell.

It chanced, as in dog-days he sat at his ease,
In his flower-woven arbour, as gay as you please,
With a friend and a pipe, puffing sorrows away,
And with honest old Stingo was soaking his clay,
His breath-doors of life on a sudden were shut,
And he died full as big as a Dorchester butt.

His body when long in the ground it had lain,
And time into clay had resolved it again,
A potter found out in its covert so snug,
And with part of fat Toby he formed this brown jug;
Now sacred to friendship, to mirth, and mild ale,
So here's to my lovely sweet Nan of the Vale. ❀
—by Francis Fawkes

1.1.1

Toby Jug

Lead-glazed earthenware with under-glaze decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1800, H: 9.6 in., MBS-2



Notes

This Toby has the collection number two in our records. The honor of being number one belongs to a Toby acquired in my teenage years and long since gone. I remember him well: a circa 1860 Toby, the model sometimes called the Landlord. His coat was blue, and his hat top was present, albeit glued across multiple breaks. He was much loved and he traveled far with us.

Ben took the first step down our slippery collecting slope when he bought this “ordinary” model Toby as my birthday gift in 1985 from Gordon Dando (the late father of today's dealer Andrew Dando), who then had his shop on Queen Street in Bath. That summer, we stayed outside Bath in the small city of Wells, and I eyed this Toby for a day or two in Mr. Dando's window but was appalled at the prospect of spending £400 on a piece of pottery. Yet when Ben suggested it as a birthday present, I didn't need any arm-twisting!

That was our first family visit to the UK, and all three kids, ranging in ages from one to eleven, were in tow. Best of all, the exchange rate was at historic lows—even with the pending “Brexit” from the E.U. as I write this in 2016, the rate is not as low. We also bought furniture on that trip, and while I paid for a sideboard from Mr. Deacon, whose shop was next door to Mr. Dando's, Ben went to buy my Toby.

In retrospect, I can't understand why I did not go into Mr. Dando's shop and learn something about what I so coveted.

Perhaps it was because a furniture shop was a safer place to keep our children! Anyway, when Ben handed me my jug, he said that Mr. Dando had said it was “made by a guy called Pratt,” and, of course, that snippet of knowledge started me on my long learning journey. ❀

1.1.2

Toby Jug

*Lead-glazed earthenware decorated with colored glaze, attributed to Ralph Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1785,
H: 9.3 in., MBS-20*



Notes

The chapter titled “Georgian Toby Jugs” in G. Bernard Hughes’s *Collecting Antiques*—this book, which I still own, was a sixteenth birthday gift from my uncle and aunt—had instilled in me a determination to someday own a Ralph Wood Toby jug. For years, I searched in vain, first in South Africa and later in North Carolina. By 1988, we had been to England twice, and, although I had imagined I would casually stumble across the Toby of my dreams in some shop or other, it simply hadn’t happened. So when Ben and I headed to England in the summer of that year, I was determined! I had noted in a UK antiques magazine two small advertisements placed by dealers who claimed to specialize in Toby jugs, and I wrote to both. Only one replied: Diane Ginns said she and her husband Ray would be able to help us, and we set an appointment to meet at their home in Birmingham.

Our visit commenced in London, and, as always, I set off to Portobello Road that Saturday. I found my way to the stand of Vic Schuler, who was known to collect Tobies—in fact, Vic that day wore a tricorn Toby-like hat. He was anything but encouraging and all but laughed aloud at my request for a Ralph Wood jug, saying “What would *you* be wanting with one of those?” Next, I tried Jonathan Horne’s famous shop on Kensington Church Street. Jonathan was to become my good friend in later years, but at that time I found him and his shop very intimidating. Jonathan did indeed have a Ralph Wood Toby, a sailor model, which he showed me, but this, the very

first Ralph Wood jug that I had ever seen “in the flesh,” just did nothing for me.

From London, we headed to Warwick, and, having spent the night and next morning in the town, we drove to Birmingham. In those days there were no navigation systems, and, aided only by our big map book, we got totally lost. And then the Ginns’s street simply appeared before us. It was divine providence, as if a Pottery God—in whose existence I now firmly believe!—was determined to guide us to our destination. ➔

At that time, Ray and Diane Ginns lived in an attached row house in a dreary part of Birmingham. Diane and her large Great Dane named, of course, Toby, welcomed us warmly. We went upstairs to a cozy sitting room, and Diane plied us with tea and delicious cream cakes and scones, something she was to do repeatedly in future years, while we looked at her stock. She had not one but two Ralph Wood “ordinary” model Toby jugs for us to see. At the same time, she shared her knowledge generously, peppering us with endless snippets of the information I relish. This is what I needed to learn! I wanted both jugs, but we managed to select just this one. I still love his gray coat, which, despite its shine, somehow evokes gray suede.

Although I was smitten with our jug, I couldn’t help noticing a shelf near the window with early figures on it, including what was, I now know, a *Perswaition* group. In those days I was not as pushy as I am now, and I didn’t dare to ask. I really can’t believe that was me!

At that time, Ray Ginns was working in the building trade, and he came home late in the afternoon and rushed to clean up before meeting us. Then Ray showed us his personal collection of Tobies, lined up on a few small shelves in the second upstairs room. I remember thinking that the Thin Man was the ugliest jug imaginable. Little did I know that my tastes would evolve and we would come to have three!

Every detail of that afternoon remains impressed on my mind. I felt that I had met people who would guide me in building our collection, and until they “broke up” with us fifteen or so years later, Diane and Ray did just that. We bought Tobies and figures almost exclusively from them, and although we eventually declared our Toby collection closed to new additions, I have never stopped loving Tobies. In fact, I still think that nothing beats a great Toby—while a mediocre one is a dreary object. I am humbled each time I hold one of our fine jugs, and although visitors come to our home to see our figure collection, I always show them a Toby because I never tire of paying homage to these extraordinary clay masterpieces.

Ray and Diane worked with great determination to turn their Toby collecting hobby into a career. Ray worked tirelessly at his building trade, and within a few years of our first meeting, they had moved to a large gated property south of London—conveniently near Gatwick airport for us—and focused on trading pottery full time. In the 1990s, they stood on Portobello Road and at the major summer antiques fair at Olympia. I thought we had a firm friendship. Ray was the first person I

called in 2001 when I turned on the TV and saw a plane hit the Twin Towers; we were on the phone together when the second plane hit. And Diane called me one June day, as soon as she and Ray returned home from Olympia, devastated at being robbed of their stock. We shared many good meals together—great big Sunday lunches rounded off with port and cheese at their home, and dinners at a nearby restaurant that we used to reciprocate their hospitality. Ray and Diane were always the most thoughtful and generous hosts, and they were infinitely patient and sweet with Andrea, our youngest, who frequently was with us on our trips. But they retreated from business and simultaneous ended our friendship in 2003. I will never know the reason, but I was heartbroken.

Looking back, a new collector plus new dealers is a recipe for disaster, and, although for us it certainly resulted in some buying mistakes, it could have been worse. In those days, the trade was thriving, and some of the old, well-established dealers figuratively got away with murder. ❀

1.1.3

Hooked-nose Toby jug

Lead-glazed earthenware decorated with colored glaze, Staffordshire, c. 1785, H: 9.3 in., MBS-24



Notes

This smiling Toby with a hooked nose is an uncommon variation of the so-called “ordinary” Toby model. His rich coloring coupled with his piercing eyes and crisp modeling make him particularly engaging and vital.

We bought him from Ray and Diane Ginns in March 1989, and I found him waiting for me when I dragged myself home from a hospital stay. The thought of coping on my own with the house, the dog, and three young children was quite overwhelming—and made worse by the fact that I was mildly radioactive and had to avoid all physical contact for several more days. The box with this Toby waited for me on the kitchen counter, and when I unpacked it, the jug just glowed, oozing a vitality that permeated the air and energized me for the task ahead. It was much more effective than any medicine, and to this day I never look at it without recalling what it did for my morale.

This jug has the “dry” (unglazed) base that is typical of Ralph Wood jugs as well as the dark eyes associated with earlier jugs—in fact, some think such jugs pre-date the Ralph Wood era. As they are pearlware, they can’t predate it by much, but perhaps some other potter did make them. ❀

1.1.4

Lord Howe Toby Jug

*Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, possibly made by Ralph Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1785,
H: 10.2 in., MBS-28*



THE BRITISH ADMIRAL RICHARD HOWE (1726-1799), son of the 2nd Viscount Howe, entered the navy in 1740 and advanced rapidly, perhaps because his mother was half-sister to King George I. He served in the American Revolutionary War and is noted for his success at the final relief of Gibraltar in 1782. Thereafter, he served as First Lord of the Admiralty from 1783 to 1788. In 1788, Howe, who had inherited his father's title in 1758, was awarded an earldom.

In 1793, after the outbreak of the French Revolutionary War, Howe commanded the Channel Fleet. He is most remembered for his historic "Glorious First of June" victory in June 1794. In this, the largest fleet action of that war, Howe used unconventional tactics to resoundingly defeat the French fleet. He was promoted to Admiral of the Fleet on 12 March 1796.

Notes

I have seen only one other enameled Lord Howe jug. The Lord Howe jug is more commonly found decorated with colored glaze, and every such example I have seen is attributed to Ralph Wood. I am not particularly fond of the color-glazed Lord Howe because the face seems rather weak—but picked out in enamels, as it is on this jug, the face gains definition, and I enjoy the end result. Here the enamel colors are typical of those that Ralph Wood used successfully on figures in the 1780s and 1790s, and I speculate that Ralph Wood made this jug from the same molds he used to make color-glazed examples. We bought our jug from Ray and Diane Ginns in 1989. ❀



THE RIGHT HON.^{BLE} RICHARD LORD HOWE. Published by Laurie and Whittle, 1794. © Trustees of the British Museum.

1.1.5

Hooked-nose Toby Jug

Lead-glazed earthenware decorated with colored glaze, probably made by Ralph Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1785, H: 6.8 in., MBS-31



Notes

I find this chubby baby jug, which is sometimes referred to as a “hooked nose” jug, charming and I really like his tortoise-shell breeches. It is modeled in a typical Wood manner with large hands and well-defined eyes.

Literature

For a similar jug, described as “hooked nose,” see Bedford, *Toby Jugs*, 33. ❀

1.1.6

Thin Man Toby Jug

Lead-glazed earthenware decorated with colored glaze, probably made by Ralph Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1785, H: 9.2 in., MBS-32





Notes

The Thin Man is the most aristocratic of jugs and one that collectors come to value very highly. I quickly learned to love this model, and we acquired three, although we parted with one many years later when we learned it had more restoration than had been disclosed at the time of purchase. Every collector should own more than one Thin Man so as to have at least one to display the other way around—the back of the chair is just lovely.

This particularly crisp jug, bought in February 1990 from Ray and Diane Ginns, has no repairs or restorations, and the fine hairline at the side is an original firing crack, filled with the glaze that puddled in it during firing. My friend Nick Burton has admired this jug. Nick has the most discerning eye, and he assembled a glowingly gorgeous shelf of early Tobies for his father, a fine gentleman whom I much admired.

In the early twentieth century, this jug was in the notable Toby collection of George Burton, Birmingham, UK, and it was pictured in his sale catalogue. A Thin Man is in Brighton and Hove Museums' Willett Collection (HW1445).

Literature

For the Thin Man in the Brighton and Hove Museums see Beddoe, *A Potted History*, 291.

For another see Schuler, *Collecting British Toby Jugs*, 48. ❀

1.1.7

Squire Toby Jug

Lead-glazed earthenware decorated with colored glaze, Staffordshire, c. 1780, H: 11.3 in., MBS-34





Notes

The Squire Toby is particularly unusual in that it stands on a geometrically shaped base. Our jug is unlike most in that it has a creamware body. Like all but one of our other jugs, we bought it from Ray and Diane Ginns in June 1990, and it was my birthday gift that year. We brought it back to the US in our hand luggage from a trip to the UK—and I should say “I” because I never let anyone else carry my pottery packages. The pipe in the raised hand is a restoration, as is usually the case, and Ray skillfully modeled this himself so that it is easily removed when the jug needs to be packed.

This Squire was formerly in the F. Stacey Hooker Collection, another of those important collections assembled in the earlier twentieth century by erudite and discerning gentleman collectors. I think it was made by an unidentified potter, perhaps a few years before Ralph Wood commenced potting, but Ralph Wood did experiment with various clays, so possibly he made this handsome jug in creamware rather than the pearlware that he typically favored.

A similar jug with a pearlware body is in the Victoria and Albert Museum (C.29-1930).

Literature

For this jug see Lewis, *A Collectors History of English Pottery*, 94. ❀

1.1.8

Toby Jugs (2)

Lead-glazed earthenware with under-glaze decoration, made by the "pottery that used the large impressed crown mark,"¹ Yorkshire, c. 1800, H: 4.7 in. (L), 9.6" (R), MBS-68 (L), MBS-35 (R)



Notes

By the time we bought the larger of these two Pratt ware jugs from Ray and Diane Ginns in August 1990, our relationship was such that the jug arrived unannounced on our doorstep, with a note tucked inside reading “Return if you don’t want me.”

The ship’s figurehead on the handle of the larger jug is so lovely that it is a shame it can’t be seen when the jug is on display, yet it functions as a surprise that never fails to delight when I lift the jug off the shelf.

We bought the small jug from Ray and Diane in 1993. By then, we were buying fewer Tobies, but our collection of early figures, also bought from Ray and Diane, was growing.

Literature

For similar jugs see Lewis, *Pratt Ware 1780–1840*, 77.

For a similar large jug in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 63. ❀

1.1.9

Toby Jugs (2)

*Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 4.8 in.(L), 3.3 in (R),
MBS-47 (L), MBS-491(R)*



Notes

These two little jugs hang around for sentimental reasons, and I will admit to finding them rather cute. Both came from Ray and Diane Ginns. The smaller one belonged to my parents, and the larger one was a gift to us from Ray and Diane. ❀

Lead-glazed earthenware with under-glaze decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1800, H: 7.7 in., MBS-39



Notes

We bought this small Toby with the following one from Ray and Diane Ginns in early 1991. It is unusual in that it has a base of double height. ❀

Lead-glazed earthenware with under-glaze decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1800, H: 6.9 in., MBS-40



Notes

In early 1991, we bought this small Toby together with the previous one from Ray and Diane Ginns, and they arrived on our doorstep together. I never fail to look at him without thinking he looks very like the doctor who delivered our younger daughter, Andrea. ❀

Rodney's Sailor Toby Jug

Lead-glazed earthenware decorated with colored glaze, probably made by Ralph Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1785, H: 11.6 in., MBS-44





Notes

We bought this splendid sailor in April 1991, and he remains one of the most beautiful jugs I have ever seen. He takes my breath away each time I handle him. The colors are harmonious, the face is serene, and the small jug in Toby's hand is a thing of beauty in its own right. There is a small short firing crack under the arm, and, oddly enough, I have had more than one weird dream about the arm falling off, but as it hasn't happened in over two centuries, I should find something else to trouble my sleep.

Literature

For this jug see Lewis, *A Collectors History of English Pottery*, 94; also Schuler, *Collecting British Toby Jugs*, 48. ❀

1.1.13

Toby Jug

Lead-glazed earthenware decorated with colored glaze, probably made by Ralph Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1785, H: 9.4 in., MBS-48



Notes

Toby collectors relish idiosyncratic details, and when we bought this Ralph Wood “ordinary” jug from Ray and Diane Ginns in August 1991 they told us that he is an oddity. Ralph Wood made two "ordinary" models: one smiles and raises a cup; the other does not seem to smile and clutches only his jug. This jug is a hybrid in that Toby does not smile, yet he does raise a cup. Ray and Diane dubbed him Apples because his coat is the color of a Granny Smith apple. In deference to the toffee-colored glaze spilling over his hat, I call him Toffee Apple. ❀

Lead-glazed earthenware decorated with colored glaze, probably made by Ralph Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1785, H: 9.3 in., MBS-49



Notes

We bought this happy jug with the previous jug, and it too is quirkily confused. This Toby has the smiling face usually found on the Ralph Wood “ordinary” holding a raised cup—but here he instead clutches just his jug. As the difference is so subtle, it is easy to see how this could have happened. ❁

1.1.15

Sharp-face Toby Jug

Lead-glazed earthenware decorated with colored glaze, Staffordshire, c. 1785, H: 9.6 in., MBS-56



Notes

This is a dazzlingly fine example of a rare jug, and, like the sailor in our collection, it has particularly appealing coloring—not too harsh, not too soft. It is rumored to be modeled after the politician Charles James Fox, who had sharp features and bushy eyebrows and was said to be as sharp as a fox. We bought him from Ray and Diane Ginns in 1992.

This jug has the dry base found on Ralph Wood jugs, but I think, as do other long-time collectors of early jugs, that jugs with these dark dotted eyes (see also nos. 1.1.3 and 1.1.17) may slightly predate the more usual Ralph Wood jugs. Given that they are pearlware, they can't predate it by much, but it is possible that some other potter made them. ❀



THE RIGHT HON^{BLE} CHARLES JAMES FOX. Engraved by James Young after the painting by Anton Hickel, 1797. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

1.1.16

Stepped-base Toby Jug

Lead-glazed earthenware decorated with colored glaze, Staffordshire, c. 1775, H: 9.3 in., MBS-57



Notes

I coveted this creamware jug in Ray Ginns's personal collection for a long time. He offered it to us once, along with another beauty, and we passed reluctantly because we couldn't afford both jugs and the other was the greater rarity. Some years later, Ray relented and offered it again, and, although the price had increased, we grabbed it.

Viewed from below, the base has a stepped interior, which is why jugs such as this are dubbed "stepped-base" jugs. Old-time collectors attribute these jugs to Whieldon, but there is no basis for that conclusion. He is a lovely relaxed fella—quite unlike any other jug in our collection. A similar jug is in the Victoria and Albert Museum (C.43-1940). ❀

1.1.17

Long-face Toby Jug with Tall Hat

Lead-glazed earthenware with colored glaze, Staffordshire, c. 1785, H: 10.6 in., MBS-60



Notes

This vibrant long-face Toby bought from Ray and Diane Ginns in 1992 was our twentieth wedding anniversary splurge.

This jug was probably made by the same potter who made our sharp-face and hooked-nose jugs (nos. 1.1.3 and 1.1.15). These jugs with their piercing dark eyes are the most engaging. He is rare, and more so in that he has a particularly tall hat, which makes him stand over an inch taller than most other Tobies. Again, maybe Ralph Wood made him, or maybe not! 🌸

1.1.18

Village Idiot Toby Jug

Lead-glazed earthenware decorated with colored glaze, Staffordshire, c. 1790, H: 9.2 in., MBS-73



Notes

Collectors in less politically correct times dubbed this jug the Village Idiot. He is an uncommon jug and is thought to have been made by some potter other than Ralph Wood. We bought him from Ray and Diane Ginns in early 1994.

Literature

For a similar jug see Schuler, *Collecting British Toby Jugs*, 86. 🌸

1.1.19

Hearty Good Fellow Toby Jug

Lead-glazed earthenware with under-glaze decoration, Staffordshire or Yorkshire, c. 1795, H: 11.7 in., MBS-82



Notes

We bought this Hearty Good Fellow in late 1994, again from Ray and Diane Ginns.

Toby's dotted eyebrows indicate a Yorkshire origin. The so-called “pottery that used the large impressed crown mark”² favored dotted eyebrows, but there is no record of that pot bank making this model. Interestingly, the hat, which appears to be black, is actually a very deep navy blue. ❁

1.1.20

Martha Gunn Toby Jug

Lead-glazed earthenware decorated with colored glaze, probably made by Ralph Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1790, H: 11.2 in., MBS-96



IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, MARTHA Gunn was England's most famed bathing attendant or "dipper." Bathing in the ocean came into vogue after 1750, when total immersion was promoted as having medicinal value, and the fad transformed the coastal fishing village of Brighton into a trendy resort. At a time when few people could swim and modesty forbade exposure, a "bathing machine" (frequently horse-drawn) allowed the bather to change clothing and enter the ocean obscured from public view. In 1769, John Trusler described this novel experience.

By means of a hook-ladder the bather ascends the machine, which is formed of wood and raised on high wheels; he is drawn to a proper distance from the shore and then plunges into the sea, the guides attending on each side to assist him in recovering the machine, which having accomplished, he is drawn back to the shore. The guides are strong, active, and careful, and in every respect adapted to their employment.³

From 1783, the Prince of Wales made Brighton one of the most fashionable Georgian seaside venues, and Martha Gunn, the prince's dipper, was to become a royal favorite and a celebrity. Dubbed by the local newspaper as "the venerable Priestess of the Bath,"⁴ she was born in 1726, and she died in 1815 at the age of 88. Contemporary prints and her portrait, painted in 1796 by John Russell, depict her as a stout lady wearing a cap, and some earthenware Toby jugs show her thus too.



MARTHA GUNN the Brighton Bather. Engraved by William Nutter after the painting by J. Russell. 1797. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Notes

We bought this jug in July 1996, on a visit to England. It had long been in Ray and Diane Ginns's personal collection. She was my birthday gift.

Some Martha Gunn jugs have Prince of Wales feathers on the cap, while others don't. The jug complete with feathers is uncommon in colored glaze, and I of course only wanted a color-glazed example with feather. I waited a long time, refusing other Martha Gunn jugs, not that there were many.

Literature

For this jug see Vic Schuler, *Collecting British Toby Jugs*, 99. ❀

1.1.21

Thin Man Toby Jug

Lead-glazed earthenware decorated with colored glaze, possibly made by Ralph Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1790, H: 9.7 in., MBS-98





Notes

We bought this Thin Man from Ray and Diane Ginns in 1996. They bought it in lot 56 of the collection of the Fourth Marquess of Bute, which was auctioned at Christies, London, on July 8 that year.

This was the last Toby jug we purchased because by 1996 figures were consuming room on our shelves and in my mind. I find figures far more mentally challenging than Tobies because they embrace a wealth of social history, and their varying subjects pose an array of riddles that I enjoy trying to solve. Tobies, on the other hand, are more limiting, although I always will think that there is little that is as splendid as a fine Toby.

We had two Thin Men in our collection in 1996 (one since sold because it had more restoration than we were aware of when we purchased it), but we couldn't resist adding this stunning example complete with hat. 🌸

1.1.22

Toby Jug

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1805, H: 9.5 in.



Notes

We bought this jug, surely the prettiest of all enameled Tobies and complete with the cup that tops his hat, from Ray and Diane Ginns in 1986. He has no number in our collection because he was a bar mitzvah gift to our son, Steven. I hoped it would nurture a collecting habit because it brings with it a lifetime of pleasure. Alas, no! Instead, Toby has remained with us ever since.

Old-time collectors would attribute this jug to Enoch Wood, but there is no basis for any attribution. I do think that the jug is relatively early, based on the colors of the enamels, which have been applied particularly well. ❁

1.2.1

Toby Fillpot (plaque)

Lead-glazed earthenware with under-glaze decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1790, diameter: 9.5 in., MBS-29



Notes

This plaque is in the strongest under-glaze colors, and the blue-coated Toby Fillpot in its center is after the engraving *Toby Fillpot* that was first published circa 1786 to illustrate the Rev. Francis Fawkes's *Brown Jug* ballad of 1761. On the plaque, Toby is surrounded by relief decorations of a putto on a duck's back, a dancing putto, a man sitting on an upturned barrel, and a classical group depicting the marriage of Cupid and Psyche.

As a beginning collector of Toby jugs, I was thrilled with this great find in November 1989 at the antiques show held twice a year in the sprawling Coliseum building in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where we lived then. The caliber of stock was far short of that offered at the English antiques show, so this really was a find. The dealer was Robert Werowski from Charleston, who favored bits of early pottery and pewter, and I had previously bought a Pratt jug from him (no. 1.5.1). Of course, I scoured the show even more carefully for the next twenty years without “getting lucky” again—but over that time, the show declined, its demise no doubt hastened by the internet and the misguided preference for modern objects—or no objects at all.

The plaque had two small breaks in the rim, with the pieces glued back in place carefully. Ray and Diane Ginns liked my purchase and had the repair tidied up for me, but later they declined to have restoration done on objects not bought from



TOBY FILLPOT. Probably by Robert Dighton and published by Carington Bowles, 1786. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

them lest it delay their work at the restorer; consequently, I hesitated to shop further on my own. Today, the market is more open, and it is easier to find a restorer. I connect collectors with restorers, and the trade generally is very supportive when restoration is needed.

Do I like this plaque as much today as I did twenty-seven years ago? Although I admire its rich quality and crispness and acknowledge that I haven't seen a nicer example....it is not precisely to my taste. Probably this comes down to my innate aversion to the color blue. But it is part of our home, and its place with us is secure.

Literature

For a similar plaque see Lewis, *Pratt Ware 1780-1840*, 185. ❀

1.3.1

Toper (plaque)

Lead-glazed earthenware with under-glaze decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1800, H: 4.8 in., MBS-115



Notes

This small plaque, bought in November 2000, has the distinction of being my first eBay purchase, my first step on an often rewarding, often treacherous path. ❀

1.4.1

Tavern Scene (plaque)

Lead-glazed earthenware with under-glaze decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1820, H: 6.8 in., MBS-111



Notes

I bought this plaque at an antiques show in Raleigh, NC, from Mr. and Mrs. Nutty, a sweet couple who also stood at the antiques show held in the Coliseum in our home town of Winston-Salem twice each year.

This plaque is a little atypical, but I showed it to Jonathan Horne when he was our guest, and he had no doubt it was correct, and neither do I. ❀

1.5.1

Smokers and Drinkers (jug)

Lead-glazed earthenware with under-glaze decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1800, H: 6.3 in., MBS-26



Notes

I bought typical Pratt ware jug in 1989 at our local "junktique" show, held in the Winston-Salem Coliseum twice each year.

At the time, I was deeply into trying to memorize every detail in Griselda Lewis's book, *Pratt Ware*, and was pleased to have a typical example of my own. The dealer, Robert Werowinski, later sold us a splendid plaque (no. 1.2.1).

I enjoy using this jug, which somehow miraculously elevates the most mundane posy from our garden into a floral arrangement of great beauty.

Literature

For similar jugs see Lewis, *Pratt Ware*, 40-41. ❀

1.6.1

Toper atop Barrel

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1830, H: 4.5 in., MBS-304



Notes

I am always on the lookout for unusual figures, and I bought this one from the late Bill Shaeffer at the Staffordshire Figure Association's Alexandria meeting in September 2008.

I have not yet recorded another example of this figure, but I have come across other small figures of a toper atop a barrel, always decorated under the glaze rather than with enamels.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780—1840*, vol. 4, fig. 199.4. ❀

"What two ideas are more inseparable than Beer and Britannia?," asked that renowned nineteenth-century wit, the Rev. Sydney Smith, his statement reflecting the contemporary sentiment that beer was the essence of Englishness. Indeed, beer has long been England's national drink, and for centuries it was a dietary staple thought to be almost essential for survival. Importantly, it significantly boosted the caloric intake of the meager diets of bygone days, and, in an era of putrid drinking water, it was the safest, most accessible, most affordable drink. Consequently, children drank beer, workers received daily quotas, and hospitals gave it to patients.

Inevitably, by 1800, England was awash in an epidemic of disruptive public drunkenness, but beer was not blamed for the sprawling intoxicated masses. Instead spirits—and gin in particular—was believed to be the culprit. Gin had been introduced into England in the seventeenth century, and it had quickly become a popular and cheaper alternative to beer. But drinking gin was more intoxicating and addictive than drinking beer, and by the nineteenth century, the dissipation caused by gin had become endemic.

Because the better classes imbibed to excess in the privacy of their clubs and homes, public drunkenness was perceived as a lower-class problem. The early temperance movement was established around 1828, and the desire of middle-class reform-

ers to alleviate lower-class misery fueled it. The movement's supporters wanted a sober society but not necessarily a dry one, so they attacked gin and other spirits, permitted wine, and promoted beer as the wholesome temperance alternative. In 1830, Parliament, wanting to encourage the switch from gin to beer, enacted the Beer Act, which eliminated the duty on beer and made licensing easier. Inevitably, beer houses mushroomed across the country. In a letter written just days after passage of the Beer Act, Sydney Smith observed, "The new Beer Bill has begun its operations. Everybody is drunk. Those who are not singing are sprawling. The sovereign people are in a beastly state."⁵

The temperance movement did little to reduce drunkenness because beer consumed in sufficient quantity was as devastatingly intoxicating as gin. The movement's refined patrons were from the upper echelons, and lower-class individuals rejected their paternalistic moral crusade. In part, the early temperance movement collapsed because its promoters failed to recognize the central role of public houses in lower-class life. Public houses were the social clubs and entertainment centers of their day. Their sizable rooms and convivial atmosphere provided camaraderie and an escape from cramped homes that lacked basic amenities. The reality, succinctly stated by one who lived in those times, was that "there were only two places to go in spending time

away from one's own home—the church or chapel, and the alehouse; the former were seldom open, while the latter was seldom closed.”⁶

The temperance movement had a fatal flaw: promoting beer drinking was inconsistent with sobriety. Next, the desire to eradicate the use of *all* alcohol begat the teetotal movement, and this was a laboring class movement from inception. Joseph Livesey, a liberal Scottish Baptist living in the booming northwestern cotton town of Preston, was England's most influential teetotaler. In 1832, Preston formed its own temperance society, and its members pledged to “abstain from all liquors of an intoxicating quality, whether Ale, Porter, Wine, or Ardent Spirits, except as Medicines.”⁷ The following year, an incident occurred that some believe created a new word in the English language. At a Preston temperance meeting, Richard—better known as Dicky—Turner was moved to cry out “I'll be reet down out-and-out t-t-total for ever and ever.”⁸ Livesey then claimed the name “teetotal” for the total-abstinence movement.

Initially, teetotalism was regarded with suspicion, for as Joseph Lawson, who lived in the remote Yorkshire village of Pudsey then tells:

When Teetotalism first came up, the few who happened to be its first adherents and propagators were mostly persons of somewhat pale countenance, and the great proof of health at that day was ruddy complexion and robustness. We really thought they were carrying the

*thing too far, and that their self sacrifice was endangering their lives. . . . The whole community was looking on expecting that the first teetotalers would not long be able to survive.*⁹

Livesey and his reformed drunkards traveled by cart, spreading their message in the style of early Methodist preachers, and their energy dispelled the common belief that beer was essential for survival. Abstinence meant rejecting the conviviality of the public house, but the teetotal movement filled the void. It paired new members with reformed drinkers, and everyone was kept busy with meetings at which tea was served. Conversions to total abstinence were akin to religious conversions. They were frequently emotional and public and culminated in the signing of “the pledge.” By 1835, the tentacles of the teetotal movement had reached London, and the British Teetotal Temperance Society was formed.

Although Dicky Turner's tombstone credits him with coining the word “teetotal,” others believe the word was in use decades earlier.¹⁰ The United States also claims credit for the word. In 1827, the New York Temperance Society disbursed pledge cards requesting a signed commitment to either the “O.P.” (Old Pledge, denoting partial abstinence) or “T” (Total, denoting total abstinence). Calling out “T-total” to promote the total-abstinence pledge card, supposedly gave rise to the word “teetotal.” ❀

1.7.1

Ale Bench

Impressed and painted "ALE BENCH", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,¹ Staffordshire, c. 1830, L: 7.4 in., H: 6.8 in., MBS-572



Notes

This ale bench shows a couple happily glugging ale. The early temperance movement, believing beer to be a wholesome substitute for more intoxicating beverages, promoted that drink.

The "Sherratt" pot bank's ALE BENCH and TEE TOTAL groups (nos. 1.7.1-1.7.4) illustrate the evolution of the temperance movement in England: first, believing that imbibing ale made for sobriety (this ale bench and the next show peaceful drinking); then, realizing that drinking ale to excess resulted in domestic violence (no. 1.7.3, ale bench showing a couple fighting); and lastly, believing that teetotalism should be encouraged to prevent drunkenness (no. 1.7.4, tee total group showing the family at tea).

This ale bench is a perhaps unique variation on the better-known version in our collection on a table base (no. 1.7.2). The figures are essentially the same, just the base is different. I have only otherwise seen this "Sherratt" base on one Tee Total group and on Tam O'Shanter and Souter Johnny groups. "Sherratt" made Tam-Souter groups from 1828 (the year in which the statues that are the design sources were carved), and I suspect that this base first came into use around then. ALE BENCH and TEE TOTAL groups date from just a little later, so perhaps "Sherratt" made the earliest versions with this low base, and then switched to the traditional footed base.

This ale bench previously belonged to an individual who lives in Manhattan, and she had bought it in 1992 from the late

dealer Alistair Sampson for £3,380. I took it on approval in December 2017, certain that one or other of the collectors I guide would love it. Instead, it charmed both of us so much that we kept it. Why the allure? It is strangely difficult to explain, but the group is far more open than traditional versions. Essentially, this is because the figures and other objects are all visibly smaller than usual. While they were formed from the molds normally used, there was extra shrinkage in firing, which is noticeable to the naked eye. Add to that, the surface area of the base is larger. Although the base is essentially the same width as the regular table base measured at its widest, here it is wider at the very front; it is also a tad deeper than the regular base because of the bowed-out area in front. As a result, the group appears more spacious and open than usual; in addition, the paler green lends a tranquil rather than jovial air; and the condition exudes authenticity.

Also of note on this group are the browned edges to some of the bocage leaves. I have seen this before and call it "salting," for want of a better word. It essentially is breakdown or weakness in the enamels. Today, restorers would tend to paint over the leaves to satisfy stupid buyers, and the result would be a very plastic look, to my eye. When this group was in the stock of the renowned Alistair Sampson, he had a bocage leaf on the right restored. The restorer painted the edges of the new leaf brown to match the rest. What great respect for originality! As a result, the group maintains its integrity and oozes authenticity. ❁

1.7.2

Ale Bench

Impressed and painted "ALE BENCH" and "ALE BENCH", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,¹² Staffordshire, c. 1830, H: 8.4 in., MBS-62



Notes

This ale bench, unlike the following model, advocates ale as a soothing beverage. Both "Sherratt" ale bench models are rare, but, because they are well known in the literature, people think they are readily procurable. This is not the case at all. I suspect that there are far fewer ale benches than there are Death of Munrow groups, and the latter is thought to be a great rarity.

We bought this group from Ray and Diane Ginns in 1993. The little table is a particularly well-done restoration, and invariably that table is missing from this group. I suspect this happens because people tend to place their thumbs on it when holding or lifting the group. Another, *sans* table, is in the Brighton and Hove Museums (HW1479).

Literature

For this group see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 171; also Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780—1840*, vol. 4, fig. 148.1.

For another in the Brighton and Hove Museums see Beddoe, *A Potted History*, 289.

For another in the Sharp Collection see Sharp, *Ceramics Ethics & Scandal*, 107. ❀

1.7.3

Ale Bench

Impressed and painted "ALE BENCH", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,¹³ Staffordshire, c. 1830, H: 8 in., MBS-200





Notes

This ale bench shows a domestic fight; it reflects the dawning understanding that beer could be as intoxicating as any other form of alcohol and perpetuated the cycle of public and domestic violence.

We had passed on this ale bench at auction early in 2005 because the bocage needed some work, but we had second thoughts and bought it from Roger Deville with the assistance of Nick Burton in September 2005. Only in 2017, did I see another offered for sale privately. I tend to be too unforgiving when it comes to restoration, but I am becoming less so as time passes. I have learned that holding out for a perfect figure or even a better figure can mean going without it for ever.

Similar ale bench groups are in the Brighton and Hove Museums (HW1477), the Victoria and Albert Museum (C.3-2002), and the Hunt Collection.

This ale bench was exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007.

Literature

For this ale bench see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 173; also Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 4, fig. 148.3.

For another in the Brighton and Hove Museums see Beddoe, A

Potted History, 296.

For another in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 57.

For another in the Sharp Collection see Sharp, *Ceramics Ethics & Scandal*, 106. ❀

1.7.4

Tee Total

Impressed and painted "TEE TOTAL", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,¹⁴ Staffordshire, c. 1835, H: 8.1 in., MBS-85





Notes

TEE TOTAL shows a family happily partaking of tea, as the Teetotal movement encouraged from around 1830 onward. The father clutches his head—a hangover perhaps? This is the third “Sherratt” group in our collection illustrating the evolution of the English temperance movement. The groups date to post-1828 and may have been intended as companions. On all, the open turrets serve as spill holders. All have marbled bases rather than bases associated with earlier “Sherratt” production.

We bought this group from Ray and Diane Ginns in 1995. The two ale bench groups that stand alongside it were bought before and after this, over a period of twelve years, and if I had wanted to buy three similar groups within the past twelve years, I would not have been able to do so.

This group was exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007. Similar *TEE TOTAL* groups are in the Fitzwilliam Museum (C.964-1928), the Brighton and Hove Museums (HW1521), the Victoria and Albert Museum (C.2-2002), and the Hunt Collection.

Literature

For this group see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 178; also Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 4, fig. 148.5.

For another in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 59.

For another in the Sharp Collection see Sharp, *Ceramics Ethics & Scandal*, 106.

For another in the Brighton and Hove Museums see Beddoe, *A Potted History*, 296. ❀

Endnotes

1. Lewis, *Pratt Ware*, 74.
2. Ibid.
3. Trusler, *Chronology*, 29.
4. Erredge, *History of Brighthelmston*, 229.
5. Smith, *Memoir*, 295.
6. Lawson, *Progress in Pudsey*, 58.
7. Livesey, *Life and Teachings*, 64.
8. Burns, *Temperance History*, 73.
9. Lawson, *Progress in Pudsey*, 60.
10. Schkolne, *People, Passions*, 177–178.
11. Hodkinson, *Sherratt?*; Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1:36–37.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.



CHAPTER 2

King and Country

Extract from "MRS POPE AS BRITANNIA." Published by M. & M. Skelt, London, c. 1838. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

QUEEN CHARLOTTE WAS BORN SOPHIA Charlotte on May 19, 1744, in the north-German duchy of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. On September 7, 1761, Charlotte, who spoke no English, arrived in London for her marriage the next day to King George III (1738–1820), who had the previous year succeeded to the British throne on the death of his grandfather.

Queen Charlotte bore fifteen children, thirteen of whom survived into adulthood. Intellectually curious, she took an avid interest in botany, German musicians and composers, and the decorative arts. By nature, she was loving and warm, but her husband's descent into insanity altered her disposition. She died on November 17, 1818, with her son the Prince Regent at her side. After the present Duke of Edinburgh, she is the longest serving consort in British history, and her name lives on in places across the globe.

Today, it is popularly rumored that Queen Charlotte descended from African ancestors and thereby is Britain's only black monarch. Credible historians doubt this theory, pointing out that the nine-generation distance between Charlotte and her supposedly black ancestor (Margarita de Castro y Sousa, a Portuguese noblewoman said to have descended from an African woman in the thirteenth century) is just too big a stretch. Sir Allan Ramsay painted most of the official portraits of Queen Charlotte, and his portrayals are interpreted to intimate an

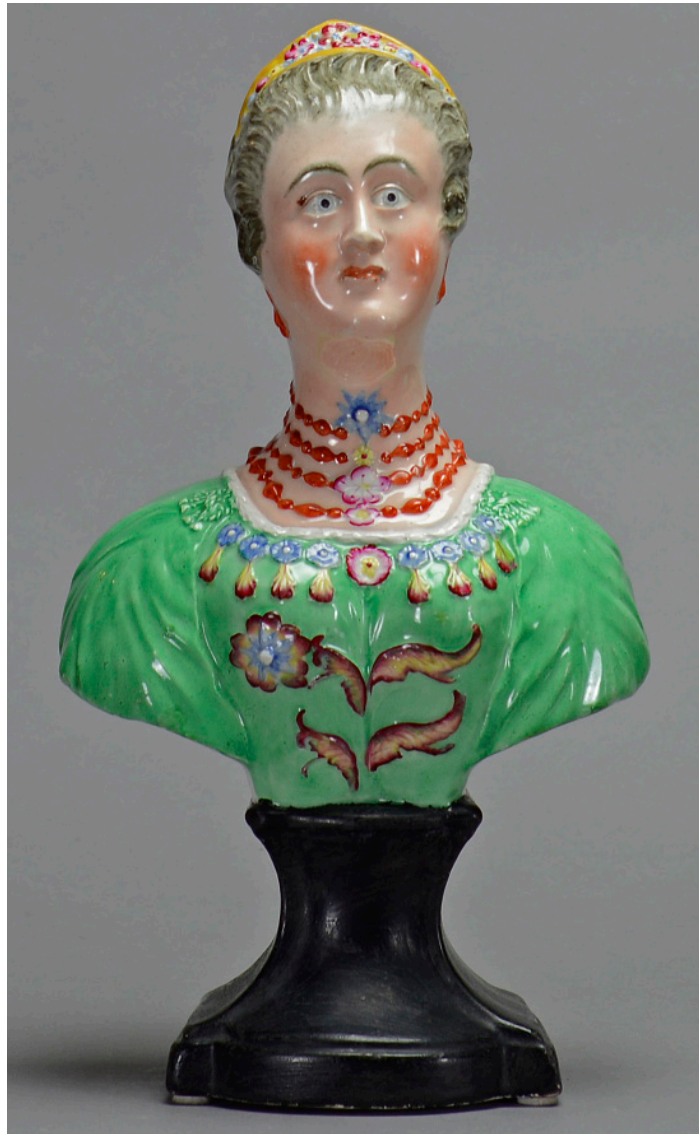
African heritage, but conceivably Ramsay had an alternate agenda. He was one of the leading anti-slavery intellectuals of his time, and his grand-niece by marriage was black (Dido Elizabeth Belle Lindsay, the niece of Lord Mansfield, whose famous ruling of 1772 was interpreted to mean that slavery could not exist in England). In any event, none of the contemporary caricatures of the queen suggest she was anything other than white, and caricaturists of that day would have had a field day if the queen's appearance indicated African descent.

The flower *Strelitzia Reginae*, also known as the crane flower or bird of paradise, is named for Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. ❀

2.1.1

Queen Charlotte (bust)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1800, H: 10.5 in., MBS-535



Notes

I bought this bust, which is unrecorded, at auction at Susanin's in October 2015, while I was in New York helping John Howard with the International Fine Arts and Antiques Show at the Park Avenue Armory.

To my mind, this bust is a very good likeness of the queen and exhibits the upturned nose evident in contemporary images, as well as the choke necklace she favored then. She lives on the deep window ledge at my kitchen sink. I am very taken with her and don't believe I will ever see a bust I like more. Visitors to our home routinely admire her, for who can resist the soft green of her clothing (an early enamel color, pre-1805) and those jewels? ❀



Charlotte Queen of Great Britain. Published by Carington Bowles after James MacArdell, c. 1765. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

PRINCE GEORGE AUGUSTUS FREDERICK, THE first child of King George III and Queen Charlotte, was born on August 12, 1762. He ruled Britain as Prince Regent from 1811 because his father was mentally ill, and, upon the death of the king on January 29, 1820, he acceded to the British throne as King George IV. As the Prince of Wales, George came to be dubbed the Prince of Pleasure because of his extravagantly dissolute life style: he drank and ate to excess, pursued women, and indulged in the finest material goods. This arbiter of taste put leisure and elegance above all else, and his flamboyant preferences dictated the style that later came to be dubbed “Regency.”

George had a succession of mistresses, but his first great love was Maria Fitzherbert, a commoner and twice-widowed Catholic who was six years his senior. The Royal Marriages Act of 1772 mandated that a royal marriage have the consent of the king, and as this would have been refused, George and Mrs. Fitzherbert married secretly in 1785, but their marriage was not legitimate.

As heir to the throne, George was under pressure to marry legitimately, and in 1795, pressured by ever-spiraling debts and bribed by the promise of an increased parliamentary allowance, he entered into an arranged marriage with his first cousin, Princess Caroline of Brunswick¹. The couple met for the

first time three days before their marriage and took an instant dislike to each other. George embraced Caroline dutifully, then turned away in disgust and asked for a glass of brandy; she commented, “My God! Is that the Prince? I find him very fat, and not as handsome as his portrait.” By all accounts, George found his new wife unclean, physically repulsive, and vulgar. They are said to have performed their marital duty only three times, and nine months after their wedding, Princess Charlotte, their only child, was born. By that year, George and Caroline were living apart.

In February 1811, George, became Regent. By now this enormously obese prince was publicly mocked by the press and people of all classes for his libertine ways, his gluttony and hard drinking, his love of women, and his shameless extravagance. Added to this, the royal marriage was publicly acrimonious. Gossip about Caroline’s alleged scandalous infidelity and indecency was an embarrassment to the crown, and the public, perceiving Caroline as a wronged wife, sympathized with her.

In 1814, Caroline, ostracized at court, departed England for Europe, where she lived as man and wife with her Italian secretary. George desperately wanted to be rid of his wife, but divorce would have required a public trial with the airing of much dirty laundry on both sides.

When King George III died in January 1820, George, aged 57, ascended the throne as King George IV, and Caroline became queen in name. George promptly ordered his wife excluded from prayers for the royal family in the Anglican liturgy. Caroline, angered by the insult, returned to England to claim her right to be queen. Despite her scandalous reputation, the public supported her because they loathed her husband, and cheering crowds greeted her when she arrived that June. On the new king's instructions, a Bill of Pains and Penalties was put forward in Parliament in an attempt to prove that Caroline's relationship with her secretary validated stripping her of her titles and annulling the royal marriage. The sordid parliamentary proceedings were essentially a trial of Caroline that captivated the nation. Reformers opposed to the king supported her, as did the public who perceived the double standard of trying Caroline as "wronged," despite her husband's philandering. The bill barely got through the Lords and was withdrawn rather than face defeat in the Commons.

King George IV was crowned on July 19, 1821, but he barred his queen from entering Westminster Abbey. Undeterred, Caroline arrived at the Abbey in her carriage but was repeatedly turned away at its entrances. Her undignified behavior cost her the people's support, and crowds jeered as her carriage drove away. That night Caroline took ill, and she died nineteen days later.

For all his faults, George was a man of great wit and charm. He had impeccable taste, but his uncontrolled spending and his

treatment of his wife earned him the contempt of the nation, and this hung as a cloud over the monarchy. By the time he ascended the throne, his debauched life style had taken its toll, and he was in ill health. He died on 15 July, 1830. The nation was relieved. The *Times* editorialized with brutal frankness the day after his funeral, "There never was an individual less regretted by his fellow-creatures than this deceased king....If George the Fourth ever had a friend—a devoted friend—in any rank of life, we protest that the name of him or her has not yet reached us."✿

2.2.1

King George IV

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1820, H: 6.5 in., MBS-520

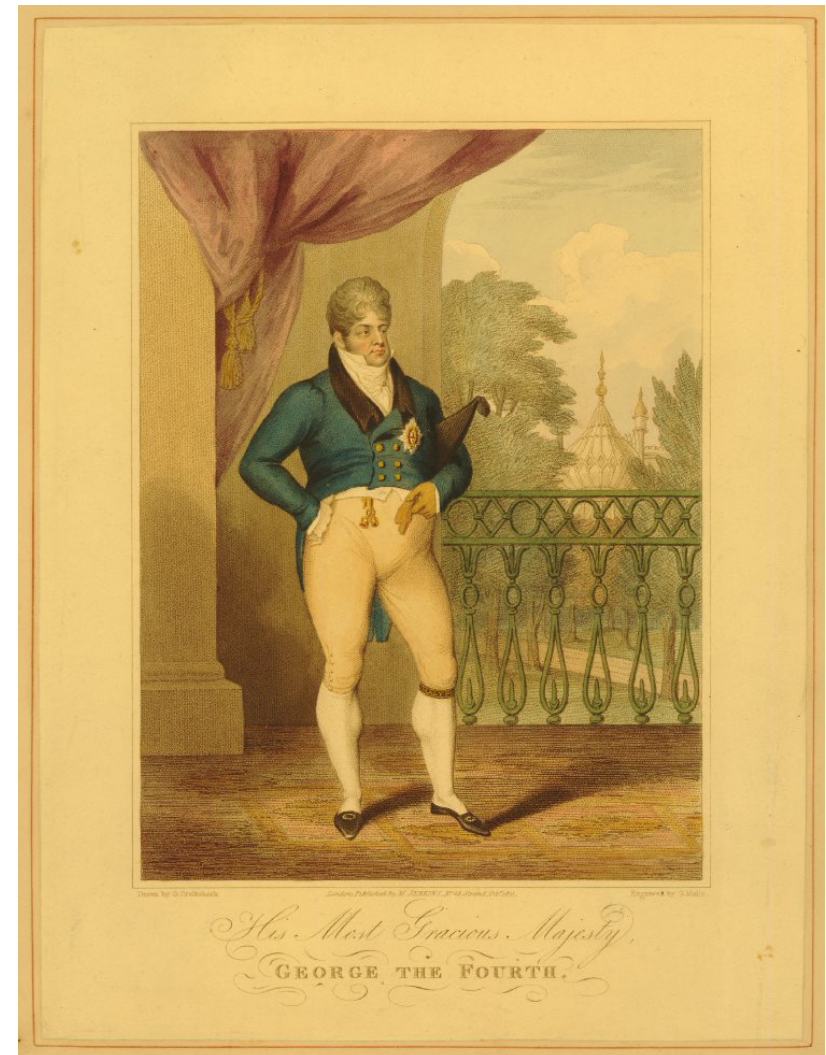


Notes

I have long admired a nearly identical figure of King George IV in the Brighton and Hove Museums' Willett Collection (HW68), and I photographed it in 2012 for inclusion in *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*. Of course, I longed for one to come on the market, so I was excited when I was able to buy this important figure at Woolley and Wallis in May 2014, against strong competition from, I suspect, collectors of items pertaining to royalty. The figure is small but it captures the great royal presence. I know of no others, although I am told that there may be one in a private English collection.

Literature

For the similar figure in the Brighton and Hove Museums see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 65.2; also Beddoe, *A Potted History*, 24. ❀



His Most Gracious Majesty KING GEORGE THE FOURTH.
George Cruikshank, 1821. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

2.2.2

King George IV (plaque)

Impressed "WELCOME KING GEORGE IV", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Scotland, c. 1822, L: 8.7 in., MBS-564



Notes

In August 1822, King George IV was the first reigning monarch to visit Scotland since 1650, and potters at the Fife Pottery in Kirkaldy made colorful plaques commemorating the historic occasion. I first saw one of these beauties at an antiques show in Birmingham more than ten years ago, and, undeterred by obvious touch-ups to the enamel on the black frame, was about to buy it when the dealer declared it perfect. While the restoration was minimal, almost expected, I froze. I can't abide a liar and prefer not knowingly giving a penny to one.

In the following years, a few similar commemorative plaques came to market, but again and again there were issues. Some were too plain, and others were too worn or too damaged. I bought this plaque at auction in the UK in July 2017. The condition report failed to disclose that a restorer had sprayed the entire frame of the plaque and most of the back. The minute I touched it, my heart sank because it felt wrong, and as I picked at the plasticky-feeling surface, it started to flake. At that point I had to know what was, or was not, beneath, so I stripped the whole plaque. To my relief, the restorer's gunk concealed merely a chip to a corner and a hairline at the top.

George Haggarty, the expert on Scottish pottery, notes that plaques of this type are rarer than their plainer counterparts. He tentatively attributes them to the Fife Pottery, but more evidence is needed. ❁



His present Majesty GEORGE THE FOURTH, from the latest correct Likeness. c. 1820

2.2.3

King George IV (plate)

Impressed "WELCOME KING GEORGE IV", painted "Robert McDonald and Margret Allan," lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Scotland, c. 1822, diameter: 7.5 in., MBS-584





Notes

In 2018, we bought this perfect plate, drooling delicious glaze, in Australia, via eBay. To my mind, it is the happiest of items, and the plump monarch seems to bask in rays of green sunshine. I have not seen anything like it.

Clearly, this plate, like the plaque in our collection previously shown, was made in Scotland in 1822 to commemorate King George IV's visit that year. The names of the original owners, Robert McDonald and Margret Allen, are painted on the reverse.

Who were Robert McDonald and Margret Allan? The Edinburgh parish register records their marriage on September 17, 1802. Best I can make out, the record reads, "Robert MacDonald Hosier New Grayfriars Parish and Margaret Allan St Andrew Church Parish Daughter Allan Labourer in Musselburgh."²

Scottish women sometimes retained their maiden names. The couple had twin daughters, Helen and Elizabeth, who were christened in Musselburgh Church, at which time Robert was a corporal in the Dumfriesshire Militia.

Now a spanner gets into the works, as often happens with research. On April 21, 1810, Robert, then a sergeant in the Ayrshire militia, died, and he was buried in Musselburgh Church two days later. Consequently, this Robert McDonald and Margaret Allan could not have acquired this plate together in 1822.

As I can find no other couple with the same names, the plate's original ownership remains an unsolved puzzle.

George Haggarty, the expert on Scottish pottery, has remarked that this plate is "important" and has as-yet unsubstantiated links to the Newbigging Pottery at Musselburgh. ❀ ❀

2.2.4

Queen Caroline (plaque)

Relief modeled "Q C", lead-glazed earthenware with pink luster and enameled decoration, probably Staffordshire or perhaps Swansea, c. 1820, H: 5.4 in., MBS-575



Notes

I suspect this plaque was made some time between January 1820 (when Caroline of Brunswick became Queen Caroline because her husband ascended to the throne as George IV) and August 1821 (when she died). In *Commemorative Pottery 1780-1900*, John and Jennifer May note it is rare and is popularly attributed to Swansea.

I bought this little gem from Martyn Edgell in early 2018. He had had it on his website for a long time, and I would visit the site frequently to look at it, hoping each time that it had not been sold. As I worked on an article on royal ceramic portraiture for publication in *Ars Ceramica*, I finally succumbed and happily added it to our collection.

Literature

For another, see May, *Commemorative Pottery*, 35. ❀



CAROLINE Queen of England. Published by Jones, London, 1820.

2.2.5

King George IV and Queen Caroline (dishes, pair)

Impressed Queen Caroline” and “King George III”, lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, George Gordon, Scotland, 1821, H: 8 in. each, MBS-578



Notes

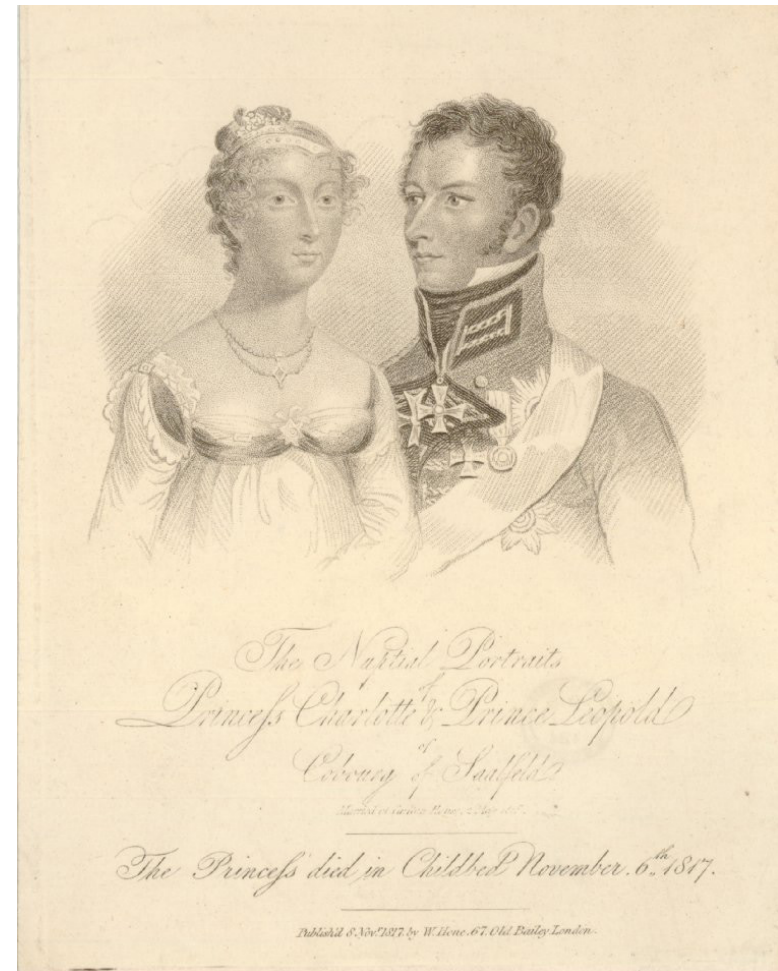
We bought this unrecorded pair of dishes at auction at A. H. Wilkens, Toronto, in March 2018. Their size suggests they were intended for display or for nursery use. The plates are bright and crisp, and their beautifully decorated relief borders are adorned with crowns as well as roses and thistles (the national flowers of England and Scotland respectively). The manner in which the monarchs names are impressed evokes the Scottish plaque of King George in our collection.

A King George plate of the same form in the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh. ❁

PRINCESS CHARLOTTE AUGUSTA OF WALES was the only child of the ill-fated marriage between George, Prince of Wales (later King George IV) and his wife Caroline of Brunswick. Born on January 7, 1796, she was named for her paternal grandmother, Queen Charlotte, and her maternal grandmother and great-aunt, the English Princess Augusta, then Duchess of Brunswick-Lüneberg. She was second in line to the British throne after her father.

From birth, Charlotte was a pawn in her parents' matrimonial battles, and she had a lonely, isolated childhood. By the time she entered her teens, she was headstrong and rebellious, and her demeanor was uncouth. But faced with the madness of their monarch King George III and disgusted by the dissipated lifestyle of the despised Prince of Wales, the British public pinned their hopes for the future on the young princess.

By the time Charlotte was of marrying age, the choice of a suitable husband had become a matter of national importance. Her father, tried to force her to marry William, Prince of Orange, but she flatly refused. In 1814, Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, an impoverished prince serving as a lieutenant general in the Russian Cavalry, caught her eye when he visited London with Czar Alexander to celebrate Napoleon's defeat. Charlotte insisted, her father relented, and in February 1816, Leopold returned to England to be formally introduced.



The Nuptial Portraits Princess Charlotte & Prince Leopold of Cobourg of Saalfeld. Published by William Hone, 1817. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Charlotte was smitten, and her father found Leopold most suitable. The nation was ecstatic, and on May 2 1816, crowds filled London to glimpse the couple on their wedding day. Princess Charlotte is said to have laughed during the ceremony when the penniless Leopold repeated the words, “With all my worldly goods I thee endow.”

In April 1817, it was known that the princess was pregnant, and the nation was agog with anticipation. The princess ate excessively in the first months of pregnancy and gained an alarming amount of weight. By the time the baby arrived in November, it was two weeks overdue, and Charlotte had been weakened by months of the blood-letting and dieting imposed by fashionable medicine in an attempt to reduce her and the baby’s size. But the baby was excessively large and it lay transversely. Charlotte labored long and hard, but intervention was not considered appropriate, and at 9 p.m. on November 5, after fifty hours of labor, she gave birth to a nine-pound stillborn son. She died at 2:30 the next morning. She was only twenty-one.

Prince Leopold was inconsolable, the Prince of Wales was plunged into grief, and the nation went into deep mourning. “It really was as if every household throughout Great Britain had lost a favourite child,”³ wrote the politician Henry Brougham. Three months later, Sir Richard Croft, the attending physician, was so depressed by the tragedy that he fatally shot himself. With Charlotte’s death, it was as if the British nation had lost its future. *England’s ONLY Hope Departing*, the title of an engraving by George Cruikshank of the princess on her death-



HIS S. H. PRINCE OF SAXE COBOURG. c. 1816.

bed, reflects that sentiment.

Although King George III and Queen Charlotte then had thirteen adult children, Charlotte had been their sole legitimate grandchild. With her death, the race to produce the next heir to the throne was on. In 1818, the Prince of Wales's brother, the elderly Edward, Duke of Kent, married the widowed Princess Victoire of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, Prince Leopold's sister. Their daughter, born the next year, was to be the future Queen Victoria.

Prince Leopold played an influential role in Victoria's life, and he was instrumental in arranging his young niece's marriage to his nephew, Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha. In 1831, Leopold became the first king of the Belgians. The next year, he married Louise-Marie of Orleans, the daughter of the French king, Louis Philippe. They named their youngest child Charlotte. ❁



Her Serene Highness Princess Charlotte of Wales and Saxe Cobourg. c. 1816.

2.3.1

Princess Charlotte and Prince Leopold (plaques, pair)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enamel and gilt decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1817, diameter: 7.3 in. each, MBS-262



Notes

We bought this stunning pair of plaques in molded frames from John Howard in October 2007. I hesitated because they seemed awfully expensive, but, in retrospect, they were not. Plaques from the same molds are in the Brighton and Hove Museums, but the museum's Leopold is unpainted, while Charlotte is painted but not gilded.

The relief on these plaques is extraordinarily high and they were made in an atypical manner, as is evident from viewing the backs. I have noted two other high-relief plaques in our collection made in a similar manner. Depicting the Triumph of Cybele and the Triumph of Bacchus (no. 22.1.5, no. 22.1.6), they were, I suspect, made by the same pot bank.

Literature

For the plaques from the same molds in the Brighton and Hove Museums see Beddoe, *A Potted History*, 23, 27. ❀

2.3.2

Princess Charlotte (jug)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1817, H: 8.3 in., MBS-351



Notes

The outpouring of public emotion that followed the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, in 1997 was reminiscent of the hysteria that followed Princess Charlotte's demise in 1817. Charlotte's death prompted the Staffordshire potters to fashion assorted memorabilia, and this jug was probably potted in that spirit.

This jug is quite lovely, and it conveys a serenity that was, I suspect, quite alien to the rather coarse princess. I bought it from the late Aurea Carter in June 2009. The model has been reproduced, but later versions fall far short of the mark. ❀

2.3.3

Princess Charlotte (plaque)

Transfer printed "THE LATE AND MUCH LAMENTED Princess Charlotte of Saxe Cobourg Who departed this life November 6.th 1817", lead-glazed earthenware with transfer-printed and enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1817, diameter: 5 in., MBS-411



Notes

I bought this plaque, described as a pot lid, on eBay in 2011 and have not been able to trace another like it. I suspect that the hole was drilled later for hanging.

I have noted a similar plaque (lacking color decoration) in porcelain, paired with another of Leopold titled with just his name. Consequently, I suspect the pottery plaques may have been made in pairs too. ❀

IN 1830, ONLY TWO MONTHS SHY OF HIS SIXTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY, Prince William, Duke of Clarence (1765-1837) ascended to the throne of Great Britain and Ireland and the Kingdom of Hanover. He succeeded his brother, George IV.

In 1817, a twist of fate had inched William closer to the throne. In that year, his father was suffering from a protracted period of insanity, and William's brother, Prince George, ruled England as regent. That year, Princess Charlotte, Prince George's only legitimate child, died in childbirth. Her death triggered a succession crisis because the king's twelve aging children lacked legitimate offspring.

By now, William had already fathered ten illegitimate children by his mistress the actress Dorothea Jordan. Lured by promises of parliamentary allowances, he and his brothers rushed to negotiate suitable marriages with European princesses. Deeply in debt, William reluctantly settled for Adelaide, twenty-seven years his junior.

Adelaide was born Princess Adelaide Amelia Louisa Theresa Caroline of Saxe-Coburg Meiningen on August 13, 1792, in the tiny duchy of Saxe-Meiningen in present-day Germany. She was homely but amiable and accepting of William's illegitimate brood. He wrote, "She is doomed, poor, dear, innocent young creature to be my wife." They met for the first time a week

before their wedding. On July 13, 1818, they were married in a double ceremony with William's brother, Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, father of the future Queen Victoria.

Marriage mellowed William, and the couple settled into a staid, parsimonious lifestyle. Despite multiple pregnancies, she bore no surviving children, and by the time he ascended the throne, Princess Victoria of Kent was his acknowledged heir. He died on June 20, 1837, nursed to the end by the devoted Adelaide. She died on December 2, 1849. ❁



Engravings of Queen Adelaide and King William IV after William John Alais's drawings in *Bell's Weekly Messenger*, 1830.

2.4.1

King William IV and Queen Adelaide (busts, pair)

Impressed and painted "KING WILLIAM THE FOURTH" and "QUEEN ADAERLENE", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,⁴ Staffordshire, c. 1835, H: 10.1 in.(L), 10" (R), MBS-609



Notes

I had long admired a similar bust of Queen Adelaide in the Hunt Collection and the companion bust of King William in the Hodgkinson Collection. I couldn't believe my luck when this true pair came up at Franklin Browns in Scotland in November 202, along with some other pieces of early pottery, including a large Polito's menagerie. I am told that these items all belonged to a Scottish museum, courtesy of a collector who gave them many years ago. No doubt they had been stored away from the public's eye, and thankfully the museum now needed funds (ostensibly to offset losses incurred during the Covid pandemic) and had decided to part with them. This pair of busts just blew me away, and I was prepared to reach deep into my pocket to get them.

The Hunts' bust is impressed "QUEEN ADDERLENE", and the Hodgkinsons' is "KING WILLIAM THE IV". Clearly, the titles were impressed letter by letter into the wet clay, hence the discrepancies. I have not seen this color palette on a "Sherratt" base before, but what could be prettier?

The busts are after prints of the royal couple after William John Alais's drawings in *Bell's Weekly Messenger* of 1830.

Literature

For a similar bust of King William titled KING WILLIAM THE IV see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 4, fig. 200.78.

For a similar bust of Queen Adelaide titled QUEEN ADDERLENE see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 4, fig. 200.79. Also see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 265. ❁

THE ROYAL COAT OF ARMS of the United Kingdom is an icon of national unity that has evolved over centuries. The crest that surmounts it comprises a crowned golden lion standing atop a royal crown. To either side stand a rampant lion and unicorn, emblematic of national pride.

From ancient times, the lion, the king of the beasts, has symbolized primal power and sovereignty, and from the late thirteenth century lions became prominent on royal shields. The unicorn, on the other hand, is a mythical animal that is as old as civilization. Medieval bestiaries firmly established the unicorn as a fabulous creature with the head and body of a horse, the legs of a deer, the tail of a lion or horse, and a single twisted horn atop its head. It is typically shown chained because it was perceived as a dangerous creature that only a beautiful young virgin could tame.

Before the seventeenth century, a lion usually stood to one side of England's arms, while two unicorns supported Scotland's arms. When Queen Elizabeth I died childless in 1603, her cousin, King James VI of Scotland, ascended to the English throne. To symbolize harmony between his two kingdoms, King James tactfully placed a rampant crowned unicorn to the right of the royal arms and a rampant crowned lion to the left. Just over a century later, the Act of Union of 1707 formally united Scotland with England and Wales as the united king-



dom of Great Britain. After the Hanoverian succession of 1714, the crown was removed from the unicorn's head.

The shield in the center of the coat of arms depicts England's three lions passant, a Scottish lion rampant, and an Irish harp. The French phrase "Honi soit qui mal y pense" on a garter surrounding the shield is the motto of the Order of the Garter, the supreme order of chivalry that King Edward III founded in 1348. At the base of the shield are national floral emblems—a rose, thistle, and shamrock for England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively—and the French phrase "Dieu et Mon Droit" (God and My Right) that King Richard I supposedly used as a password at the Battle of Gisors in 1198. In the fifteenth century, King Henry VI selected these words as the royal motto. ❀

2.5.1

Royal Armorial Container

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1820, H: 10 in., MBS-526





Notes

The crest surmounting the royal coat of arms is a crowned golden lion atop a crown, and here a crowned golden lion atop a crown forms the stopper of this container. No other armorial container is known to have retained this small stopper, although I have concluded that each originally had one. The purpose of such containers is unknown as their shape is ill-suited to pouring liquids or holding spills or flowers.

Of interest is the small central inescutcheon surmounted by a crown. This represents the Electorate of Hanover, the galloping horse on it being the symbol of Hanover. From 1714–1837, English kings were also the Electors of Hanover. Prior to 1816, a bonnet rather than a crown sat atop the inescutcheon. The presence of a crown here implies post-1816 manufacture.

A friend has a similar armorial container (lacking that all-important stopper) that he bought a good many years ago from the then top-of-the-trade dealer Alistair Sampson. I had long thought it a beautiful object and, to my eye, so much nicer than the better-known Walton armorial spill vase. When an almost identical one (again without stopper) came up at auction in the US in around 2012, I bought it. Not too long after, in late November 2014, this container came up at Sotheby's New York, from the collection of Mrs. Paul (Bunny) Mellon. It had formerly been with D. M. & P. Manheim, New York. To say I was shocked to see a stopper is an understatement. It would have been so simple if the stopper had been a restoration, but it was in completely original condition. I had to buy it, and I

did so against stiff competition. In short, this was one expensive little stopper—but I am thrilled to have it. To date, the only armorial vases of this form that I have recorded are those mentioned here.

Literature

For a similar container lacking the stopper see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, figs. 63.1–2. ❁

2.5.2

Armorial-type vase

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,⁵ Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 8.8 in., MBS-358





Notes

The vase is designed after the royal coat of arms of the United Kingdom. As might be expected, a lion and a unicorn stand as heraldic supporters to either side of the bulbous shield area, which is decorated with a clock face. The leaf sprig encircling the waist of the vase is a less obvious “Sherratt” feature.

We bought this vase at auction at Brightwell’s in September 2009. A collector friend also wanted it, but, as I had stood aside for him umpteen times, he stood aside for us. It is unrecorded and, as we were prepared to bid to a high level, my friend Nick Burton viewed it and handled the auction on our behalf.

Two related “Sherratt” vases are documented, but the addition of the tiny sheep to this one as well as the bright palette make it especially appealing, and, even though it stands on a high shelf in our house, visitors seldom fail to notice it. On all three “Sherratt” armorial vases, the clock hands stand at 11:46, the same time as is shown on clocks on “Sherratt” *Prepare To Meet Thy God* groups.

A collector who inherited a smimilar vase tells me that when his mother bought it she was told it celebrated Queen Caroline prevailing in her scandalous divorce trial of 1820. I believe there is more than a grain of truth to this. The figure in relief at the top of the vase might be expected to be one or other of the classical deities. Instead, it resembles Caroline, right down to the three Prince of Wales feathers in her hair.

Literature

For this vase see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 63.4.

For a related vase in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 63.6; also Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 3. The small flowers at the base of this vase are exclusive “Sherratt” attributes.

For another related vase see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 63.5. ❁

FOR MORE THAN TWO MILLENNIA, Britannia has personified Britain. In the first century C.E., Roman invaders established in today's England a province that they called Britannia (a name already in use for that geographical region), and they placed on coins a female figure representing the province. After the Roman occupation, the name "Britannia" dwindled in use, but it was revived in the Renaissance era as a sense of national identity evolved. When the Union of Crowns in 1603 united England and Scotland beneath one monarch, the concept of Britain as an island nation took root, and Britannia was to become the iconic personification of Britain and her empire.

In Elizabethan times, Britannia became established in modern imagery. Her trident or spear alludes to Britain's global dominance; her helmet attests to her preparedness for battle; the lion at her side is the regal animal found on the arms of England and Scotland; and the flag on her shield is the Union Jack, the national flag that dates to the unification of the English and Scottish thrones in 1603. ❀



BRITANNIA crowning the DUKE OF WELLINGTON with VICTORY.
W. B. Walker, c. 1815. Courtesy Martyn Edgell Antiques Ltd.

2.6.1

Britannia

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled and silver luster decoration, made by Wood & Caldwell and impressed "WOOD & CALDWELL" and inscribed "Burslem", Staffordshire, c. 1810, H: 9.5 in. (without spear), MBS-212





Notes

The Wood & Caldwell partnership was formed in January 1791. This figure can be dated to between 1804, the year in which silver lustering was introduced commercially, and 1818, the year in which the partnership dissolved.

In early 2006, I found this Britannia on the small web site of the late Bernard Trower. As I had not previously bought from Bernard, I asked Nick Burton to check the figure. He made the long drive from Staffordshire to Suffolk and bought her. The silver luster and the rich enamels, as well as the lion's expressive face more than made up for one problem: the plume atop the head was a replacement. As Nick said, it looked like a yellow banana! We were determined to have the plume restored correctly, and so the search began for a Britannia with the correct plume. This was not easy. We turned to the Potteries Museum, but they could not access their figure within its locked case. Then Nick traveled to photograph a plume in a private collection—only to find that plume too was restored. We eventually got what we needed from Miranda Goodby at the Potteries Museum, who is always so very helpful. The spear, I will confess, is my handiwork. I have since noted that figures of Britannia almost invariably have lost their plumes, and restorers typically attach very poor substitutes atop the helmet. I do wish they would take the trouble to do this restoration correctly because that plume really is Britannia's crowning glory.

Similar figures are in the Brighton and Hove Museums, the

Potteries Museum, and the Fitzwilliam Museum (C.910-1928). This figure was exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 61.2.

For a similar figure in the Potteries Museum see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 162.

For a similar figure in the Brighton and Hove Museums, see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 61.3.

For a similar figure in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 9. ❀

SAINTE GEORGE IS THE PATRON saint of England. There are no historical sources for his existence; rather his origins are hagiographical. By the second millennium, Saint George was well established in European culture, and he was to become a recurrent figure in the iconography of many nations.

Jacobus de Voragine's popular medieval book of hagiographies, written between 1260 and 1275, tells the story of Saint George and the dragon. A beautiful princess was to be sacrificed to an evil dragon, but Saint George, after making the sign of the cross, stayed the dragon with his lance, and it is in this pose that Saint George is traditionally shown.

For Christian Crusaders of those times, the dragon embodied the evil that they believed they were fighting, so they revered Saint George and adopted his red and white cross as their own. From the thirteenth century, England gradually accepted Saint George as its patron saint; his cross was adopted as England's flag and it remains so today, although other entities too claim Saint George and his flag as their own. ❁



St. George. By Nicolas de Larmessin after Raphael, c. 1735. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

2.7.1

Saint George and the Dragon

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled and silver luster decoration, made by Wood & Caldwell with "Wood & Caldwell" and "Burslem" poorly incised, Staffordshire, c. 1810, H: 11 in. (without spear), MBS-229





Notes

For centuries, the theme of Saint George and the dragon has been represented in art. A print or a bronze equestrian statuette by the sculptor Francesco Fanelli (c. 1577–1661) probably influenced earthenware figure design.

This is very dramatic and fluid figure with an impressive presence. The Wood and Caldwell partnership that made it operated from 1791 to 1818, but the use of silver luster decoration here indicates post-1804 production.

Wood and Caldwell made models of Saint George and the dragon in two sizes, this being the larger.⁶ The models share the same big dragon but use quite different molds for the horse and Saint George.

Although this figure group is known from the literature, it really is very rare, and another has not come for sale since we bought ours from John Howard in September 2006. In fact, the only other I have recorded of this size is in the Wisbech and Fenland Museum (1900.26). Other George and dragon models are not uncommon and occur most often decorated in colored glaze or under the glaze.

Our figure came into John Howard's stock from an auction at Moore, Allen, and Innocent at which Nick Burton had represented us a few months earlier. Nick had passed on this figure then because the raised arm was restored. Nick is almost always right, and I admire his lofty standards, but I couldn't

resist teasing him about passing on this. In all fairness, I suspect that when he viewed it the arm was rather badly restored, but by the time the gifted restorer Alan Finney had worked his magic, it looked great.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 62.4 and dust jacket. ❀



BY 1800, ENGLAND AND WALES numbered almost nine million souls, of which a mere ten thousand were of black African ancestry.⁷ For centuries, England had had a scattered black population, but in the eighteenth century the triangular slave trade brought black slaves to England's ports and increased their number. The legal status of these slaves was uncertain until 1772, when Lord Mansfield ruled in the case of James Somersett, an American slave brought to England and claiming his freedom. His lordship stated that slavery "was so odious that nothing can be suffered to support it, but positive law,"⁸ and this was interpreted to mean that slavery could not exist in England. But this ruling was not implemented in Britain's colonies. Rather, slavery remained at the foundation of the great West Indies plantation economies that filled British coffers.

In May 1787, nine Quakers and three Anglicans formed the Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade. Rather than focus on emancipation, the movement sought to abolish the slave trade because its evils were considered far more egregious than slavery itself. The early abolitionists were highly effective in raising public awareness of the degradations and horrors of slavery, but, despite the popularity of their cause, they could not effect parliamentary change. This was because most of the population was disenfranchised and those who sat in Parliament were loath to tamper with a trade that under-

pinned the economy. But in 1807, after decades of failure, abolitionists secured passage of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act. From March 25, 1807, Britain would no longer trade in slaves—but slavery itself continued in Britain's colonies.

In 1823, abolitionists established the London Society for Mitigating and Gradually Abolishing the State of Slavery throughout the British Dominions. By now, there was widespread recognition that slavery could no longer be defended, but apprehension about how best to handle any transition stalled emancipation. But in the ensuing years, radical agitation culminated in parliamentary reform, and the Parliament seated in 1833 was less representative of plantation owners. That year, the Slavery Abolition Act passed. On August 1, 1834, slaves in all colonies were freed and designated as apprentices. Full emancipation was achieved by August 1, 1838, with the government paying £20 million in compensation to slave owners. ❁

2.8.1

Emancipated Slave

Impressed and painted "BLESS GOD THANK BRITTON ME NO SLAVE", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1830, MBS-216



Notes

This figure is reminiscent of the medallion William Hackwood designed in the eighteenth century as the motif for the abolitionist movement. Perhaps Hackwood's design influenced the earthenware figure model, but there may be some other as-yet-undiscovered design source.

While some collectors think that this figure was made to celebrate the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833, others posit that it was made in preceding decade as an adornment for the homes of the abolitionist movement's supporters.

In our early collecting days, I had seen an example of this figure with restored hands, and it just looked awkward to me. The raised hands are so very focal. Nick Burton is even pickier than I am, so when he was smitten with this figure when it came up for auction at Tennants in Yorkshire in 2006, I knew that it was more than alright. The figure had come into Tennants in a box of old china, but we paid a lot of money for it, as we expected to have to do. There is a tiny chip to one finger—a touch that indicates the very vulnerability of those hands without causing damage that detracts from its perfection. The clothing is in colors associated freedom, thereby adding to the symbolism of the figure.

In the ten years that we have owned this figure, I have not seen another come on the market. It was exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007. Figures like this are



Medallion with the words “Am I not a man and a brother?” © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

in Victoria and Albert Museum (C.129-2003) and the Brighton and Hove Museums (HW589).

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, figs. 80.2–3 and dust jacket.

For a similar figure in the Brighton and Hove Museums see Beddoe, *A Potted History*, 140.

For a similar figure in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 53. ❁



2.8.2

Emancipated Slave and Britannia

Lead-glazed earthenware with gilded and enamel decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1833, H: 7 in., MBS-471



Notes

This Staffordshire pottery portrayal of a pivotal moment in British history was made circa 1833 to celebrate emancipation. The ecstatically happy scene is wonderfully wacky and rather unlikely: a petite, refined Britannia dances alongside an enormous, scantily clad emancipated slave.

This group is unique. I rate it very highly for many reasons, not least of which is its fine quality and unrestored condition. The condition is something of a miracle, because the prominent figures and their outstretched arms invite damage. Above all, the group is simply beautiful.

A closely similar group occurs in porcelain, as does a rather brutal companion group showing a man flogging a chained slave,⁹ but I know of no other pearlware example. We acquired it from John Howard in December 2012, and I did not hesitate for a second, despite its steep price. It had been previously in the collection of Malcolm and Judith Hodkinson.

Literature

For this figure group see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 80.5. ❀

In the late-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Britain's military and naval battles spanned the globe. Sailors and soldiers served in far-flung places for protracted periods, and a figure was a treasured memento of a loved one. Figures of sailors are identifiable by the sailor's distinctive attire that includes striped trousers, a neckerchief, and a characteristic cap or hat. The sailor sometimes stands beside an anchor or clutches a bag of coins in one hand.

Britain's navy transformed her small island nation into a maritime power with an empire that spanned the globe. From early times, the navy relied on impressment, or forced recruitment, to swell its ranks. Impressment came to be considered a maritime right, and in the eighteenth century, the navy's voracious demands made impressment both on land and at sea essential.

The Impress Service, better known as the press gang, was an organized network that extended inland from Britain's ports. Press gangers—often local ruffians—were paid for each recruit, and they used trickery, coercion, and brute force to induce enlistment. Any British seaman aged fifteen to fifty-five could be impressed. The man had a choice: he could enlist as a paid volunteer and receive the bounty awarded volunteers as well as forgiveness of old debt, or he could remain impressed and receive nothing. Much impressment happened at sea, and the crews of merchant ships were prime targets, as were shiploads



THE SAILORS FAREWELL. J. Fairburn, c. 1835.

of British prisoners returning on prison exchanges, and it was distressing for a sailor who was longing to see his loved ones to be forced aboard a navy ship for indefinite service.

Impressment was upheld in court as being vital to the nation, but it impoverished and destroyed families, and it was blatantly unfair. The Yale professor Benjamin Silliman, who visited England in 1805, found the practice morally repugnant.

There are press gangs now about Liverpool, and impressments daily happen. I saw a sailor dragged off, a few evenings since; he was walking with one who appeared to be a woman of the town, and he of course was considered a proper object of impressment; for, it is the uniform practice of press gangs to take all whom they find in such society, and all who are engaged in night brawls and drunken revels, not that the press gangs have any peculiar solicitude for the preservation of good morals, but because such things afford somewhat of a pretext for a practice which violates equally the laws of natural liberty, and the principles of English freedom.... one particular class of men seem to be abandoned by society, and relinquished to perpetual imprisonment, and a slavery, which, though honourable, cuts them off from most things which men hold dear.¹⁰

The impressment of American merchant seamen into Britain's Navy was a primary cause of the thirty-two month British-American war known as the War of 1812. After the defeat of Napoleon in 1814, impressment was not used again, and the practice was abolished later in the nineteenth century. ❁



THE SAILORS RETURN. J. Fairburn, c. 1835.

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1815, H: 5 in., MBS-19



Notes

I was pleased with my first few purchases from Gerald Clark in Camden Passage in 1987 (see 15.6.1. Notes), so when Ben and I headed to London in 1988, we caught the tube up to Camden again, only to find the shop had closed. Not daunted, I called Mr. Clark, who was then working out of the small shop attached to his home in Mill Hill Village because his wife was ill. Getting there was a trek, but we caught a bus on a rainy day. I remember the shop having a lovely window, but there was not much for us, aside from this small sailor. Yellow is always so appealing in pottery—and I am not the only collector who succumbs to its charms. This figure is quite uncommon because I have seen only one other, that one being on a square base.

Why was it so difficult for me to find figures in the 1980s, when the world was, we now believe, awash with early pottery? Within London, the best source then would have been Jonathan Horne, but I wasn't ready for what I perceived as the lofty prices of Jonathan's stock, and I was intimidated by his very proper demeanor. I later learned that Jonathan stocked modestly priced items. Also, beneath his very proper English exterior, Jonathan was a charming gentleman with a great sense of humor, and we were to become friends.

Another legendary source of figures at that time was Oliver Sutton, just down the road from Jonathan on Kensington Church Street. It has always been rumored that unless you happened to be a mature, blue-haired lady with an American

accent, the gentlemen who presided over this emporium perceived you as a waste of time and made you feel unwelcome in the shop. One time, I plucked up the courage to enter. Either Anthony Oliver or Peter Sutton opened the door to let me in... and stood holding the door open, suggesting that I was expected to leave within moments of arriving! Of course, I did, and I never returned. In retrospect, I don't think I missed much.

Beyond London, there were in the 1980s numerous smaller dealers. The best way to make contact with them was at a fair—but if you didn't live in the UK, this was a problem. Collecting was truly very difficult. Even if you found a dealer you liked, communicating was either slow or costly or both. On my early trips to England, I frequented small fairs in London hotels on Sundays and, sometimes in smaller towns beyond. The one figure I recall picking up there—a small cradle—has long since left our collection.

This figure was exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007. A similar figure atop a square base is in the Brighton and Hove Museums (HW338).

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 79.15.

For the figure in the Brighton and Hove Museums see Beddoe, *A Potted History*, 65. ❀

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1800, H: 5.6 in., MBS-294



Notes

The baton and purse of coins identify this figure as a press ganger. I bought him from Martyn Edgell in June 2008, as much for its quality as for the social history encapsulated in it.

I am always struck by the attention given to painting this figure. Those stripes on his trousers are so fine, as are the tiny white buttons and buttonholes on the front of the coat, as well as the two buttons on the back.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 79.17.

For a similar figure in under-glaze colors in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 46. ❀

IN THE WAR-TORN LATE-EIGHTEENTH AND early nineteenth centuries, amputee soldiers were a common sight. In 1805, Benjamin Silliman, noted, “It is a very common thing here to meet those who have lost a leg or an arm....I know not why they are suffered to beg, for, surely, government ought to take care of them.”¹¹

In that time, amputation was the only treatment for severely injured limbs, and on a given day, a military surgeon might perform dozens of these procedures in the field. Without anesthesia, surgical speed was of the essence, and good surgeons took pride in amputating in mere seconds. Nonetheless, in an age without antibiotics, the risk of infection and death was high.

The screw tourniquet that the French surgeon Jean Louis Petit, invented in 1718 limited bleeding during amputation and is considered the most significant medical advance of the eighteenth century. Petit’s tourniquet device made above-the-knee amputations possible and reduced the risks associated with amputations below the knee. ❀

2.10.1 Amputee Soldier

Impressed and painted "THE POOR SOLDIER", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 6 in., MBS-431



Notes

A bought this figure at auction at Tennants in September 2011. It had previously been in the stock of Andrew Dando. A companion figure titled *THE POOR LABORER* is in this collection (no. 9.5.1).

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 79.21.

For another in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 48. ❀



2.11.1

Highland Regiment Bagpiper

*Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, probably made by Rathbone, Scotland, c. 1830,
H: 9 in., MBS-482*



Notes

This was the the only known example of this figure, which was ridiculously costly when I bought it from Martyn Edgell in June 2013. George Haggarty, the expert on Scottish pottery, subsequently showed me another, which was colored under the glaze.

It seems this figure was probably made by Rathbone in Scotland. This base form is only otherwise recorded on figures emblematic of the seasons, which seem to have emanated from the same source.

The figure represents a bag piper from the 42nd Highland Regiment, later the Black Watch. His head-dress is a cloth cap known as a “hummlie” bonnet. The dicing on the border represents the “check fesse” in the Stuart Arms. For ceremonial parades, ostrich feathers were attached on the side.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 4, fig. 199.51.

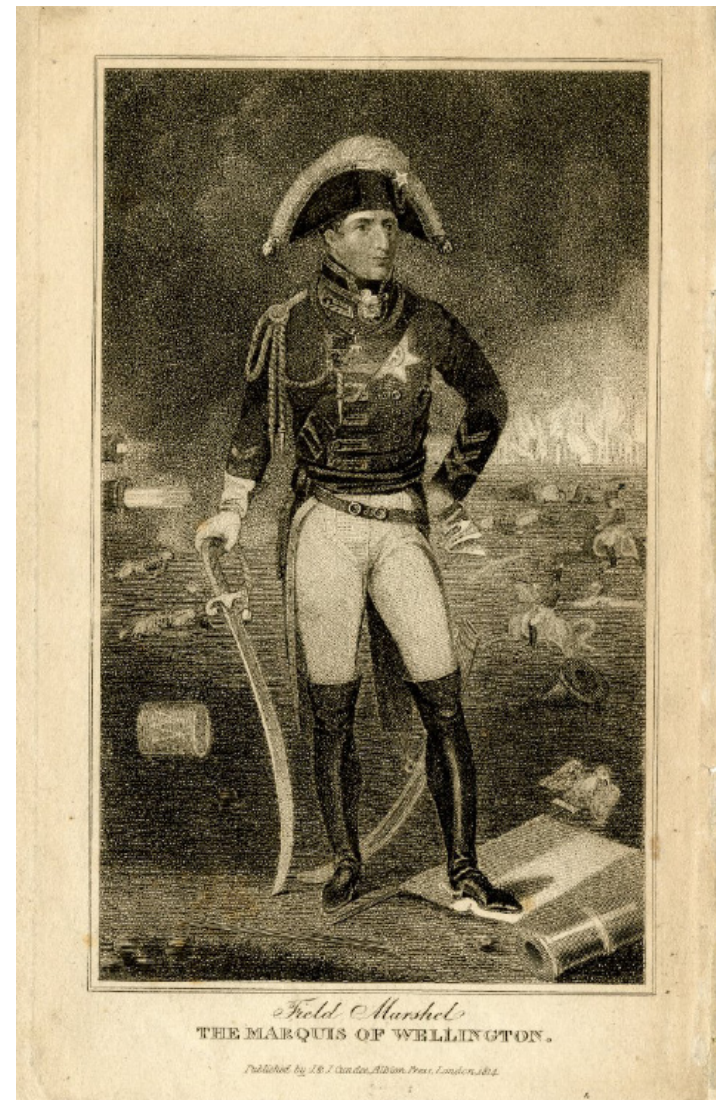
For figures of the Seasons on the same base see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 4, figs. 155.53–55. ❁

ARTHUR WELLESLEY, THE FIRST DUKE of Wellington, is best remembered for his conquest of Napoleon Bonaparte at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. While other Dukes of Wellington followed him, Arthur Wellesley remains forever *the* Duke of Wellington.

Born Arthur Wesley on May 1, 1769, into an aristocratic Anglo-Irish family, Wesley was commissioned into the British army in 1787. In 1798, while serving in India, he changed his last name to Wellesley. Having acquitted himself admirably in successive Indian campaigns, he returned to England in 1805 with a knighthood and a fortune in prize money garnered as bounty in the Indian wars. In 1806, he secured a seat in Parliament, and the next year he was appointed Secretary for Ireland.

In 1807, the Napoleonic Wars were raging, and Wellesley returned to military service. From 1808, he campaigned in the Iberian Peninsula, beating Napoleon at the Battle of Vitoria in 1813. In 1814, he was rewarded with a dukedom and a posting as ambassador to the restored Bourbon court in Paris.

When Napoleon returned to France the next year, Wellesley (now the Duke of Wellington) led Anglo-allied coalition forces to victory at the Battle of Waterloo on June 18, 1815. This battle ended the Napoleonic Wars and secured Britain's global supremacy. Wellington on his famous horse Copenhagen had



Field Marshal THE MARQUIS OF WELLINGTON.
Published by J. & J. Cundee, 1814. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

vanquished Napoleon, and, for the rest of his life and beyond, the Duke of Wellington would be a hero to the British people.

With England at peace, the Duke of Wellington was an influential member of the House of Lords . He served as prime minister from 1828 to 1830 and again briefly in 1834. In his later years, he settled into the role of a dignified, blunt elder statesman, nicknamed “the Iron Duke.” He remained commander-in-chief of the British Army until his death on September 14, 1852, and he was honored with a state funeral. 🌸

2.12.1 The Duke of Wellington

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1815, H: 12 in., MBS-462



Notes

Originally, Pierre Stephan modeled this figure form, and a single example with Stephan's mark inscribed in the body is recorded. Over the years, I had noted examples of this figure described as assorted military heroes, but the true identity remained a mystery. In 2011, while photographing in the reserve collection at the Potteries Museum, I came across an example titled *Duke Wellington* (3191).

The riddle seemed solved, but a nagging doubt remained in my mind, and it was still with me when I published my thoughts on this figure model in *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2: Wellington only accepted his dukedom in 1814, and I was not at all sure whether Pierre Stephan was still active in 1814. Had Stephan modeled this figure to be someone else, and sometime after 1814 a potter painted *Duke Wellington* on a lone example to give it a new lease of life? I have since learned that Stephan was very much alive as late as 1818, and this somewhat lays to rest my doubts I as to the true identity of this officer.

A similar figure is in the Victoria and Albert Museum (90-1874).

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 76.4.

For the titled *Duke Wellington* in the Potteries Museum see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 76.10.

For the figure with Pierre Stephan's mark see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, figs. 76.1–2.

For a similar figure in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 3.

For a similar figure in the Sharp Collection see Sharp, *Ceramics Ethics & Scandal*, 239. ❀

2.12.2

Wellington at the Battle of Vitoria (plaque)

Impressed "VITTORIA" and "WELLINGTON", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1813, L: 9 in., MBS-587





Notes

We bought this unrecorded and important documentary plaque at auction in the fall of 2018 in the Washington, DC, area. It is delightfully wonky, as might be expected of a rectangular piece of clay fashioned by hand rather than by machine.

I have not seen another plaque with two hangers of this form, but it was quite obvious to my eye that the hanger to the right was restored, especially as the restoration had yellowed on the reverse. The condition report, of course, described the plaque as being in perfect condition with “yellowing due to aging.” But we both just loved it and thought it historically significant, so we went out on a limb to secure it, and I sent it to Alan Finney in the UK for the careful restoration it deserved.

A label on the reverse attests to this plaque having formerly been with the legendary D. M. & P. Manheim, New York. ❀

NAPOLÉON BUONAPARTE WAS BORN IN Corsica on August 15, 1769, and he rose from modest beginnings to become the first emperor of France. He was commissioned as a lieutenant in the artillery in 1785. In 1793, the Buonaparte family moved to France, Frenchifying the Italian spelling of their family name to Bonaparte.

By 1793, the French revolution was in full swing, and the newly-formed French republic was in turmoil. Napoleon rose rapidly to assume command of French forces in Italy in 1796. For the next twenty years, he was to dominate the world stage with successive military campaigns aimed at securing French dominance of Europe. Above all, Napoleon was a shrewd tactician with political aspirations. After a coup in 1799, he skillfully negotiated the crafting of a new constitution, and in 1800 a national referendum endorsed him as France's First Consul. In this role, he had full military and parliamentary power, and he transformed France's economic, legal, and educational systems. Significantly, he introduced the Napoleonic Code that ultimately influenced civil law worldwide. His rise was meteoric: in 1802 a national referendum conferred on him the title of First Consul for life, and on December 2, 1804, he crowned himself Emperor of France.

In 1802, France was briefly at peace for the first time in a decade, and she held sway over territories that included the



Napoleon Bonaparte as First Consul. Robert Lefevre, c. 1803.

Netherlands, Italy, Austria, and parts of Germany. Britain had been at war with France since 1793, but in March 1802, the Treaty of Amiens ended hostilities. In May 1803, however, peace ended, and Napoleon prepared to invade Britain. The threat of invasion was very real, and Britain undertook civil and military preparedness. Lord Horatio Nelson's defeat of the French fleet at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805 was an enormous relief to Britain, and it will live forever the annals of British history.

By that time, hostilities between France and other European nations had recommenced. French troops crushed a coalition of British and allied forces at the Battle of Austerlitz in December 1805, and Napoleon seemed invincible. But from 1810, the tide turned, and French forces suffered a string of defeats that culminated in their devastating retreat from Moscow in 1812. In October 1813, an allied coalition defeated Napoleon's troops at the Battle of Nations at Leipzig. Napoleon retreated to Paris, where he surrendered to the allies on March 30, 1814.

The Bourbon dynasty was restored under King Louis XVIII, and Napoleon was exiled to the island of Elba. In February 1815, he escaped and returned to France. His troops defected to join him, and for a brief period known as the Hundred Days, Napoleon again led French forces. On June 18, 1815, Anglo-Allied forces led by the Duke of Wellington and Prussian forces under Field Marshal Blucher defeated Napoleon decisively at the Battle of Waterloo. He abdicated on June 22, 1815, and was exiled to St. Helena, where he died on May 5, 1821. ❀

2.13.1

Napoleon Bonaparte as First Consul

Impressed "BONAPARTE", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled and gilded decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1810, H: 9.8 in., MBS-545



Notes

The bust is after Robert Lefevre's portrait of Napoleon, 1803. Swayed by the beauty of a similar bust I had acquired from John Howard for the Hunt Collection, I watched for another. When John displayed this one on his site in the summer of 2016, I was smitten by the brilliant red jacket with gold braiding. Similar busts are in the Victoria and Albert Museum (69-1874) and the Brighton and Hove Museum (HW405).

Literature

For a similar bust in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 20.

For a similar bust in the Brighton and Hove Museums see Beddoe, *A Potted History*, 89. ❀

GEORGE WASHINGTON, ONE OF THE Founding Fathers of the United States of America and its first president, was born on February 22, 1732, to a Virginia planter family of British ancestry. As a young man, Washington rose in the ranks of the Virginia militia. His marriage in 1759 to the widow Martha Custis greatly increased his wealth and social standing, and he became one of Virginia's most eminent citizens.

After 1765, Washington took a leading role in colonial resistance to British taxation and repression, and at the start of the Revolutionary War with Britain in 1775, he was appointed commander-in-chief of the newly-formed Continental Army. These civilian forces were poorly equipped and untrained, but Washington led them to defeat the most powerful nation on earth. On October 19, 1781, his troops, aided by French forces, decisively defeated British forces under Lieutenant General Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown. This, the last major battle in the Revolutionary War, secured America's independence. At the Treaty of Paris signed on September 1783, Britain acknowledged the United States as a sovereign nation and relinquished all territorial claims.

Washington's military skills had made him the leading military light of the Revolutionary War, but it was his political expertise that secured his prominence in the peace that followed. After the war, he presided over the Constitutional Con-

vention charged with drafting a new constitution for the United States. He was a popular man, highly principled yet able to reconcile rival sides. As a visionary and supporter of liberty, he established the foundations of a great nation.

In 1789, George Washington took the oath of office as the first president of the United States, and he served two terms. He died on December 14, 1799. In his will, he freed all his slaves.

Literature

For other busts like this see Schkolne, *Holding the Past* 27; also Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, vol. 4, 234. ❀

2.13.1

George Washington (bust)

Impressed "WASHINGTON/ Born ---1732/ Died---1799/ ENOCH WOOD SCULP/ 1818.", and "315", lead-glazed earthenware with enamel decoration, made by Enoch Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 8.4 in., MBS-556



Notes

I bought this bust at Westport Auctions in February 2017. Although Washington had not been among my favorites in bust form—more so as I don't like blue and the Enoch Wood version of this bust usually has a blue jacket—I decided to go for it because it is particularly finely modeled and would sit well with our other busts, few that they are. I procured it very fairly, and now that it is in place in the collection, I am annoyed at my previous reservations! It is really splendid and neat, a rather compact piece of earthenware.

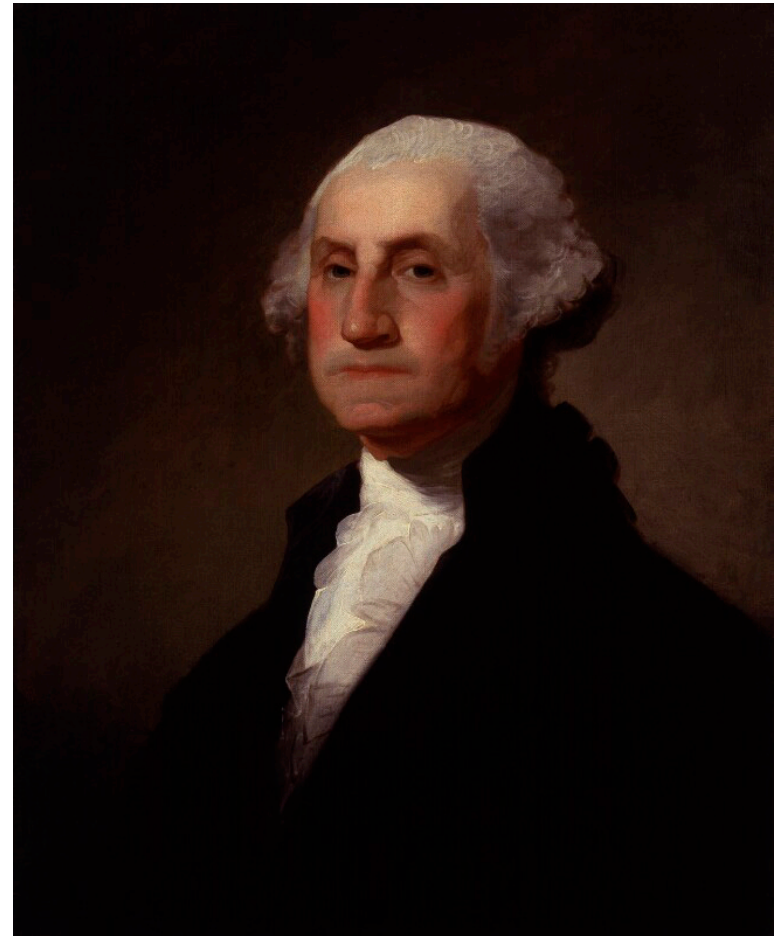
I am uncertain of the significance of the impressed “315” on the base of the socle at the reverse, and I have seen other examples of this bust without that impression.

This bust was modeled by Enoch Wood in 1818 and reissued in following years. The model was revived decades later, as evidenced by similarly formed busts of a much later date.

Similar busts are in the Winterthur Museum (1959.0579) and the Hunt Collection.

Literature

For other busts like this see Schkolne, *Holding the Past* 27; also Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, vol. 4, 234. ❁



George Washington. By Gilbert Stuart. © National Portrait Gallery, London.

Endnotes

1. Her mother was the sister of King George III.
2. 17/09/1802 McDonald, Rober (Old Parish Registers Marriages 685/1 530 70 Edinburgh) Page 70 of 372. Accessed and supplied by Sally Goodsir, October 2019
3. Brougham, *Life and Times*, 332.
4. Hodkinson, *Sherratt?*; Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1:36–37.
5. Ibid.
6. Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 2: fig. 62.5.
7. The 1801 census estimates England and Wales to have had 8.9 million people. It is commonly suggested that around 10,000 of them were black, with half that number living in London.
8. Hurd, *Law of Freedom and Bondage* 1:191.
9. The Collection of Rex Stark; <http://www.chipstone.org/images.php/39/Ceramics-in-America-2002/%E2%80%99CAnd-Freedom-to-the-Slave%E2%80%99D:-Antislavery-Ceramics,-1787%E2%80%931865>.
10. Silliman, *Journal*, 1:50–51.
11. Ibid., 1:243.



CHAPTER 3

Sports

*Extract from "A FIRST RATE SHOT." After Benjamin Marshall.
Published by Pittman, London, 1831. © The Trustees of the British
Museum.*

IN BYGONE TIMES, HORSES AND dogs were the household names of Britain's sporting world, but in the late eighteenth century, the nation's first human sports stars rose to fame, and they were pugilists.

Fisticuffs had long been a peculiarly British predilection, and from earlier times both men and women commonly used blows to settle scores, with crowds wagering on the outcomes. Around 1700, a crude combination of wrestling and bare-knuckle boxing became a popular organized sport, and boxing evolved from those roots. After 1785, the skills of a young Jewish boxer, Daniel Mendoza,¹ attracted royal patronage and launched a golden era for boxing that was to span four decades. Although organized boxing was illegal, milling, as the sport was commonly called, appealed to all classes because fights indulged the national propensity to gamble, and it became fashionable at the highest level of society.

By the nineteenth century, England's boxers were a source of national pride. That Englishmen distinguished themselves in a manly way with their fists symbolized the nation's courage, strength, tenacity, and sense of fair play. By now boxing matches were highly organized events. A challenge, usually published in the newspaper, initiated a prize fight, and the purse and venue were decided. The ideal site was a remote outdoor location that accommodated thousands of spectators

and eluded magisterial detection because fights were illegal. Typically, the ring was a twenty to forty-foot square roped-off area that might be atop a raised wooden stage. An outer ring accessible only to umpires, officials, select friends, and those charged with keeping the crowd at bay surrounded it. Beyond that was a sea of standing spectators, and carriages and wagons circled the field to form a grandstand of sorts.

Each boxer, stripped to the waist, was assisted by only his bottle-holder and his second. The latter lent his knee as a seat, offered advice, administered ringside surgery, and generally did whatever it took—biting ears was common—to keep his man conscious. Unlike today's fights, matches were unlimited in length, and rounds ended only when a boxer went down. A downed boxer had a thirty-second count, and then he had to be at the scratch, the name given a square chalked in the ring center. If he could not make it, he was defeated. Fights were protracted slugfests in which men pummeled away at each other interminably. Blood flowed freely as bare fists shredded faces, swelled eyes shut, and reduced hands and knuckles to painful pulp, despite careful pre-fight “pickling” in astringent.

In the halcyon days of boxing, a gentlemanly camaraderie prevailed among boxers. Because fights took inordinate physical tolls, boxers fought few battles, but they earned their keep staging sparring exhibitions. England's aristocrats patronized

these events and engaged boxers to entertain their guests with displays on the lawns of their estates. The country's most privileged bucks routinely stripped to the waist to hone their skills at pugilists' academies. Retired boxer "Gentleman" John Jackson's establishment on Bond Street was rumored to be patronized by a third of the peerage, and Lord Byron took regular instruction there.

At the other end of the social spectrum, scores of fighters were household names that today are forgotten, and most towns and villages had their own pugilist celebrities that included women. Thus, in 1822, Martha Flaharty took on Peg Carey for the grand sum of £17:10s. In preparation, both ladies cropped their hair and plied themselves with gin. After fourteen desperate rounds, Martha was hauled away senseless in a hawker's cart; Peg, victorious but unstable, departed in a hackney coach.

Nineteenth-century boxing had opponents who feared savage sports brutalized the population. They urged local magistrates to enforce the law and ban boxing, but because boxing had powerful patrons, most magistrates turned a blind eye. Yet by 1825, boxing had problems of its own. Increasingly, contests were rigged, ruffians broke up fights when their patrons' wagers were losing, and pickpocketing was rampant.

The final Spring-Langan fight in 1824 marked the end of the glory days of the sport. In 1838, boxing's rules were modified, and in 1867 the Queensbury Rules, in use to this day, limited rounds to three minutes, banned wrestling, and mandated the

wearing of gloves.

Staffordshire's potters paid homage in clay to their national champions and to the men who fearlessly challenged them. Earthenware pugilists depict the epic battles of the sport's formative years: the contests between Cribb and Molineux, and Spring and Langan, battles in which Englishmen triumphed over boxers of other nations. These figures eternally celebrate the triumph of English manhood and the invincibility of the nation. ❁

3.1.1

Thomas Cribb, Thomas Molineaux (pair)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1811, H: 9 in. (L), 8.7 in. (R), MBS-362



IN 1809, THOMAS CRIBB, a pugilist with an impressive string of victories to his credit, claimed the English boxing crown. In 1810, Thomas Molineux, a former American slave who had won his freedom with his fists, challenged Cribb to a title fight. England's attention was to be riveted on the Cribb-Molineux contest, for national self-esteem and identity were at stake. The Fancy, as boxing's aficionados were called, wanted a white boxing champ for, as the *Sporting Magazine* explained, "what alarmed the *natives* most was, the consideration that an African or a *tawney Moor*, was looking forward to the championship of England, and had even threatened to decorate his sooty brow with the hard-earned laurels of Crib [*sic*]." ² Race had reared its ugly head in boxing before: in 1805, Cribb had easily beaten Bill Richmond, a former American slave living in England. Richmond now trained Molineux for this challenge fight and was to be his second. ³

On December 18, 1810, thousands of spectators braved torrential rain and waded through mud to reach the remote outdoor venue near East Grinstead where Cribb was to defend the national honor. Around round twenty-eight, Molineux felled Cribb, and when the referee called time, Cribb was unable to come to the scratch. Clearly Molineux was the new English boxing champ, but Cribb's second jumped forward, charging that Molineux had held bullets in his fists. The accusation was blatantly false, but the resulting fracas gave Cribb time to recover and left Molineux shivering in the rain. When the fight resumed, Cribb outlasted Molineux, but only just. In round



Molineux. Robert Dighton, January 1812. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

thirty-three, Molineux declared, “I can fight no more,”⁴ and Cribb was declared the winner. His claim to the English championship was validated, although its fairness is questionable.

On September 28, 1811, Cribb answered Molineux’s challenge to a rematch at Thistleton Gap. By now the pugilists’ names were on every tongue, and twenty thousand fans flocked to the remote field that was conveniently situated at the junction of three counties lest magisterial intervention necessitate relocation of this illegal event. This time, Molineux did not stand a chance. While Cribb had spent eleven weeks training, Molineux had been enjoying a dissipated lifestyle. In eleven rounds, and after nineteen minutes and ten seconds, Cribb prevailed.

Cribb’s victory was an event of national significance, and he returned to London in a beribboned coach that was cheered along its route in the manner accorded the bearer of news of a military victory. Fortunes had been made and lost on the fight, and the *Edinburgh Star* admonished the country for wagering more on its outcome than had been given to aid British prisoners in France. Boxing enthusiasts found a defeated Molineux admirable, and he became a popular boxer of secondary standing, notorious for his love of ladies, liquor, and spiffy clothing. In 1818, emaciated and estranged from his friends, he died in Ireland. Although Tom Cribb never again defended his title, he reigned as a respected and beloved champion, the biggest sports star of his era, until he retired in 1821.



The Battle Between Crib [Cribb] and Molineux. George Cruikshank, 1811. Courtesy the New York Public Library.

Notes

I believe the Cribb and Molineux models had no “sell-by” date in that figures of these pugilists were made over an extended period of time. However, this pair (like most others where the men wear yellow breeches) ranks among the earliest. The molds must have been very crisp because details such as the waistband of the breeches and the ties at the calves are clearly visible, whereas on later models (typically on different bases) these details needed to be painted in a contrasting color to be evident.

After many years of looking in vain, I bought this pair from John Howard at the 2010 New York Ceramics Fair. The figures have great presence. They are really amazingly impressive and rather statuesque. I admit that I don’t understand the technique used to get Molineux skin to resemble black basalt.

I subsequently wanted a similar pair for the Hunt Collection because I felt that *Holding the Past* would be incomplete if it omitted the tale of the early pugilists. Being an overachiever, I particularly wanted a pair just like ours, but I admit I would have compromised. I knew of only one other pair like our pair, and I negotiated prying it out of a private collection for Herbert and Nancy Hunt.

A different pair is in the Brighton and Hove Museums (HW1034).

Literature

For this pair see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 81.2.

For a similar pair in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 179.

For a related pair see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 153; also Halfpenny and Beddoe, *Circus & Sport*, 59.

For a related pair in the Brighton and Hove Museums see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 155; also Beddoe, *A Potted History*, 222.

For a related pair in the Sharp Collection see Sharp, *Ceramics Ethics & Scandal*, 166. ❁

3.1.2

Tom Spring and Jack Langan

Impressed "SPRING" (R) and "LANGAN" (L), lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, made by John Walton and impressed "WALTON", Staffordshire, c. 1824, H: 7 in., MBS-205





WHEN REIGNING CHAMPION TOM CRIBB retired in 1821, his protégé Tom Spring (born Thomas Winter) challenged all comers, and in 1823 he defeated Bill Neat to become the next celebrated champion. On January 7, 1824, Spring took on the Irish champion Jack Langan on the Worcester Racecourse. The crowd of fifty thousand was the biggest ever. Spring's advantage in height and weight led him to victory in seventy-seven rounds (and two hours and twenty-nine minutes). The boxers were not the only casualties: twice portions of the grandstand collapsed, pitching thousands to the ground.

Convinced he had been disadvantaged because crowd pressure had shrunk the ring, Langan challenged Spring to a rematch on a raised stage. On June 8, 1824, the men met again near Chichester. After seventy-six rounds, and an hour and forty-nine minutes, Spring stretched forth a palm and humanely pushed an exhausted Langan to the turf. Both parties were put to bed and were bled to recuperate. Spring retired after this fight, for his hands could not withstand further pounding.

Notes

When I researched *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, the early boxers fascinated me. Their extraordinary grit and determination to win despite the enormous personal cost seems to be the essence of Englishness as it was perceived then—the very qualities needed to make the British Empire the largest empire the world has ever seen. But to tell their story, I needed a photo of the Spring and Langan figure group, and I

could only find two: one illustrated in *Circus & Sport* that was displayed at Kentucky's J. B. Speed Museum in 1990; the other illustrated in Rosalie Wise Sharp's *Ceramics Ethics & Scandal*. Rosalie kindly provided a photo of the latter for my book.

And then a surprise! As I was in the final stages of the book's lay-out in fall 2005, a Sotheby's catalog arrived with a Spring-Langan figure group scheduled for auction in October. The group was perfect. It had not a single repair or restoration, which is particularly surprising given its structure. I wanted it so badly that I decided to go to New York to bid.

On the afternoon of the auction, I settled into my seat early. The cavernous auction room was largely empty. The decorative arts coming under the hammer included a handful of early figures. Shortly before my lot came up, there couldn't have been six people in the room, but at the very last moment Simon Westman entered to bid on behalf of his employer, Jonathan Horne. Jonathan was then the dealer at the very top of the trade and, much as is the case with John Howard who now occupies that perch, he recognized rarity and excellence and was not afraid to push the bidding for a special figure. I had to pay an awful lot for this group, but it was worth every penny. I floated on air as I walked all the way from Sotheby's back to my daughter's Gramercy Park apartment. As soon as I could, I called Nick Burton, who was every bit as excited as I with my purchase because he appreciates the essential Englishness of this group, as well as its extraordinary condition.

It wasn't long after my return home that I spotted one of the Kovels's syndicated column on antiques in the local Winston-Salem paper. Titled "In the days before photographs, figures spread fame," it discussed the significance of the Spring-Langan group sold at Sotheby's and noted the hammer price. That evening at dinner, a friend, aware of all the seemingly strange figures cluttering our house, asked if I had seen the column and if the figure discussed was the sort of thing I collected. When I replied that it was, she asked if I had ever seen that very figure. I answered that we owned it, and a stunned silence hit the dinner table. The guests were probably thinking that we could have bought a car for less!

This is a particularly rare Walton group, with the only other known examples now being in the Hunt Collection and the Sharp Collection. It was exhibited at the J. B. Speed Art Museum, Kentucky, c. 1990; Stoke Museum *Fantastic Figures*, 1991; the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 81.10 and dust jacket; also *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 33, 157; also Halfpenny and Beddoe, *Circus & Sport*, 60; also Halfpenny, *English Earthenware Figures*, 224.

For another in the Sharp Collection see Sharp, *Ceramics Ethics & Scandal*, 167. ❁

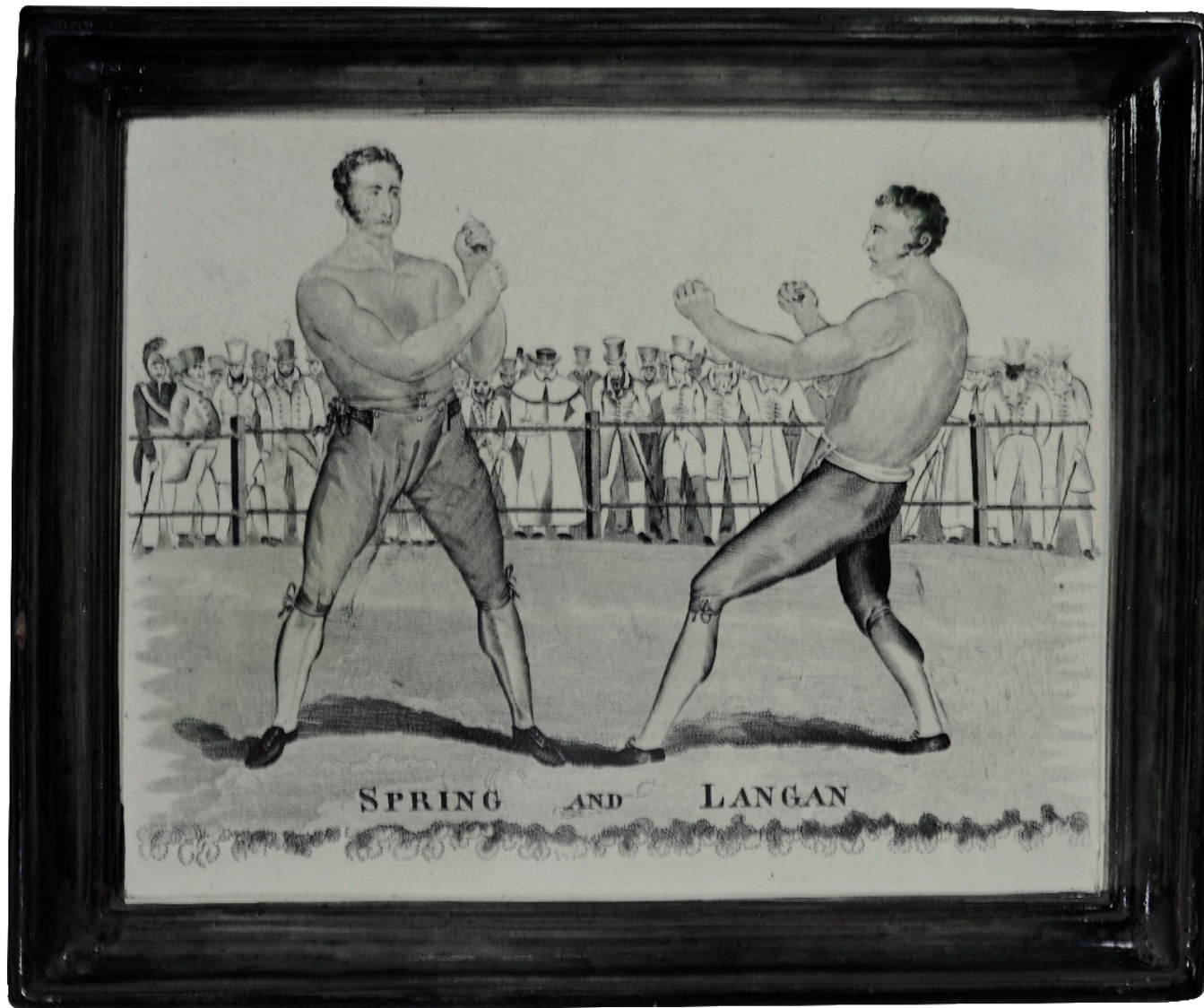


To the Admirers of British Courage. This representation of the Great Contest between SPRING & LANGAN upon Worcester Race Course, January 7, 1824 for the Championship of England. James Clements and John Pitman, 1824.

3.1.3

Tom Spring and Jack Langan (plaque)

*Lead-glazed earthenware with transfer-printed and enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1824, L: 16 in.,
H: 13.2 in, MBS-433*



Notes

This most impressive of plaques, the largest and heaviest plaque of this period, is known from very few examples. I bought it at auction at Brightwells in 2011. At that point, a person in England collected and mailed for me, and I prayed the plaque would arrive intact, which it did. Another (broken) is in the Brighton and Hove Museums (HW1029).

I think this plaque portrays the first Spring-Langan contest, held in January 1824. Whereas the second fight was held on a raised stage so as to keep the crowd and mud at bay, the first fight was staged at ground level, as shown here. I enjoy the crowd scene that includes a soldier, a sailor (I think), and a black gentleman. The men at the rope surrounding the ring are all well dressed, for boxing was enjoyed by people of all classes, and their ring-side viewing points must have been particularly desirable.

Literature

For a similar plaque in the Brighton and Hove Museums see Beddoe, *A Potted History*, 221. ❀



Thomas Winter, Spring. John Langan. Published November 1, 1824.

3.1.4

The Boxing Baroness

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1810, H: 7.1 in., MBS-317



THE NOTORIOUS SEVENTH EARL OF Barrymore, known as “Hell-gate” because of his rakish lifestyle, routinely boxed with his mistress, who came to be dubbed the Boxing Baroness. The lady in question has long been thought to have been Miss Charlotte Goulding, the daughter of a sedan chairman, who in 1792 eloped with Lord Barrymore to Gretna Green. The next year the Earle’s musket accidentally discharged and killed him.

It has been suggested that the Boxing Baroness was not Charlotte Goulding but was instead Mary Anne Pierce (or Pearce). Miss Pierce was one of Lord Barrymore’s former mistresses, but she was known colloquially as Lady Barrymore.

Supporting this conjecture is an undated broadside titled *The Extraordinary Life and Death of Mary Anne Pierce, alias LADY BARRY MORE, Who was for some years the dashing Mistress of Lord Barrymore ; afterwards the [sic] became upon the town, where her exploits in Flooring Beadles, Charlies, &c. are well known. She was the terror of Police-officers and Publicans. Had been 150 times at Bow-street, and confined in every Goal in London.* The broadside says that the “ruling passion of her life, the love of gin,” had caused the lady to spend most of the previous fifteen years in prison. While acknowledging that she was once “the chere amie of Lord Barrymore,” the writer makes no mention of the lady’s boxing skills.⁵

An obituary in the *Gentleman’s Magazine* of 1832 tells,

In Charles-court, Drury-lane, the notorious ‘Lady Bar-



The Boxing Baroness. Charles William for *Bon Ton Magazine*, March 1819.

rymore.' She had passed from the drawing-room of a profligate peer to the lowest grade of prostitution. She had been brought 150 times to Bow-street Office on charges of drunkenness and rioting, and possessed great pugilistic skill and strength; but, when kept sober in Tothill Fields Bridewell, proved an useful and trustworthy assistant of the female prisoners.

Notes

This is the only known example of this figure. I had spotted her with Elinor Penna, and when I found the print of the Boxing Baroness, I made the connection and bought both the print and the figure in November 2000.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 81.13. ❀

ALTHOUGH THE BOW HAD BEEN a tool for both hunting and defense from prehistoric periods, the invention of the musket in the early sixteenth century reduced archery to a mere recreational pursuit. But from the 1780s, the trend setting Prince of Wales spurred a revival in archery, and exclusive archery clubs took root under aristocratic patronage.

Toxophilites, as archery enthusiasts were called (from “tox-on” and “philos,” the Greek words for “bow” and “loving”), included men and women, for archery was the one sport that both sexes might compete in equally. For ladies, archery was the only opportunity to exercise with the opposite sex, and the sport’s costumes and poses discreetly displayed a fine figure. Moreover, archery was an escape from the drawing room, and, because it provided genteel exercise that did not mandate excess exertion, even older ladies could participate.

By the early nineteenth century, archery societies had become status-conferring playgroups for the elite, with the emphasis on cordiality rather than competitiveness. Gatherings were ostentatious events resplendent with pageantry, and highly regulated conventions governed the minutest details of dress and etiquette. At grand celebratory dinners, winners bedecked with laurel wreaths lead triumphant marches, and all partook of pomp and ceremony that today seems silly. But by the 1830s, archery’s wealthiest patrons were losing interest and

more upper middle-class individuals had embraced the sport as a healthy, improving exercise. With this, archery emerged as a skilled national sport.

In contrast to archery, shooting, as the pursuit of game on foot was called, was a manly outdoor sport that could be enjoyed alone. The Game Act of 1671 allowed only those with annual personal incomes from land of at least £100 to hunt game animals, as could their sons and heirs. Until its repeal in 1831, this law essentially gave rural gentry a monopoly on shooting.

Typically, a gentleman hunted hares or any wildfowl species in season. While shooting solo was a splendid pastime, gentlemen also hunted in groups. Success was measured by the size of the sportsman’s bag, and by the early nineteenth-century, improved firearms enabled the slaughter of vast quantities of wildlife. To ensure an ever-ready supply on their estates, wealthy men established game reserves where they bred game birds in preparation for mass shoots staged to entertain house guests. The existence of vast bird reserves on rural estates enticed both professional poachers and hungry country folk, and in the poaching war of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, landowners used mantraps and spring guns to capture, maim, or kill their human quarry. ❁

3.2.1

Lady Archer, Sportsman (2)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,⁶ Staffordshire, c. 1830, H: 8 in.(L), 7.9 in.(R), MBS-184 (L), MBS-250 (R)



Notes

In 2004, I was working consistently on the text of *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures* and was immersed in the social history of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. That July, I traveled to the UK to use the British Library. I took a day off from research and caught a train to visit Griselda Lewis in Woodbridge (see 17.1.3 Notes). The journey required a change at Ipswich, so on my return, I stopped in that town to meet John Read, who was winding down his activities as a dealer (see 23.1.1 Notes). I bought this archer from him.

I bought the companion sportsman in a lot of three figure at auction in the UK in April 2007 and traded the unwanted two figures in the lot with Malcolm Hodkinson, who restored the sportsman for me while I watched, thus sharing his restoration skills as he worked. The sportsman is really uncommon, and I have yet to find another besides one that Malcolm owns.

The archer was exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007.

Literature

For these figures see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, figs. 84.4, 84.6; also Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 198 (archer only). ❁

3.2.2

Lady Archer

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,⁷ c. 1830, Staffordshire, H: 7.5 in., MBS-292



Notes

When I purchased this lovely lady at Cheffins in June 2008, we already owned a “Sherratt” archer (no. 3.2.1). I tried to convince myself not to bid. After all, I owned a similar figure, buying at auction in the UK is never simple, and I hate waking up in the middle of the night to bid. But in the end, I simply couldn’t resist the figure’s beauty and that lovely crisp bocage.

This lady archer was formerly in the stock of Jonathan Horne.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 84.3. ❀

3.2.3

Lady Archer

Impressed and painted "ARCHAR", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, impressed "SALT" and made by Ralph Salt, Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 6.6 in., MBS-172



Notes

By fall 2003, my fifteen-year friendship and business relationship with Ray and Diane Ginns had ended, for a reason still not known to me. The realization that I was on my own in growing our collection hit me like a rock on the head. An addict without a supplier...I was really in trouble! I remember fretting about what I might have done to break our relationship, and worrying about how I was going to buy figures at auction in the UK without trusted eyes to view for me. By that time, more and more auction were on the internet, which would have been unimaginable a decade or so earlier. Also, the buying process itself was becoming easier. Phone calls (until then a luxury that cost several dollars a minute) were becoming ever cheaper, email facilitated communication, and I had a UK checking account for payment. But buying remained risky because condition reports from very many auction houses were, and still are, notoriously unreliable, so I decided to approach Nick Burton for help.

Nick lives in Staffordshire, and we had met at Christie's, New York, that bitterly cold January, at the sale of the Hope McCormick collection. We had run into each other more than once during viewing, and we had sat next to each other during the sale. We just "clicked," and I had confided in him that I was working on a book. I admired the thoughtful choices Nick made at the sale as well as his determination to buy the very best or nothing at all. No compromises. To my mind, Nick would be the perfect person to help me, so I dug up his phone

number, and called, wondering if he even remembered me. He did, and he was very willing to help. I heaved a huge sigh of relief, confident that I was in good hands.

Nick and I worked out an arrangement, and I soon learned that I had found my collecting soul mate. This archer was his first purchase for us, and he bought it at Bonhams, Knightsbridge, in October 2003 along with a gardener (no. 7.1.8). In those days, that sale room held great sales of Staffordshire twice each year, under the guidance of Gareth Williams assisted by Beth Sanders. Those sales truly were the last great auctions devoted to English pottery on a regular basis. Alas, a few years later Bonhams moved Gareth to modern prints or some such thing. Thereafter, Bonhams sent all but the highest value pottery to its Chester sale room to be sold along with early oak by a staff devoid of expertise in early figures, and the sales floundered.

In the next months, Nick hunted down several other small figures for us, often traveling great distances and sometimes coming home empty handed. In early 2004, Ben and I went to the UK to collect our little stash. We stayed with Nick and his wife Vicky and their two marvelous greyhounds, Cassie and Bonnie, in Leek. Nick's parents, Brian and Audrey, lived nearby in a gorgeous country home, and they shared their fabulous pottery collection with us. Nick had added significantly to the collection over the years, and his additions were stunners. Each just punched me in the gut! Among them were some unique pearlware figures, but the display in the main

bedroom is forever in my mind. The spacious room was bathed in soft light that flooded through its tall windows. On the mantel, a row of fine, sharp Ralph Wood Toby jugs simply glowed. Audrey is very warm and outgoing; Brian was very blunt, but he and I took an instant liking to each other. I was greatly saddened by his passing in December 2015. He wrote me a beautiful letter when *People, Passions, Pastimes, & Pleasures*—which he dubbed my “love story”— was published, and I treasure it.

A similar Salt archer is in the Potteries Museum (1398). This figure was exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 197; also Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 84.42.

For a similar figure in the Potteries Museum see Halfpenny, *English Earthenware Figures*, 228. ❀

3.2.4

Sportsman, Lady (pair)

Painted "Sportman" and "& Lady", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to Ralph Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1790, H: 7.5 in. each, MBS-380



Notes

These figures were made without bocages, and, as would be expected, the back of each base is undecorated. The figures do not have impressed numbers, but I have recorded the lady impressed “48” in the manner of Ralph Wood figures, and the gentleman decorated in colored glaze and impressed “47”.

I was thrilled to get this lovely early pair at auction in the UK in June 2010 and have yet to see another of equal quality.

Literature

For this pair see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 84.56. ❀

3.2.5

Sportsman

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to John Dale, Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 8 in., MBS-225



Notes

Who could not be “gob-smacked,” as the English say, by this sportsman’s stunning, wide-spread bocage? When the figure appeared on the late Bernard Trower’s site in the summer of 2006, I had to have it. Bernard mailed it to Nick Burton, who then routinely checked out my purchases.

John Dale made a few figure models with the bocage manufactured separately from the figure itself, as you see here. At the end of the production process, the bocage was fitted into a socket in the tree trunk behind the figure, in much the same way as a candle fits into a candlestick. This technique enabled easy replacement of the bocage if it was broken during manufacture.

In this case, the bocage must have been placed in the socket for the final enamel firing, and the heat melded the glazes and enamels, effectively making the bocage stick in the socket. I suspect this alone has saved the bocage from being lost over time, as I have not yet seen another example of this figure with the original bocage.

This figure was exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 84.56. ❁

3.2.6

Sportsman

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1815, H: 8.3 in., MBS-506



Notes

In October 2013, I bid on a Neale gentleman piper at North-east auction, which I needed to pair with a female figure (no. 6.1.18). This sportsman happened to be in the same lot, so I acquired him too. When he arrived I was surprised—almost shocked—at how impressive he is. He is quite tall and the dog is substantially chunky, so the figure has a good footprint, and the colors are particularly eye-catching. This is the only recorded example of this figure, and I just managed to sneak it into the addendum to *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 4.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 4, fig. 203.2. ❀

3.2.7

Sportsmen, Spaniel, Hare (4)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, all made by John Walton and impressed "WALTON", Staffordshire, c. 1820, from left to right: H: 6.5 in., 4.6 in., 3.7 in., 6.4 in., MBS-186, MBS-463, MBS-387, MBS-558









Notes

The potter John Walton made a number of figures on a shooting theme that were designed to stand together in a garniture. I firmly believe they were sold individually so that the initial buyer could purchase as many or as few elements as he or she desired. I have recorded six of these figure models.⁸ Today, all are very rare.

Nick Burton started me on this slippery slope when he bought the sportsman with a dog, the critical figure in assembling the garniture, at Bonhams, Knightsbridge, in October 2004. He was particularly excited with the purchase because he loved both the subject and the exceptionally fine quality. The sportsman stands very well on its own and was exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007.

I bought the hare at auction at Bellmans in September 2010 and the spaniel from Malcolm Hodgkinson in 2012. I didn't think I would ever find the second sportsman, and it wasn't until March 2017 that one came onto the market. I bought it at Martel Maides in Guernsey, and, unusual though it is to receive service from an auction house, the personnel actually mailed my purchase to me at a modest cost. The box arrived pasted on all sides with very attractive sheets of stamps, which delighted Ben, who is a stamp collector, as much as the sportsman thrilled me.

Literature

For the sportsman facing right see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 202; also Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 84.64 and dust jacket.

For another sportsman facing right in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 188.

For another sportsman facing left see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, figs. 84.65–67

For the spaniel see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 120.31.

For the hare see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 130.2.

For the two only other recorded garnitures see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 84.66–67. ❁



3.2.8

Sportsman

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Leaf Mat Group" pot bank,⁹ Staffordshire, c. 1820, H: 7.1 in., MBS-549



Notes

I bought this sportsman on eBay in October 2016. He is a handsome gentleman—as my collector friend Mike Smith correctly observed, he looks almost like a dandy—and the enamel colors are particularly pretty.

Although the figure is uncommon, I have seen two or three other examples, but with bocages from other pot banks. Here, the bocage supports a “Leaf Mat” attribution.

The figure needed a little restoration, but I was pleased that the hands and bird were original because any restoration to those elements would have interfered with my enjoyment. Alan Finney in the UK did the work because I thought it worthy of his expertise.

Literature

For examples of this sportsman but with different bocages indicating different pot banks of manufacture, see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, figs. 84.1, 84.10, 84.54. ❀

FALCONRY WAS, IN ANCIENT TIMES, the most esteemed of hunting sports, and learning to train and fly hawks was essential education for noble and fashionable gentlemen. But the advent of the musket made falconry obsolete, and the sport, which was at its zenith in 1600, had almost faded into obscurity a century later.

In the closing years of the eighteenth century, the Earl of Orford revived falconry. From 1792, the Falconer's Club (later known as the High Ash Club) made the Norfolk estate of Lord Berners (then Colonel Wilson) its epicenter. The surrounding vast sweeps of open land were perfect for hunting, and a well-stocked heronry with access to nearby fens and rivers provided prey.

Lord Berners died in 1838, and the dismantling of his establishment was the death knoll for the struggling sport. With increasing urbanization and enclosure, the wide sweeps of land necessary for falconry had vanished. With marshes drained and heaths ploughed, feeding and hunting grounds were forever lost, and falconry was no longer feasible in England. ❁

3.3.1

Falconer

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1800, H: 8.1 in., MBS-328



Notes

I bought this splendid and rather snooty gentleman from Jonathan Horne at the New York Ceramics Fair in January 2009. It had previously been with John Howard. I was drawn to both the haughty expression and the silky, subtle early enamels. The figure is after a similar Derby figure of a gentleman holding a cockerel, produced circa 1765.

I never fail to look at this figure without thinking of Jonathan Horne, who was in his time the preeminent dealer in English pottery. Prior to 2006, I was not well acquainted with him, but I came to know him better when we bought a small menagerie from him that year (see 10.1.1. Notes). The next year, Jonathan, knowing that I had lectured to the Delholm Service League at the Mint Museum in Charlotte, North Carolina, asked me if I could arrange for him to address that group. I readily made the arrangements for 2008 and, of course, invited Jonathan to be our guest.

To say I was intimidated at the prospect of such an auspicious guest is an understatement! Thinking that conversation might not flow readily, I planned a busy itinerary, which started with me meeting Jonathan at the local airport and taking him to see the eighteenth-century potters house at the Moravian settlement of Bethabara, part of today's city of Winston-Salem. It was pouring that day, but Jonathan had the best time. He explored the potter's house as well as every nook and cranny of the church, which he declared had the oldest tile oven in America. Within no time, the ice was more than shattered, it was

pulverized!

Jonathan and I had the very best few days together—everything from elegant dinners with collectors to a visit to the original Krispy Kreme doughnuts, where Jonathan sampled the fare hot off the conveyor belt. I couldn't have enjoyed the conversation more, and I have never enjoyed a house guest as much. Sadly, Jonathan told me that he had only just learned he had a recurrence of the illness that was shortly to claim his life, and that news hung over every moment. I was very, very sad to leave him at the airport three days later. We stayed in touch after that, right to the end when he was confined to his bed at home. He died in July 2010, and I miss him.

Literature

For this figure see, Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 84.82. ❁

DEER STALKING IS A LONG-ESTABLISHED tradition in Scotland, where deer have traditionally flourished on Highlands estates. A serious sport for the affluent, it requires stealthily pursuing a deer on foot, perhaps assisted by a dog, so as to shoot it. In the late-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, deer were perceived as a nuisance, and their number dwindled as profitable sheep farming took hold on the Highlands. But by the 1830s, landowners were intent on re-establishing deer herds, and deer stalking acquired the royal imprimatur when Queen Victoria acquired her Balmoral estate in 1852. ❁

3.4.1

Deer Stalker

*Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,¹⁰ Staffordshire, c. 1830,
H: 7.6 in., MBS-342*



Notes

In the pre-Victorian era, the deer stalker seems to have been an uncommon figure that was specific to the “Sherratt” pot bank, but later look-alikes are more common and persisted into the twentieth century. A similar deer stalker appears on transfer-printed plates made by William Adams & Sons as part of their Caledonia pattern series, and possibly there is a common design source. I bought this figure on eBay in June 2009, and paid a lot for it—but a lot less than a friend had paid Jonathan Horne for another of the same form in his 2008 exhibition. That figure was imperfect as was this one, and Malcolm Hodgkinson kindly did the restoration for me as I watched and learned.

I can’t look at this figure without recalling that its purchase resulted in a falling out with a fellow collector. The person in question, whom I will call Paul, is someone whom I have never met but he, like so many others, would periodically email me to ask about a purchase he had made or intended making. At some point, he sold his collection because he needed money for a new kitchen, but the collecting bug resurfaced a while later, and he started filling his shelves (and emptying his pockets) yet again. When this figure came on eBay, I intended bidding in the final moments of the auction. A few hours before that time, Paul emailed me to ask my thoughts on the figure. What was I to do? If I had told him all I knew, he would have used my knowledge to bid against me. Had he contacted me a good while before the auction’s end, I know I would have felt obli-

gated to answer, but with only hours to go, I let the email sit and replied after the auction’s end. Some week’s later, I wrote about this figure on *mystaffordshirefigures.com*, and Paul emailed me, spitting fury and contempt. He really felt that by failing to provide an immediate answer to his question (and my help is always free, I must add), I had cheated him. I have not heard from him again, but the tone of his email was so distressingly offensive that I appreciate his silence.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 84.76.

For another upon a different base see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 84.75; also Horne, *English Pottery*, 2008, no. 29. ❀

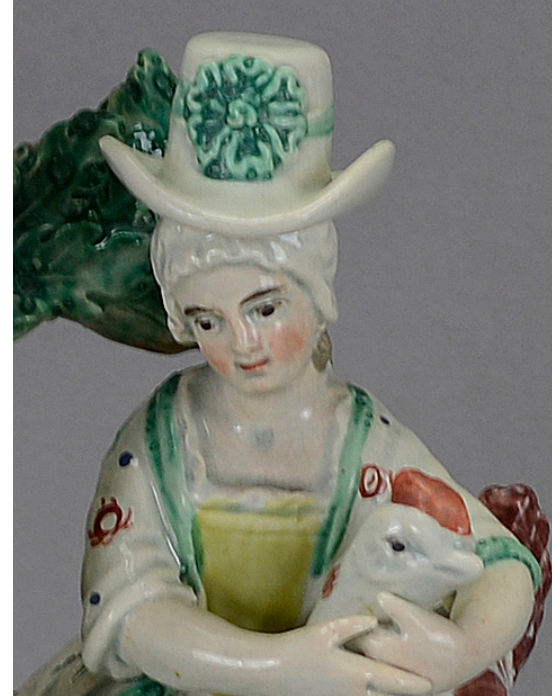
COCK FIGHTING IS A NOW-ILLEGAL blood sport and a gambling sport that utilizes the male cock's inbred aggression toward others of its sex and species. The sport has existed since ancient times and is said to be the world's oldest spectator sport.

In bygone centuries, England's monarchs elevated cock fighting to a royal sport, and it became a national pastime that kings and commoners alike enjoyed. Owners diligently prepared their birds for battle, feeding and exercising them carefully, trimming the comb and wattle to reduce the bird's vulnerability, and attaching razor-sharp metal spurs to enhance its fighting prowess. Even school boys at elite public schools studied the finer points of preparing a cock for success in the ring and set their birds against each other. Above all, cock fighting indulged the national propensity to gamble, and, because fortunes might be wagered on an outcome, strict conventions evolved to regulate the contests, which often continued to the death.

England's Cruelty to Animals Act of 1835 banned cock fighting, but the sport continues underground to this day. ❁

3.5.1 Cock Fighting

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1810, H: 9.2 in., MBS-239



Notes

At first glance, this appears to be a bucolic farm yard scene, but I believe it instead refers to cock fighting because a similar group titled *Cock-Fighters* is recorded.¹¹ I am very taken with the lady's hat.

I bought this group from John Howard in late 2006. A similar figure in under-glaze colors is in the Brighton and Hove Museums. (HW1051).

Literature

For this figure group see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 3, fig. 114.31.

For a similar group in the Brighton and Hove Museums see Beddoe, *A Potted History*, 218. ❀

FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS, ENGLISH crowds relished bloody contests that pitted tenacious dogs against tethered bears or bulls. Until their banning in 1835, bear and bull baitings were public amusements that crossed class divides. Figure groups depicting these brutal sports pay tribute to the spirit of the opposing animals while bearing mute witness to man's innate cruelty. Those who love animals cringe at the damning finger they point at mankind.

The first reference to baiting sports is in William Fitzstephen's account of twelfth-century London, where Fitzstephen notes that on almost every holiday "some lusty Bulls, or huge Bears, are baited with Dogs."¹² Such events soon became entrenched English entertainment. From the perspective of those times, it was amusing to watch animals display grit in an instinctive battle for survival. But above all, baiting was a great gambling sport, with dog owners and spectators wagering on each outcome. And the profit motive was ever present. Because the events drew crowds, resourceful entrepreneurs supplied venues, or quick-witted inn keepers staged baitings to boost ale sales.

The sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were the heyday of bull and bear baiting, and nearly every town boasted a baiting ring of sorts. Because bears were costly and had to be imported, bull baiting was more common nationwide and it

became almost a national sport. Both sports had royal patronage. The Tudor monarchs particularly relished bear baitings and staged these contests to honor foreign visitors. Such displays of brutality contrasted sharply with more timid European entertainments, and the tenaciousness of British dogs sent a powerful message to foreign dignitaries. By that time, London had large custom-built baiting arenas known as bear gardens where both bulls and bears were baited. Around then, theatre, as we know it today, emerged. This entertainment genre's popularity came to challenge that of bear baiting, so in 1591 Queen Elizabeth banned plays on Thursdays, the day favored for baiting.

The Puritans abhorred cruelty, gambling, and public disorder, so they were baiting's most vocal opponents. At the start of the Civil War (1642–51) they banned baiting (along with much other revelry) and later had the bear garden bears shot. The nineteenth-century British historian Thomas Macaulay is remembered for saying that "the Puritan hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators."¹³ When the monarchy was restored in 1660, bear gardens were once more up and running, and baiting again had royal patronage. But as the century drew to a close, enlightened individuals recoiled in horror at cruelty to animals and denounced bloody baiting contests that evoked

violence in man. By the century's end, baiting sports no longer had royal patronage, although they retained a strong following nationwide. While the lower classes were the most avid enthusiasts, some ladies and gentlemen of the upper classes relished them too.

As the years marched on, concerned voices increasingly complained that savage bear garden diversions barbarized the population. Whereas Elizabethan London had taken pride in depraved displays that stirred battle in Englishmen's breasts, Georgian London feared that blood-lust in the common man might unravel its neatly ordered society. But something other than self-interest motivated the growing opposition. The eighteenth century witnessed the dawning of an enlightened morality, and progressive thinkers vehemently protested inhumane treatment of animals. In this century, change was in the air. Notably, after 1747 Eton's privileged schoolboys were forced to abandon the Eton Ram Hunt, an annual ritual in which they clubbed a ram to death. Also, England's age-old school sport of cock-throwing, or stoning a cock to death, died its own death. By the middle of the century, bear gardens were considered so disreputable that they had largely disappeared from the heart of London, yet the baiting sports thrived across England because baiting was a core English tradition.

Joseph Strutt, historian of England's sports and pastimes, would have us believe that baiting was a thing of the past by the nineteenth century. "Bull and bear baiting is not encouraged by persons of rank and opulence in the present day," he wrote in

1801, "and when practiced, which rarely happens, it is attended only by the lowest and most despicable part of the people; which plainly indicates a general refinement of manners and prevalency of humanity among moderns."¹⁴ In reality, baiting was by no means merely a fading plebeian pastime, and both city dwellers and the rural elite retained their predilection for the brutal sport. By this time, some communities had prohibited baiting, but local officials generally just turned a blind eye because bloody animal fights remained favorite amusements. In rural areas, bull baiting in particular was as much a part of life as maypoles, harvests, and fairs. Baiting sports were a core English tradition, and it required more than the enlightened persuasion to ensure their demise. It required legal action.

From 1800, Parliament pondered a succession of bills aimed at abolishing baiting, but with little result. Baiting's opponents wanted to reform the morals of the lower classes, but others pointed out that the upper-class's hunting sports were as cruel and immoral. England's elite, aware of the double standard in mercilessly hunting for sport while denying others baiting's pleasures, refused to act.

The issues argued went beyond the questionable morality of allowing pleasure to be derived from pain. Baiting's opponents contended that because baiting brutalized the common man, it risked bringing England the same turmoil that had befallen revolutionary Europe. Proponents, on the other hand, held that animal cruelty stabilized society by providing a harmless vent for man's frustrations. Baiting, they believed, developed

the martial spirit needed to prevail in battle. Without it, they argued, the nation would fall. But legislative reform did not prevail because even those who sat in Parliament were not above enjoying the odd baiting.

Animal welfare reformer's first victory was scored with the passage of the Martin Act of 1822, which criminalized the abuse of cattle—but bulls did not qualify as cattle. Nevertheless, that legislation paved the way for the creation in 1824 of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, which spearheaded the fight against baiting sports.

After 1830, political, scientific, and social progress made public brutality increasingly unacceptable, and in 1835, after thirty-five years of political wrangling, Parliament finally outlawed baiting. Still, the sports did not die. Instead, they were driven underground to linger for a while longer, with the last recorded bull baiting being held in 1853.¹⁵ Earthenware bear and bull baiting figure groups give us the lasting reminders of brutal sports that persisted for centuries.

Historians remind us that it is inappropriate to judge the past from today's perspective, but it is impossible to dismiss the cruelty of baiting sports as a product of harsher times, for man has always comprehended pain. These pastimes highlight an innate defect in human nature, evidenced by the often-illegal bloody animal sports and barbaric human killings and mutilations that persist today in our world.

BULL BAITING

Although William Fitzstephen's account of London in around 1180 tells that bulls were then baited each Sunday and holiday,¹⁶ bull baiting is commonly claimed to date to the early thirteenth century. It is said that in that century the Earl of Warren (then Lord of Stamford) stood atop his castle wall, watching two bulls fighting. Apparently the sight of a dog attacking and pursuing one of the bulls so amused his lordship that he gave the town butchers a meadow, on condition that they forever after bait a bull each November.

In time, baiting a bull before slaughter became common practice throughout England. This "butcherly sport" was thought to drain poison from the bull's blood and tenderize its meat. Over the centuries, wealthy gentlemen bequeathed funds to stage bull baitings, with the sale of the meat benefiting the poor. In those times, bull baiting was perceived as an economic necessity because it tenderized cuts of meat that might otherwise be discarded. As late as the nineteenth century, some communities still forbade the slaughter of a bull that had not been baited.

For centuries bull baiting was the national amusement, and contests were commonly held at fairs and holidays, or at the time of elections. Each time, the bull was tethered to a rope or chain affixed to a metal stake or ring in the ground, and many towns had a permanent metal ring in the market place for just this purpose. Dog owners—frequently butchers whose dogs

had acquired their expertise in slaughter yards—paid entrance fees that allowed their dogs to challenge the bull. The dogs might be released singly or in multiples, but in each case the dog owner served as a two-footed second, goading his dog to aggression, catching it as it was tossed through the air, and performing ringside surgery. Similarly, the bull had a second, who shouted warning of an approaching dog. The dog strove to immobilize the bull by locking its teeth into the larger animal's sensitive nose or lip, and the bull attempted to toss the dog into the air, shake it, gore it, or stamp it to death. The owner of the dog that gripped the bull longest pocketed a prize, along with winnings from his wagers. The sport's appeal was its brutality. The crowd relished the howling dogs, the bellowing bull, and the blood and gore. And the event also afforded opportunity for much gambling.

A bull baiting commonly ended when all were weary of torturing the bull, which could then be taken for slaughter, and the meat would be sold. Particularly spirited bulls that showed mean tempers and skilled offenses might be allowed to live to fight another day, but these “game bulls” always paid a high price for their expertise, customarily losing hunks of flesh in battle. Owners maximized these Goliaths' fighting prowess, often trimming down their horns and affixing large ox horns to the stumps with pitch. Onlookers gored bulls with pointed sticks, twisted their tails to the point of dislocation, lit fires beneath their weary bellies, blew pepper up their nostrils, and even poured boiling water in their ears. Prolonging the

animal's agony apparently added to sport's pleasure. As the *Staffordshire Advertiser* reported in 1833:

At Rowley Regis Wake a two-year old bull was worried in the most brutal manner. Either on the Monday or Tuesday one of this bull's horns was broken off, and the following day the other shared the same fate, and a portion of the tongue was also torn out of his mouth by one of the dogs. On the Thursday he was again dragged to the stake and worried for hours, the whole of his head and face being mangled and covered with blood, in a manner too shocking to describe. Two iron horns had been also rivetted on the broken stumps, and the bellowings and groans of the wretched beast, while undergoing this barbarous operation, are said to have been truly appalling.¹⁷

At an especially heinous baiting in 1801, at a time when it was widely acknowledged that animals do indeed feel pain, a bull had his four hooves hacked away at the start of the contest and had to fight for his life on bloody stumps.

Any dog with a fighting spirit might enter the baiting arena, but a small one with a good dose of mastiff genes earned the title of bulldog. By the early nineteenth century, these dogs differed vastly in appearance, and all looked very different from today's bulldog. Each aspect of the bulldog's physique served it well in the baiting arena. Its heavy musculature and loose skin folds protected the internal organs from damage, and facial wrinkles acted as conduits for draining the bull's blood away from the dog's eyes. The dog's bite locked so fast

that it seemed incapable of loosening it—yet its belligerently prominent jaw and recessed nose allowed it to breathe with its teeth locked firmly in an adversary’s flesh. Notably, the dog seldom barked in excitement but approached its foe stealthily and used its squat body to creep under the bull’s belly. To top it all, the dog’s pain tolerance was legendary. Savagely mutilated dogs persisted in lunging at bulls, despite their own battered and broken limbs, and dogs even fought with their entrails dragging behind them. More than one proud owner demonstrated his dog’s tenacity—and won his wager—by amputating his dog’s legs while it held its grip unrelentingly. The British bulldog’s courage epitomized the grit that had built Britain’s empire, and the name “John Bull” became synonymous with the British people.

Baitings were vicious battles that imperiled human lives. A flying dog with dangling entrails could be a lethal weapon, and dog owners who stood ready to break their dogs’ falls with their own bodies were at great risk, as were spectators, who risked injury from tortured bulls or wounded dogs. In Surrey in 1807, at a bull baiting staged after a boxing match, the bull broke loose, became entangled in surrounding carriages, and threw two onlookers.¹⁸ In 1810, at a baiting staged as an Easter entertainment in Hove, the bull broke loose and charged spectators.¹⁹ The next year, a similar mishap on the outskirts of Birmingham caused multiple injuries and the death of a child; consequently, Birmingham authorities banned baiting.²⁰ In 1814, about a dozen people were injured, some critically, at



Bull Baiting. Henry Alken, first published 1822.

a Staffordshire bull baiting.²¹ In 1820, seven people died when a surging crowd at a bull baiting in Rochdale caused the collapse of a bridge parapet—and that officially ended bull baiting in that town.²² And around this time in Bilston, Staffordshire, a baiting ended in disaster.

The dogs were at length let loose and began to cruelly torment the poor bull, which soon worked itself into a mad state of fury, and several of the canine fraternity were tossed high into the air, and descended among the vast crowd with sides torn open, and entrails protruding, as they fell heavily on the heads of the people. This state of things was carried on till the afternoon when the bull, frightfully worried about the head and nostrils, made a last mighty effort to free himself from his bondage. To the great consternation of all around the fastenings gave way, and the bull charged furiously among the crowd, upsetting scores in his mad rush for liberty. Thousands who seemed brave enough when the bull was safely chained, now took to their heels in all directions, but the infuriated beast in his mad gallop took a course up the main street. At that period the markets and fairs were held in that street, and being the wake time the thoroughfare was packed with people, and stalls of all descriptions lined the street on each side. These were soon deserted by their owners, who fled for safety in a great state of terror. The stalls were overturned by the mad rushes of the bull, the contents of one being mixed with those of another, all being scattered in hopeless ruin and confusion about the street and in the gutters. I believe a great many

*persons were badly injured by the falling stalls, and in coming in contact with his bullship, in their mad haste to make tracks for a safer quarter.*²³

The bull managed to get out of town, but armed pursuers later shot him. The following day, his meat was sold to the poor at just two pennies per pound. While there was increasing anguish at animal agony, unruly mobs particularly concerned authorities and others who wanted to refine society. A bellowing bull, howling dogs, and frenzied crowds were an open invitation to chaos beyond conception.

BEAR BAITING

Bear baiting required tethering a chained bear to a metal stake or ring driven into the ground. Then, dog owners paid a small fee to allow their dogs to go for the bear, and the crowd wagered on the outcome. When loosed, the dogs lunged at the bear's throat in an attempt to bite and kill it, and the bear swiped the dog away with its lethal paws. The dog that jumped highest on the bear and survived took the winner's purse. It came to be practice to pin a rosette to the bear's forehead, and the dog that retrieved it from this dangerous spot (and lived) was the winner.

Bear baiting is entrenched in the history of several English communities. The city of Liverpool until the mid-eighteenth century provided a bear for baiting at the time of its mayoral elections. To this day, the town of Congleton, well-known in the early 1600s for its bear baiting contests, is known as Bear

Town because in 1601, faced with the death of the town bear, residents used money intended for a new town Bible to buy a new bear. This event inspired an inaccurate but amusing rhyme, still remembered today: “Congleton rare, Congleton rare, sold the Bible to buy a bear.”

By the nineteenth century, bears were in short supply, so bear baiting was very much less common than bull baiting, but the events still were staged in cities and towns alike. In 1815, a young Boston merchant traveling through Cheshire went to a fair in the village of Winwick.

Among the sports of this place was a bear bait. Bruin after being muzzled was tied to a stake and the dogs were set upon him. I was at first shocked at the inhumanity of depriving the poor animal of resistance and then thus tormenting him, but I soon discovered that the bear was fully equal to his adversaries. The first dog set upon him was a large bull-dog, to whom he gave the “hug à la françois” and sent him off howling. So well was he satisfied of his reception that all the coaxings and threatenings of his master could not induce him to repeat it. Many others were served in a similar manner without the bear’s being in the least injured, as his hair was grown to such an immoderate length as to entirely prevent the least laceration of the flesh from the dog’s teeth. The baiting had continued for some time until the bear grew angry, when he broke his rope and after laying his keeper sprawling set off in full chase after the mob of men, women and children who fled over hedges and ditches in all directions.²⁴



THE COUNTRY SQUIRE taking a peep at CHARLEY'S THEATRE WESTM^R where the performers are of the Old School. Henry Alken, c. 1820.

In 1828, Prince Pückler-Muskau wrote of an evening of bloody animal sport held in “a sort of barn” near his London lodging. Around the small stage was “a gallery filled with the lowest vulgar and with perilous-looking faces of both sexes. A ladder led up to a higher gallery, for the patrician part of the spectators, which was let out at three shillings a seat.” The evening ended with a bear baiting “in which the bear treated some dogs extremely ill, and seemed to suffer little himself.”²⁵

The sins of fathers supposedly pass to ensuing generations, and it has been so with bear baiting. About two hundred years ago, English colonists introduced this savage sport to today’s Pakistan. Despite laws banning it, bear baiting continues in modern Pakistan, to that nation’s shame. ❀

3.6.1

Bull Baiting

Impressed and painted "BULL BEATING" and "NOW CAPTIN LAD", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,²⁶ Staffordshire, c. 1830, L: 14 in., MBS-59





Notes

In the early twentieth century, word of mouth attributed bull baiting groups like this one to a potter named Obadiah Sherratt. Obadiah Sherratt was a successful potter who may or may not have made such bull baiting groups, but this iconic model serves as the foundation for defining the attributes of the work of the pot bank we have dubbed “Sherratt,” for want of another name.

I know of no finer example of this bull baiting model than ours, and it has given us both enormous pleasure. Although we bought it in April 1992, I recall it as if it were yesterday. We were in England that spring, with Andrea, who was then eight years old. She was often with us on our trips, and she was very fond of both Ray and Diane Ginns, who always spoiled her too generously. As always, our first stop was with Ray and Diane, who by then lived conveniently near Gatwick airport. They had previously had a “Sherratt” bull baiting in stock, but it hadn’t pressed any buttons with me. I didn’t then know enough about what I was looking at to understand its virtues or vices, but Diane had advised us that it as a “bad” bull baiting, with too many issues for our collection.

On this visit, Diane proudly brought out another bull baiting group to show us, the group shown here. I was truly bowled over. The bright glazes matched the vigor of the subject, and the colors came together so harmoniously, as they usually do on “Sherratt” pieces. Ben, on the other hand, recoiled. Our decisions are usually joint, and, as a bull baiting is rather large, I

especially wanted him to like it. In any event, he kinda-disliked it, whereas I loved, loved, loved it, and as we weighed our reactions, my enormous longing won out against his mild aversion. It helped that Ray and Diane were also immensely pleased with this group, saying it was the nicest they had ever seen.

The bull baiting duly arrived in North Carolina, shipped in a sturdy apple box that Ray carefully custom fitted to hold its weighty contents. The man’s stick is, of course, restored, and the restoration was done so that the stick can be detached quite easily to facilitate safe travel. The box was such a masterpiece that I kept it and used it to again move the bull baiting to Texas in 2015.

In those days, televisions were not mounted on walls, so we were able to place the bull baiting atop our television cabinet. Then, the Dow Jones Industrial Average was just over 3,000, but in the next seven years it tripled. With that, Ben came to love the bull baiting because he was convinced that it had brought with it a bull market in stocks. The stock market continued to roar until 2002, and at the very time that I moved the bull baiting off the television, the market plummeted to a four year low! I tried moving the bull baiting back to its old spot, but the magic was, alas, lost.

Anthony Oliver’s *Staffordshire Pottery: the Tribal Art of England*, pages 45 and 48, tells of this group being reproduced by the Kent factory in the twentieth century and as late as 1960. The Kent version is on a significantly smaller scale and is about

seven inches long.²⁷ Oliver spoke to the man responsible for reducing the group from the original. He was very proud of his derivative work and kept an example in a cabinet in his living room.

Similar groups are in the Potteries Museum and the Brighton and Hove Museums (HW1019). Another (albeit on a different base) is in the Winterthur Museum (2002.0030.078). This figure was exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth & Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 83.7 and dust jacket; also Schkolne, *People, Pastimes, Pastimes, & Pleasures*, 137.

For a similar group in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 182.

For a similar group but on a different base and now in the Winterthur Museum see Halfpenny and Beddoe, *Circus & Sport*, 56. ❀

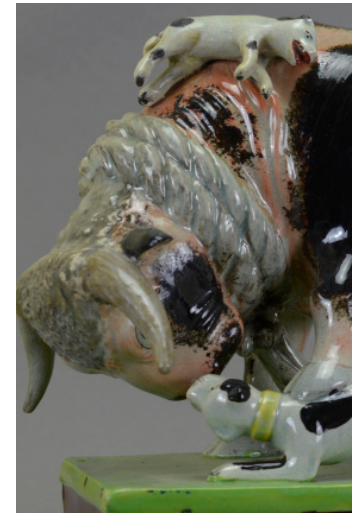


3.6.2

Bull Baiting

Impressed and painted "BULL BEATING" and "NOW CAPTIN LAD", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,²⁸ Staffordshire, c. 1820, L: 15 in., MBS-515





Notes

This bull baiting group is almost certainly an earlier model than our other one (no. 3.6.1). Note that here the bull is from different molds and is significantly larger and chunkier; also the man is larger and quite different. There are other subtle differences: the rope is much thicker, and the bull is posed with one huge hoof atop the dog, rather than on the ground.

I have recorded one other group with this same bull and man.²⁹It too is on a brown base (but with claw feet and untitled). I believe that these brown bases are the earlier “Sherratt” table bases and that, therefore, bull baitings on these bases predate those on other bases.

This group came up for auction in January 2014, and I experienced an adrenaline rush the instant I saw its picture. I well recalled the other similar bull baiting on a brown base previously mentioned because I had seen it auctioned in January 2003 at Christie’s New York when the Hope McCormick collection was dispersed. I remember it having some over-painting, but even so it wow-ed me and I wish I had bought it, despite its flaws. I determined to go all out on this group, and we won it at a reasonable price.

The admirably thorough condition report had read as a list of issues, but you have to know how to interpret a condition report. Detailing several chips to the feet can make for lengthy reading, but these are minor issues that are almost to be expected. What concerned me most was the man’s raised hand,

which was described as over-painted. I suspected it was a brand new hand, and I fretted that the arm might be restored too.

Immediately after the auction, a rather ignorant member of the trade contacted me to ask if the bull baiting that she had just seen sold online was genuine! I assured her it was. She replied that she was certain that the black was over-painted and the condition report indicated that the group was in deplorable condition. As I was confident in my purchase, I simply said nothing. The group had not yet arrived when I headed off to New York to work at the Ceramics Fair a few days later. There another member of the trade approached me asking if I knew who had bought a bull baiting that he heard on the grapevine had been in umpteen parts and had an over-painted bull!

Shortly after I returned to North Carolina, my purchase arrived. Usually, an auction purchase is disappointing in that it has more issues than the condition report notes, but it was not so this time. The group was filthy, filthy, filthy, and I immediately set about washing it. As the grease and grime dissolved, the enamels glowed. There was the expected damage to some of the feet, but over-painting of the bull’s black patches? Not at all. The man’s hand had been totally over-painted, leading the auction house to think it was restored, but when I stripped off the nasty old paint, the original hand was there in all its glory, with just a chipped finger tip. Similarly, both horns had been described as restored because both exhibited new paint, but beneath the paint one horn was completely original; a

lazy restorer had simply painted both horns to ensure that his restoration to the end of one matched the other. Also, one dog was largely over painted but to disguise a restoration to merely his tail.

This is the most stunning bull baiting group, and visitors to our home are taken aback at its vigorous presence. Until we got it, I had always said that our first bull baiting (no. 3.6.1) was the nicest “Sherratt” bull baiting I had seen, but now that honor goes instead to this group.

Literature

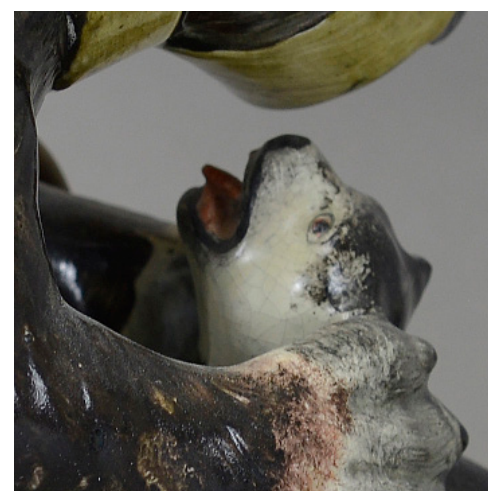
For this group see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 4, fig. 203.8. ❀

3.6.3

Bear Baiting

*Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,³⁰ Staffordshire, c. 1815,
L: 13.5 in., MBS-157*





Notes

This group was formerly in the collection of the Chicago collector Hope Baldwin McCormick, who was in her time the *grand dame* of Chicago society. Born and raised in New York state, in 1940 she married Brooks McCormick, a son of one of Chicago's most prominent and oldest families. The McCormick family fortune rested on the development of the horse-drawn reaper in the nineteenth century, which lead ultimately to the family's ownership of International Harvester. Mrs. McCormick achieved prominence in her own right for her service in the Illinois General Assembly and on the National Republic Committee. A great philanthropist, she supported many of Chicago's cultural institutions and is still remembered for her numerous civic and community endeavors. She died in 1993, at the age of seventy-four. Shortly before her death, she lost her daughter to cancer and her son committed suicide, so I always think of her with great sadness and wonder if her figures could have brought her any joy at all after such devastating sorrow.

The sale of the Hope McCormick collection was the last big sale of early Staffordshire figures in recent times, and it occurred in January 2003, at Christie's, New York. It coincided with the New York Ceramics Fair, so I went to New York for a few days. The city then was still subdued following the 9-11 attacks, and somehow the Ceramics Fair is consistently held on the coldest week of the year. To say it was bitterly cold that January is an understatement. I don't recall temperatures rising above the single digit for my entire stay, and I bought a second scarf to

wrap around my face to protect it from the biting cold, only to find that my glasses then misted up. I recall walking from my daughter Deborah's Gramercy Park apartment up to Christie's at Rockefeller Center on the Sunday afternoon before the sale for one last look. Walking back at five o'clock, Fifth Avenue was deserted—like something out of a post-apocalyptic movie. A combination of the cold and the post-9-11 malaise, I suspect.

At this point, I was a just slightly more experienced collector, but the array of figures at Christie's boggled my mind. I spent hours looking. There was lots I would have liked to own, but I decided I was to only buy the one item that I might not be able to get again. To my mind, this bear baiting was IT, and time has proved me right. I didn't see another until 2015, when John Howard had a similar group that has gone into the Hunt Collection in Dallas.

My bear baiting group came up in the third lot at the sale, and I secured it at a steep price, underbid by the dealer Alistair Sampson, who in those days bid for himself and the dealer Jonathan Horne. I sat near the back of the room, alongside Nick Burton, whom I had met for the very first time when viewing the auction. Nick had come to New York with a friend and fellow collector, Andrew Houghton, and, little did I know then that Nick was to become my true and much-valued friend.

After the auction, I returned to North Carolina and called Ray Ginns to share the news. When Ray heard what I had paid for the bear baiting, he was shocked and said, "If I had had it

in stock, you would not have paid me that for it.” Until then, Ray and Diane had handled nearly every purchase we made. I was a loyal Ginns customer and did not buy from others in the trade, but the fact that I had spent this much at auction seemed to rattle Ray, and, although I can’t be certain, I wonder if this soured our relationship. Ray did tell me that he thought the item I should have bought at the sale was a spill vase with a family group on it. I had looked at it, but it was so palpably restored that I didn’t want to own it, and its final price reflected its condition. Over the years, it has reappeared on the market, always struggling to sell.

Until this time, I had been very dependent on the opinions of Ray and Diane for guiding my pottery purchase, but I was so convinced that I had made the right decision with this purchase that the cloud of negativism didn’t upset me. To this day, this bear baiting group is a firm favorite. I love it too much and fondly call the bear Beulah. The group was exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007.

The similar bear baiting group in the Hunt Collection has helped me link together features that establish a “Sherratt” attribution for both. In brief:

- The Hunt group is very like this group, but it is on a slab-like green base. That base is also found on the “Sherratt” Death of Munrow in the Brighton and Hove Museums.
- The man in this group (and the Hunt group) is also found

on “Sherratt” bull baitings.

- The base for my group is known on only one other figure group, also with a “Sherratt” connection: a tiger with a deer in its mouth.³¹ That tiger group also links to Sherratt: the same unusual deer is found with a lion in yet another distinctive “Sherratt” group.³²

Literature

For this group see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 127; also Schkolne,

Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840, vol. 2, fig. 82.2; also Manheim, *Selections from the Hope McCormick Collection*, plate 25.

For an article supporting the Sherratt attribution see <http://www.mystaffordshirefigures.com/blog/sherratt-pearl-ware-groups>.

For a similar figure group in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 67. ❀

3.6.4

Bear Baiting (jug)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, made by J. Morris and twice impressed "J. MORRIS STOKE", Staffordshire, c. 1830, H: 12.6 in., MBS-203



Notes

The maker J. Morris, whose mark is impressed so confidently beneath this jug, is not recorded in Staffordshire trade directories, and his mark is only known on rare jugs like this. The bear's head lifts off to form a cup, and the dog's mouth is the spout. As the removable head is easily lost, this jug routinely occurs with a heavily repaired or restored head. This head is original, and I have recorded only one other intact example, exhibited in Jonathan Horne's 2007 exhibition.

Nick Burton bought this jug for us from the dealer Roy Bunn in September 2005. Nick and I had admired a bear baiting jug at the Newcastle-under-Lyme museum when he had helped me photograph figures there that summer, so it was fortuitous that he learned Roy had this jug in stock. Nick said that when he saw Morris, as I have dubbed this bear, across the room, he loved him, and when he showed my purchase to his mother, Audrey, she too was smitten. Roy at that time had two of these jugs in stock, the other being much paler in color, and Jonathan Horne bought it. This jug was exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007.

This jug is vigorous and animated, and it embodies the spirit of its times. I roll my eyes, mentally at least, in despair at the refined sensitivities of the collector who recoils in horror at figures depicting baiting sports. Such people live with their heads buried in the sand, and even greater cruelty occurs on a daily basis today because man is inherently flawed.

Literature

For this jug see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 82.4; also Schkolne *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 130.

For a similar figure see Horne, *English Pottery*, 2007, no. 07/42. ❀

Endnotes

1. Daniel Medoza, a Jew of Spanish descent, was the first Jewish boxing champion. He was also the first boxer to be honored with the patronage of the Prince of Wales and to have spoken to the King of England (George III). His success elevated Jews in England and helped stem anti-Semitism.
2. *Sporting Magazine*, “Fight Between Crib and Molineux,” 98.
3. Bill Richmond was an American slave who enlisted with the Duke of Northumberland at the start of the Revolutionary War and earned his way to freedom in England. In 1776, at the age of just thirteen, he was the hangman for the American spy and hero Nathan Hale.
4. Miles, *Pugilistica*, 1:255.
5. <http://digital.nls.uk/english-ballads/pageturner.cfm?id=74891200&mode=transcription>.
6. Hodkinson, *Sherratt?*; Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1:36–37.
7. Ibid.
8. Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 2:150.
9. Ibid, 1:42.
10. Hodkinson, *Sherratt?*; Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1:36–37.
11. Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 3: fig. 114.27.
12. Stow, *Survey of the Cities*, 2: appendix, 14
13. Macaulay, *History of England*, 1:142.
14. Strutt, *Sports and Pastimes*, 227–228.
15. Leighton, *New Book of the Dog*, 36.
16. Stow, *Survey of the Cities*, 2: appendix, 14.
17. *Staffordshire Advertiser*, November 23, 1833.
18. Tuer, *Follies and Fashions*, 227.
19. Bishop, *Peep into the Past*, 106.
20. Razzell, *Victorian Working Class*, 315.
21. Halfpenny, *Circus & Sport*, 56..
22. Mattley, *Annals*, 12.
23. Vol. 9, Newspaper Cuttings, 42, 43, West Bromwich Library, in Raven, *Folklore of Staffordshire*, 177.
24. Ballard, *England in 1815*, 163.
25. Pückler-Muskau, *Tour*, 226.
26. Hodkinson, *Sherratt?*; Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1:36–37.
27. Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 4: fig. 201.11.

28. Hodkinson, *Sherratt?*; Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1:36–37.
29. Christie's, New York, January 21, 2003, lot 14. It also has another man lying on the ground beneath the bull.
30. Hodkinson, *Sherratt?*; Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1:36–37.
31. Christie's, South Kensington, 25 November 1994, lot 45.
32. Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 3: fig. 126.21.



CHAPTER 4

Reading and Education

Extract from an engraving for a children's book, c. 1810.

IN 1790, EDMUND BURKE ESTIMATED that a mere 80,000 English people—less than 1% of the population—could read, yet in 1832 the *Penny Magazine* claimed a readership of one million.¹ This explosive growth in England's reading public was as revolutionary in that time as the internet is today, and in the Potteries the sight of children and adults reading was so novel that potters committed such vignettes to clay.

By 1800, the prevailing mindset was that education was not intended to enrich individuals, but it did have to benefit society—and industrial interests wanted cheap labor, not educated workers. In the early nineteenth century, England's first compulsory education targeted teaching the poor enough to earn their keep. From 1802, a succession of Factory Acts mandated basic instruction for some young apprentices, but the instruction was inadequate, and many children worked in industries not covered by this legislation.

For the lower classes, the first rung on the educational ladder was usually a dame school, where a dame (or sometimes a man) minded local children and taught rudimentary reading skills along with some domestic skills. Dame schools essentially were daycare centers for the youngest children of laboring people, but relatively few children attended them.

Those parents who did not have to put their children to work

typically gave them a primary education befitting their station in life. A resident tutor, instruction by a family member, or attendance at a day or boarding school enabled a child to learn to read, if little else. For those of limited means, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge sponsored charity schools with a curriculum based on the Church of England's catechism. Reading was emphasized, but writing was considered unnecessary for poor children. Few children attended these charity schools because, in reality, children who required free education did not have the time to acquire it. Factories and fields beckoned.

From 1780, the newspaper editor Robert Raikes established Anglican Sunday schools where children learned to read the Bible, but writing was not taught because it desecrated the Sabbath. Similar schools of other Christian denominations quickly popped up. Some teachers could barely read, and two hours of instruction a week achieved little, but these inadequate Sunday schools were the most wide-reaching vehicle for primary education.

Primary education took a step forward after 1808 when Joseph Lancaster, a Quaker, established British Schools to teach the three Rs to children of all Christian denominations. The Church of England, guided by Dr. Andrew Bell, established similar National Schools that mandated adherence to

Anglican principles. Notably, both systems relied on monitorial instruction that utilized students to instruct groups of less knowledgeable students, who in turn instructed others. Teachers were few and far between, and the Bible was often the only reading text. Unsurprisingly, many pupils never learned to read or quickly forgot what they had learned for lack of practice. And education bypassed parishes where there was scant funding for day schools or where children had to earn a living.

If education was the feeble stick that drove the growth of the reading public, the large carrot that lured was the plethora of increasingly assorted reading matter. In the early nineteenth century, the Bible was the chief reading primer for Sunday school students, and if a home owned even a single book, it was the Bible. But by then, middle- and upper-class ladies were reading novels voraciously, and many towns had subscription libraries. Newspapers were not yet affordable literary staples because they were heavily taxed, but the untaxed tabloid press was a vital force in growing readership. Each year, printers nationwide churned out millions of cheap broadsides—crudely imprinted, single-sheet publications—with racy content, poignant tales, and news that catered to the nascent reading public. To displace this cheap street literature, Evangelical Christian societies bombarded the public with Bibles and religious tracts with sentimental religious tales that appealed to middle-class tastes. Adding to the mix, Utilitarians, published practical, affordable literature on mechanical processes and economic principles.

In the 1830s, lower-class readership received additional stimulus: middle-class reformers, wanting to improve lower-class lifestyles, promoted reading as a substitute for less moral plebeian pastimes. But lower-class readers could not afford to join subscription libraries or buy books. Reminiscing of his Yorkshire village of this period, Joseph Lawson recalls that “there were no libraries for the people, who had no access even to the few books there were; and the home that had a family Bible, hymn-book, prayer-book, or catechism, the Pilgrim’s Progress, or News from the Invisible World, together with a sheet almanack nailed against the wall, was considered well furnished with Literature.”² Staffordshire figures memorializing that time remind us that families that proudly displayed earthenware figures of reading children to celebrate their status as educated members of society. ❀

4.1.1

Dame School

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1820, H: 8 in., MBS-119



Notes

This dame school was exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007. It was formerly in the collection of Miss Reed and Miss Fitt, which sold at Lawrences, Taunton, in February 2000. That was the last great sale before the internet changed my collecting world, and it was much anticipated. In those days, email catalogs and images were not available, so collectors and dealers traveled from afar, and the auction house was packed beyond capacity. Ray and Diane Ginns were there to bid on our behalf, and we had wired money into their account to make this possible. The sale catalog—and in particular the back cover showing hordes of figures clustered closely within a leafy-green world (all those bocages!)—fired my determination to explore the stories encapsulated in the figures.

Miss Cyllene Reed (b. 1899) came from what the English term a “good” family. Her father was a successful lawyer who would inherit and expand his father’s prosperous trade publishing business; her mother was descended from the 4th Duke of Richmond. Miss Reed was active in the Women’s Voluntary Service during World War Two, and in that capacity she met Miss Beatrice Fitt, a secretary and government employee. In 1946, Miss Reed moved from Sussex to Lower Thorne Farm, Exford, in the Exmoor district, bringing her gardener and his wife to look after her, but they left a year or two later, and Miss Fitt then joined her in 1948 as companion-housekeeper.

Miss Reed and Miss Fitt were great friends, and they amassed

a collection of about three hundred figures. Figures of sportsmen, archers, and gardeners, as well as those of cockfighting and baiting sports reflected Miss Reed’s love of country life, while the dandies for which the collection was so well known were Miss Fitt’s particular passion.

At Lower Thorne, Miss Reed grew vegetables and kept bees. Both ladies were hunt enthusiasts and went out with the Exmoor foxhounds in their younger days, and they followed the hunt on foot when they could no longer ride. Miss Reed’s gardener of many years describes her as a “real lady” and he claims to have seen a photo of her riding side-saddle wearing a top hat and veil.³ She died in 1990 at the age of 90. Miss Fitt died around ten years later at the age of 87.

The Reed-Fitt collection was left to the National Trust, no doubt with the intent that it be kept together as one collection, but, as the bequest did not specify that, the Trust decided to sell nearly every figure, claiming it had nowhere to house the collection.

On the day of the sale, demonstrators outside the Taunton sale room protested the Trust’s decision. I wish I could say that these individuals were pottery collectors, but alas not. Rather their outrage was fueled by the Trust’s position on the then hotly debated topic of banning hunting, a pastime that Miss Reed and Miss Fitt had enjoyed. Inevitably, the sale went ahead, and the pleasure that Miss Reed and Miss Fitt had in owning their figures is now shared by collectors worldwide.

The Reed-Fitt collection was an insightful reflection of English country life as it once was, and its value exceeded the sum of its parts. From today's perspective, many of the figures were of trifling value; others were particularly lovely and rare. Prices were high, particularly for "special" figures. The most costly figure group at the sale was a stunning performing dog troupe in excellent condition that fetched £6,600, more than such a group would command at retail today, but then when do you ever see such a fine example, and does today's market necessarily appreciate and pay a premium for quality?

Literature

For this figure group see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 25.40; also Schkolne,

People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures, 181.

For another in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 210. ❀

4.1.2

Sunday School Teacher

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 7.2 in., MBS-215



Notes

I suspect the oversized book this man carries is the Bible, and, for that reason, I assume he is a Sunday School teacher. I bought him from the former dealer Roy Bunn in February 2006. Love that jacket!

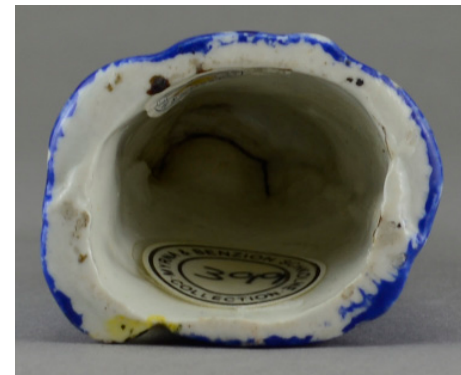
Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 29.40. ❀

4.1.3

Bluecoat School Boy

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1820, H: 3.8 in., MBS-399



Between 1536 and 1540, the Tudor king Henry VIII dissolved all England's monasteries, the institutions that had traditionally cared for the poor. Later, his son, King Edward VI, granted land and means to create Christ's Hospital, London, as a much-needed foundling hospital charged with caring for indigent children and teaching them the three Rs. The school opened in 1552 with 380 pupils. Students wore a uniform of a long blue outer coat, knee-breeches, a shirt with bands at the neck, and yellow socks. This striking garb quickly earned Christ's Hospital the name "Bluecoat School."

In subsequent centuries philanthropists established other Bluecoat schools where students wore similar bluecoat attire. Some of those schools continue today within the state school system, their traditional uniforms having given way to modern attire. At Christ's Hospital, however, children still wear traditional Tudor-style uniforms, the girls donning skirts rather than breeches.

Notes

I bought this petite figure, a small piece of English history, from Andrew Dando in late 2010. Previously, it was with Jonathan Horne. Figures of this sort were made into the Victorian era but are easy to tell from their earlier counterparts.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 199.16.✿



Bluecoat school boy from *Picturesque Representations of the Dress and Manners of the English* by William Alexander. Published 1813.

4.1.4

Reading Maid

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,⁴ Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 10.6 in., MBS-263



Notes

The “Sherratt” reading maid is a large figure—in fact, she is on a larger scale than any other “Sherratt” figure, and she is commonly known as *The Reading Maid* because examples occur titled thus. Sometimes, “Sherratt” titled this model *The Village Maid*.

This model typically occurs on a footed table base, which elevates it and makes the already-large figure appear particularly clunky. Often adding to the nastiness is a very prominent bocage, which is routinely rather blitzed and restored. But when I saw this very reading maid, I just melted. The low spreading base and the perfection of the bocage made it all come together with great charm. My friend Nick Burton, who feels as I do about the awkwardness of this model, went to look at her when she came for auction in Yorkshire in 2007; she won him over, and he bought her for us.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 25.1.

For another titled *VILLAGE MAID* and on a footed base in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 209. ❀

4.1.5

Lady Reading

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, made by John Walton and impressed "WALTON", Staffordshire, c. 1815, H: 5.7 in., MBS-510



Notes

I initially owned this Walton figure model with a regular bocage, but when I found this perfect example with the less common arc bocage at auction in 2013, I had to buy it. This figure is particularly pretty because the bocage is so crisp and the dress enamels are evocative of raspberries and cream. It was formerly with Jonathan Horne. Interestingly, this is the only marked Walton figure model that I know also to have been made in porcelain, the porcelain example being in the Potteries Museum. It is also the only marked Walton figure model that includes a cat.

Literature

For a similar figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 25.16.

For another with a traditional bocage in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 208. ❀

4.1.6

Reading Boy, Reading Girl (pair)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1830, H: 5.6 in., (L), 5.8 in., (R), MBS-220



Notes

I bought this pair from John Howard in May 2006. Already by then, I knew how difficult it is to find reading figures in true pairs. Often the arms and books on such figures are restored, and that bothers me. I don't mind a reattachment of a book (or an arm, head, or any other body part, for that matter), but I try to avoid made-up pieces, particularly when they are prominently placed on the figure. These figures were exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007.

Literature

For these figures see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 25.34. ❀

4.1.7

Reading Boy, Reading Girl (pair)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to John Dale, Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 3.2 in. each, MBS-261 (L), MBS-581(R)



Notes

I bought this sweet figure of a boy from Jane McClafferty's stock at the Staffordshire Figure Association meeting in Lambertville, NJ, in September 2007. Traditionally, dealer members set up their stock at the meeting, so it is a good opportunity to see lots of figures at one time, although I seldom find anything for our collection, and if I go, I tease Ben that his money will be "safe."

For a long time I strongly suspected that John Dale made the reading boy, but I lacked confirmation. However, I have since seen a boy from the same molds with a distinctive Dale sprig on the base, which confirms a Dale attribution.

In early 2018, I found this unrecorded companion figure of a girl on eBay, complete with a floral sprig on the base that is exclusive to Dale. To my disappointment, the auction ended prematurely, but months later I was able to acquire the girl when David Boyer added her to his stock.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 25.46. ❀

4.1.8

Reading Girl

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,⁵ Staffordshire, c. 1820, H: 4.8 in., MBS-207



Notes

I bought this sweetest of figures from Malcolm Hodkinson in November 2005, and it was one of the last purchases I could place on the pages of *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, the layout of the book then being in its final stages. By that time, Malcolm had built up a good collection of small figures that had proved invaluable in determining attributes associated with the “Sherratt” pot bank, and I resolved to expand our collection similarly to further my research into specific pot banks. I have always found small figures particularly charming, and this is one of my favorites. Just love those pudgy legs!

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 314; also Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 25.53. ❀

4.1.9

Reading Boy , Reading Girl (pair)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 3.2 in. each, MBS-340 (L), MBS-501 (R)



Notes

I bought the boy figure in spring of 2009, but didn't see the much rarer girl figure until this girl came up on eBay in the fall of 2013. She needed restoration, which I did to complete the pair. By then, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1 had been published, so I was not able to include the pair, and she remains otherwise unrecorded.

Literature

For the male figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 25.64. ❀

4.1.10

Reading Lady

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 2.2 in., MBS-306



Notes

I bought this teeny, tiny figure, the smallest in our collection, from the dealer Jane McClafferty at the Staffordshire Figure Association meeting in Alexandria in September 2008 because I was intrigued by its minute size. Why so small? I have seen only one other example, which happened to be in Arnold and Barbara Berlin's collection, which we visited as part of the Alexandria meeting. After the event Barbara and Arnold, who have always been most generous in sharing their collection, allowed me to photograph it extensively, and my collector friend Malcolm Hodgkinson, who was returning to North Carolina with Ben and me, was with us.

I am sure thousands of similar small figures have been thrown away over the centuries, but now true collectors cherish them, when they can find them.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 25.67. ❁

VOLTAIRE IS THE *NOM DE PLUME* of the French Enlightenment writer and philosopher François-Marie Arouet (1694–1778), who advocated for religious tolerance and a constitutional monarchy. He wrote prolifically in every literary format, publishing works ranging from plays and poems to scientific writings.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) was a younger contemporary of Voltaire's. A Swiss philosopher, author, and composer, his work, which built on that of Voltaire, profoundly influenced the Enlightenment and the French Revolution and shaped today's thinking on childhood and education. Regarded as a hero of the French Revolution, he was re-interred in Paris sixteen years after his death. ❀

4.2.1

Rousseau, Voltaire (busts, pair)

Impressed "ROUSSEAU" (R), "VOLTAIRE" (L), lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1790, H: 6.5 in. (L), 6 in. (R), MBS-561



Notes

This pair of busts, decorated in a typical late-eighteenth century palette, was probably made by Ralph Wood or Enoch Wood around 1790. Unusual is their petite size. Typically such busts are somewhat larger. London plaster makers probably supplied plaster busts used for the modeling in assorted sizes, and that accounts for the size variations. When paired, Rousseau is consistently the taller bust, probably because of his hat.

The bust of Voltaire is after a bust that Paul-Louis Cyfflé modeled for Lunéville, after Nicolas de Largillière's portrait of Voltaire, 1718. Such Lunéville busts, thought to date from the 1765-1780 period, are in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Metropolitan Museum. The Lunéville bust was then copied in the Staffordshire Potteries. An example is in the Fitzwilliam Museum (C.14-1947).

The bust of Rousseau portrays him in Armenian costume and is after the portrait painted by J. H. Taraval, which is based on a bronze medal that Frans Gabriel LeClerc designed in 1761 and C. H. Watelet engraved in 1766. Derby made a similar bust of Rousseau in soft paste porcelain around 1780, and the pottery bust is after the Derby model.

Wanting to add to our collection of busts, I bought these from Andrew Dando in 2017 because they were as fine a pair as I had ever seen, and their petite size made them even more attractive. It seems neither of these gentlemen was a knockout in the flesh, so it helps that the busts are small, and they are

beautiful pieces of pottery, quite enchanting really.

Literature

For busts of Rousseau and Voltaire, see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 200.28-32. ❀

Endnotes

1. *Penny Magazine*, Preface, December 1832, n.p.
2. Lawson, *Progress in Pudsey*, 42.
3. Batchelor, transcription of oral history.
4. Hodgkinson, *Sherratt?; Schkolne, Staffordshire Figures*, 1:36–37.
5. Ibid.



CHAPTER 5

Literature, Theatre, and Science

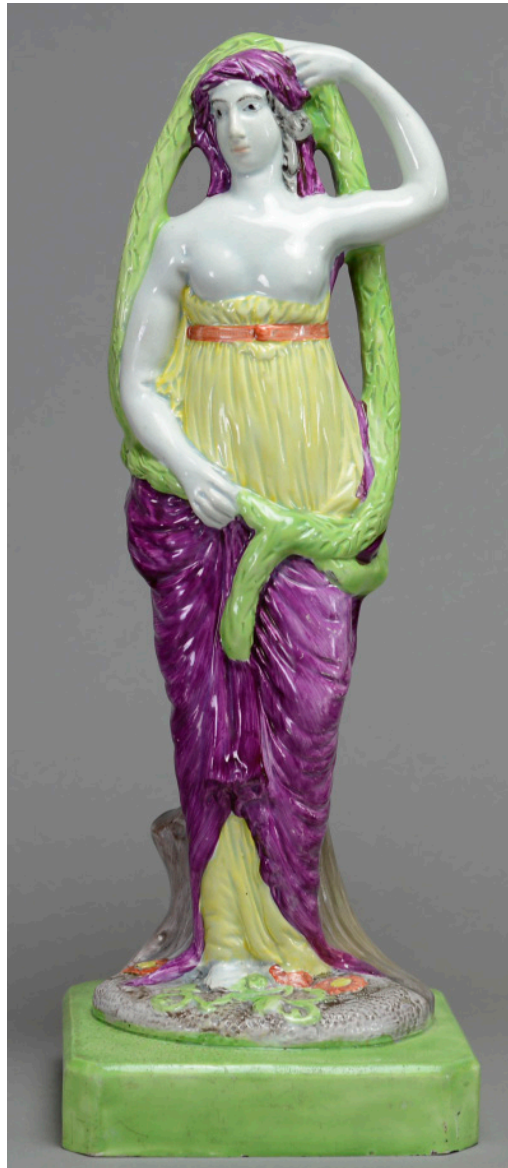
Extract from "DRURY LANE THEATRE, Tom & Bob enjoying a Theatrical treat." George or Robert Cruikshank, 1821. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

OPHELIA IS THE TRAGIC HEROINE of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. She loves Hamlet, but, mad with grief when he kills her father, she climbs into a willow tree, a branch breaks, and she plunges into the brook beneath and drowns. Appropriately, a willow branch drapes the figure of Ophelia. ❁

5.1.1

Ophelia

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1810, H: 14.5 in., MBS-401



Notes

Creamware pairs of Ophelia and Hamlet, possibly made at Leeds and decorated in colored glaze, have been noted, but, as yet, no enameled Hamlet has been recorded.

I bought this largish figure from Martyn Edgell at the New York Ceramics Fair in January 2011. It was one of those instant purchases—I saw it and knew I needed to buy it. The colors are so uplifting, and the flowers on the base are particularly lovely.

I really enjoy figures of Ophelia generally—there are several slightly different variants—and was pleased to be able to add one to the Hunt Collection. Other examples are in the Fitzwilliam Museum (C.938-1928) and the Potteries Museum (base lost).

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 34.1.

For a similar figure in the Hunt Collection, see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 249. ❀

5.2.1

Sir John Falstaff

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1810, H: 7.4 in., MBS-589



Notes

I am well acquainted with the Wood and Caldwell model of Falstaff, which must be among the most common of figures from that pot bank. Each time I see one, I am impressed yet again with the presence it exudes....but I have never been able to make my peace with other aspects. Firstly, the figures usually incorporate silver luster that has worn badly; secondly, at the very least the sword and hand/arm holding it are invariably restored; and thirdly, I find the color palette and the painting not particularly pleasing.

I have noted that another pot bank made Falstaff, seemingly from the same molds that Wood and Caldwell used. Sometimes, these Falstaff figures stand on bases with a vermicular decoration, and I associate that feature with a pot bank that worked to high standards. This figure is from that very pot bank. In the summer of 2018, it came on eBay for a pittance, in large part because the arm needed work. I bought it, restored it myself, and couldn't be more pleased with the end result. I often tell new collectors that you can buy a good figure for less than the price of a modest New York hotel room. This figure was acquired for less than the cost of modest hotel room in the middle of nowhere.

Literature

For similar figures see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 35.7–8. ❀

IN 1700, JOHN DRYDEN PUBLISHED the story of Cymon and his beloved, Iphigenia, as a poem in his *Fables, Ancient and Modern*. The tale has ancient roots for Cymon is the hero of *The Decameron*, a novella by Giovanni Boccaccio written in around 1350. The narrative tells that Cymon's aristocratic father considers him a dolt and sends him to live and work with his slaves in the countryside. In this environment, Cymon becomes increasingly coarse. One day, he comes upon high-born Iphigenia, slumbering in a field. He is so smitten by her beauty that his noble bearing surfaces, and his father reinstates him. Iphigenia is promised to another, but this tale of wars and abduction in the name of love ends happily with Cymon and Iphigenia united for life. ❀

5.3.1

Cymon, Iphigenia (pair)

Impressed "SIMON" and "IPHIGENIA", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to Ralph Wedgwood, Staffordshire, c. 1795, H: 9.5 in. (L), 8.9 in. (R), MBS-577





Notes

The figure of Cymon (usually Simon, if titled) is said to be modeled from the figure Paul Louis Cyfflé made for Lunéville, but a similar Strasbourg porcelain figure circa 1760 may pre-date it. The design source for Iphigenia is not known. Ralph Wood introduced the models into the Staffordshire Potteries circa 1785, and Ralph Wedgwood copied them, as evidenced by a recorded example of Simon in the Buten Collection bearing the Wedgwood mark.

This pair of figures, bought at Litchfield County Auctions in March 2018, was formerly with Gail Sheehy, author of *Pas-sages*. The figures are titled in the distinctive manner consistent with other Wedgwood figures. Another pair, titled in the same manner, is in the Wisbech and Fenland Museum (199.27, 1900.40), and Nick Burton and I were very taken with them when I photographed them at that museum some years ago.

A figure of Iphigenia, probably also by Wedgwood but not titled, is in the Victoria and Albert Museum, erroneously cataloged as Spring (C.442-1928).

Literature

For a similar pair in the Wisbech and Fenland Museum see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 39.2-6. ❁

DOCTOR SYNTAX—A GANGLY, BLACK-FROCKED CLERIC and schoolmaster with a protruding chin—was one of the early nineteenth century’s most popular literary characters. He was the brainchild of the eminent caricaturist and watercolorist Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827). Traditionally, a book’s text inspires its illustrations, but in the case of *Doctor Syntax*, the text was written in verse form to accompany Rowlandson’s artwork.

In 1809, Rowlandson produced a series of aquatint engravings illustrating the mishaps of a cleric-schoolmaster touring England in search of the picturesque. The publisher Rudolf Ackermann, thinking the illustrations ideal for his new *Poetical Magazine*, asked William Combe (1742–1823), a gentlemanly hack writer languishing within debtors’ prison, to write accompanying prose. The Combe-Rowlandson collaboration was unusual: the men did not meet, but each month Ackermann supplied one drawing, and Combe produced the required lines of verse. As a result, *The Schoolmaster’s Tour* was published in serial form from 1809. The almost 10,000-line doggerel was immensely popular, and in 1812 Ackermann published a revised version, *The Tour of Doctor Syntax in Search of the Picturesque*, as a book, complete with thirty Rowlandson aquatints.

In the early 1800s, the cult of the picturesque was in vogue,

and those with leisure and means wandered around England on quests for artistic natural vistas. Publications by the Rev. William Gilpin, who had roamed England in pursuit of picturesque beauty, had fostered this infatuation with artistically appealing scenery. Thomas Rowlandson’s penchant for satire seems to have inspired him to parody the Rev. Gilpin in creating Doctor Syntax because *The Tour of Doctor Syntax in Search of the Picturesque* tells of a cleric’s amusing mishaps as he obsessively pursues nature’s artistry.

The book immediately made rhymed narratives paired with aquatint engravings a recipe for literary success. In 1820 and 1821, Combe and Rowlandson completed their *Doctor Syntax* trilogy with *The Second Tour of Doctor Syntax in Search of Consolation* and *The Third Tour of Doctor Syntax in Search of a Wife*. The three tours remained popular reading for decades longer, and pottery and contemporary porcelain figures capitalized on the Doctor Syntax theme. ❀

5.4.1

Doctor Syntax Stopped by a Highwayman

Impressed "DR SYNTAX STOPPED BY HIGHWAYMEN", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Patriotic Group" pot bank,¹ Staffordshire, c. 1820, H: 8.6 in., MBS-233





Detail of *Doctor Syntax Stopt by Highwaymen*. Thomas Rowlandson, first published c. 1810.

Notes

The figure group showing Doctor Syntax being robbed at gun point by a highwayman is after Thomas Rowlandson's *Doctor Syntax Stopt by Highwaymen*, first published circa 1810.

I bought this group at Skinner Boston in 2006 and was very happy to acquire it because it was—and still is— the only example I know of with the original highwayman present. I have recorded two other examples, both having lost the highwayman. I lectured at the China Students' Study Group of Boston a year or two later, and someone in the audience assured me that bocage figures are *never* seen in Boston!

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 36.2. ❀

5.4.2

Doctor Syntax Playing Cards

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,² Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 7.9 in., MBS-213



Notes

In February 2006, right after *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures* was released, Nick Burton bought this figure group on our behalf at auction in Yorkshire. It felt like a reward for all my hard work! The group had found its way into the sale-room after being discovered in a garden shed, where it had probably been hidden from a disapproving spouse, or perhaps it was on its way to the trash.

I had admired and photographed a similar Doctor Syntax group in the Willett Collection at the Brighton and Hove Museums, and I included it in *People, Passions*, but I had not been able to find one for sale. I knew of only two others in private collections, but each had at least one replaced head, which would have made them unacceptable to us. Only a full ten years later did I see not one but two other examples of this rare group. Both are very similar to ours and both are in private Texas collections, one previously having been in the stock of John Howard.

One might assume that this group is after one of the many plates in the Doctor Syntax books, but not so. Rather, the design source is not known. While a plate titled *Doctor Syntax at a Card Party* is within *The Third Tour of Dr. Syntax* (1821), it bears no resemblance to this group.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 36.4.

For a similar figure group in the Brighton and Hove Museums, see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, & Pleasures* 193; also Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 36.3.✿

IN THE EARLY 1800S, BILLY Waters was a familiar site in London's theater district. This peg-legged street entertainer, known for his fiddle and lavishly cockaded hat, was a former American slave who had lost his leg serving in the British navy.

In 1821, a turn of events rocketed Billy Waters to theatrical fame. That November, William Thomas Moncrieff's burletta *Tom and Jerry; or, Life in London* opened at the Adelphi Theatre. The play was an adaptation of Pierce Egan's *Life in London* published earlier that year. Billy Waters is not a character in Egan's book, but he is shown in an accompanying engraving of a tavern scene. Moncrieff, however, introduced the character of Billy Waters into his play. The production ran for over three hundred nights, breaking a sixty-two-night record held since 1728. Its success spawned multiple dramatizations of Egan's book on London and provincial stages.

Sadly, the play contributed to Billy Waters's demise because those who could see him impersonated on the stage no longer felt obligated to support him on the street, and in March 1823, Billy, having sold his violin, died impoverished at St. Giles workhouse. His dying words supposedly were "cuss him, dam Tommy Jerry." ❀



BILLY WATERS. Published by T. L. Busby, 1819.
Courtesy David Brass Rare Books, Inc.

5.5.1

Billy Waters

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, impressed "H" beneath, attributed to Enoch Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 8 in., MBS-332



Notes

Fragments matching this figure were among Enoch Wood shards of circa 1820–1830 excavated from the Burslem Old Town Hall site. The shards and a similar figure are in the Potteries Museum (495P1987). Another example (similarly impressed “H” beneath) is in the Brighton and Hove Museums (HW 883).

I bought this figure from John Howard in March 2009. Not long after, I bought another at auction in the UK for very little and sold it well, recouping much of my cost. I don’t normally trade, but as the UK trade was asleep at the wheel, I had to make sure that a lovely figure got the respect, and the home, it deserved.

I have not yet recorded a companion figure model.

Lord Busby’s *Costume of the Lower Orders of London*, first published in 1819, before the character of Waters rose to stardom, includes a color lithograph of Waters, which appears to have been the design source for this Staffordshire figures. But the demand for images from *Life in London* was voracious, and any of the simple engravings of the play’s characters that adorned inexpensive street publications may have influenced the design of Billy Waters figures.

I searched diligently for several years for a copy of the source print for this figure to hang on our walls, but the only one I was able to find was bound within a book, and I did not want

to purchase that beautiful but understandably costly volume, and, had I done so, I certainly could not have removed the illustration that I so admired. In 2016, I was in London and went into Grosvenor Prints in Covent Garden. Rummaging in a stack of framed works propped up on the floor, I found the Busby print of Billy Waters! Of course, I wanted to buy it, but we hit a snag: it was not priced, and the girl who was watching the shop couldn’t give me a price until the next day, by which time we would have been on our return flight. She was happy to have it professionally packed and sent to us the following week. The whole matter got complicated, as the print was modestly priced, but you could not say the same for professional shipping. Finally, we agreed on postage at our risk, and the print today hangs happily on our breakfast room wall.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 55.2.

For a similar figure in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 265.

For a similar figure in the Brighton and Hove Museums, see Beddoe, *A Potted History*, 182; also Halfpenny and Beddoe, *Circus & Sport*, 25. ❀

5.5.2

Billy Waters

Painted "WATERS", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1810, H: 6.5 in., MBS-478



Notes

This is a slightly smaller Billy Waters figure model than the previous one shown (no. 5.5.1), and, unlike that example, this one was made with a dog. Also, his skin is white, and I have noted that most smaller Waters figures have white rather than black skin. Also, unlike the larger figure, they are routinely accompanied by a dog. A woodcut by the printer James Catnach shows Billy Waters accompanied by a dog.

Whereas I have not yet recorded a companion figure to the large Billy Waters, this smaller model has a companion figure in the form of the theatrical character Douglas (see no. 5.13). This figure's companion is titled *DOUGLAS* and is in the Hunt Collection.³

We bought this figure from John Howard in May 2013. Another example is in the Victoria and Albert Museum (C.38-2002).

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 55.9.

For the companion figure of Douglas see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 266. ❀



Printed by James Catnach, c. 1825. Billy, seated to the side, has a dog at his feet.

THE ROLE OF PAUL PRY in the eponymous play is forever associated with John Liston (1776–1846), the leading comic actor of his day. Born in London, he started his career as a teacher but performed in amateur theatrical roles. His natural comic skills led to his London debut in 1805.

Paul Pry, a comic farce by John Poole, opened at the Haymarket Theatre on September 13, 1825, and it became one of the great theatrical hits of its era. In 1826, the German traveler Hermann Pückler-Muskau attended a performance.

*Let me now turn your attention... by leading you to the Haymarket Theatre, which I lately visited, when the celebrated Liston enchanted the public for the hundred-and-second time in Paul Pry, a sort of foolish lout. The actor, who is said to have made a fortune of six thousand a-year, is one of those whom I should call natural comic actors...men who, without any profound study of their art, excite laughter by a certain drollery of manner peculiar to themselves, an inexhaustible humour, "qui coule de source:" though frequently in private life they are hypochondrical, as is said to be the case with Liston.*⁴

The play portrays Paul Pry as an interfering busybody who deliberately leaves his trademark umbrella behind as an excuse to return and eavesdrop. Because he peers through keyholes, he is usually depicted in a stooping pose. ❀



M^R. LISTON as PAUL PRY. Well, if ever I do another kind action—may I be—. Ingreys & Madeley, c. 1825. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

5.6.1

John Liston as Paul Pry

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,⁵ Staffordshire, c. 1826, H: 5.3 in., MBS-400



Notes

I bought this figure at auction at Rosebery's in January 2011. Buying at auction sight unseen is fraught with peril and inconvenience, but by this time I was chasing down smaller figures that I particularly wanted. Otherwise, they seemed impossible to procure, with the only alternative being to live in hope that someday one of the few members of the trade just might happen to get one into stock. I am not good at hoping!

I have a soft spot for small "Sherratt" figures, and I have a few others on this base, all of which are musicians. The so-called "Sherratt" figures are a very well-defined group, but no evidence exists to confidently link them to the potter named Obadiah Sherratt. Absence of evidence is not, however, evidence of absence! I like to think that it was indeed Sherratt and not someone by some other name who made the vast body of figures that we attribute to him. Clearly, all the figures came from the same pot bank, and what's in a name anyway? I have stood on the uninspiring spot of earth that is Hot Lane Burslem, the very place where the potter Obadiah Sherratt did indeed pot, but, of course, the remnants of his handiwork now lie forever buried beneath the nearby roads. But if I could go back in time and ask a few questions, inquiries about "Sherratt" would top my list.

Literature

For a similar figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 51.11. ❀



Mr. Liston in the Character of Paul Pry. "How do you do—I hope I don't intrude". Thomas McClean, 1825.

THE POPULAR COMIC ACTOR JOHN LISTON (1776–1846) was a stage hit as the vulgar cockney Sam Swipes in *Exchange no Robbery; or, The Diamond Ring*. This play, an adaptation by Theodore Hook of the eighteenth-century play *He Would be a Soldier*, opened on August 12, 1820, at London's Haymarket Theatre.

The play tells of a young aristocrat who leaves his illegitimate child in the care of the landlord of an ale house, sending regular funds for the boy's care. The boy flees his cruel presumed father, but his natural father returns to claim him. Unable to produce the boy and afraid he will be charged with theft of the funds he has been receiving for years, the landlord substitutes his own son, Sam Swipes, as heir to the baronetcy. But elevated to a new role in society, young Sam Swipes is unable to abandon his plebeian ways. ❀



MR. LISTON as SAM SWIPES (in "Exchange no Robbery")
No, am I a Gentleman! upon your soul tho' Mother? Ingrey
& Madeley, January 1826. © The Trustees of the British
Museum.

5.7.1

John Liston as Sam Swipes

Painted "No! am I a Gentleman? Upon your Soul tho' Mother", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, impressed "20" beneath, attributed to Enoch Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 6.3 in., MBS-377



Notes

We bought our Sam Swipes from Andrew Dando in May 2010. As often is found with this model, “20” is impressed beneath in the manner of Enoch Wood. The figure seems to have been designed to stand with figures of Liston as Van Dunder that Enoch Wood produced (no. 5.8.1). I believe that the design source is Ingrey & Madeley's print of Sam Swipes of 1826 or possibly the similar lithograph by J. W. Gear of 1824.

Similar figures are in the Victoria and Albert Museum (S.950-1996, S.951-1996), the Potteries Museum (373 P49), and the Brighton and Hove Museums (Hoare Collection).

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 53.2.

For another in the Hunt Collection, see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 262.

For another in the Brighton and Hove Museums, see Beddoe, *A Potted History*, 196.

For another in the Sharp Collection see Sharp, *Ceramics Ethics and Scandal*, 138. ❀

ON SEPTEMBER 18, 1824, JOHN Liston debuted at London's Haymarket Theatre in the role of Van Dunder in John Poole's *'Twould Puzzle a Conjuror; or, the Two Peters*. The play was a revamp of Poole's earlier play, *The Burgomeister of Sardaam*, which had failed at Covent Garden in 1818. Wearing baggy Dutch bloomers and silly shoes, Van Dunder was a bumbling Dutch burgomaster trying to figure out which of the numerous Pieters in the shipyard was Peter, Czar of Russia, working in disguise as a carpenter. His catch phrase was "twould puzzle a conjuror."

The play's plot is not as fanciful as it might seem because Peter the Great (1672-1725) did indeed work in Holland in his youth. The Dutch Republic was then the leading European power, and Peter wanted to modernize Russia, which was an isolated backwater. In 1697, at the age of twenty-five, Peter, he lived and worked at the Dutch East India Company's shipyard in Amsterdam so that he might learn about ship building. ❁



MR. LISTON as Van Dunder in *'Twould Puzzle a Conjuror*
"Read it indeed! that's very easily said read it!!" c. 1825.

5.8.1

John Liston as Van Dunder

Painted "Read it indeed! that's very easily said, read it!!", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, made by Enoch Wood and impressed "K" and "WOOD", Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 7.1 in., MBS-333



Notes

Figures of Van Dunder are after contemporary engravings, and this figure closely matches an engraving that we own and is illustrated in this work. This figure also matches Enoch Wood figure fragments of circa 1828 excavated from St. Paul's Church, Burslem. The maker's mark "WOOD" on it is only recorded on two other figures, both of Van Dunder, one being the figure in the Potteries Museum and impressed both "K" and "WOOD" (380 P49).

As noted previously (see 5.7.1 Notes), this figure is in very much the same style as the Enoch Wood figure of Sam Swipes, another famous Liston role, and perhaps the two were intended to stand besides each other (see alongside).

I bought this figure at auction at Leslie Hindman in March 2009. Other similar figures are in the Brighton and Hove Museums (HW932), the Fitzwilliam Museum (C.991-1928), and the Victoria and Albert Museum (S.1032-1996).

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 54.2.

For a similar figure in the Brighton and Hove Museums, see Beddoe, *A Potted History*, 196.

For another similarly impressed figure in the Sharp Collection see Sharp, *Ceramics Ethics and Scandal*, 138. ❁



Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1820, H: 6.7 in., MBS-536



Notes

I bought this Van Dunder from Andrew Dando in November 2015. I had admired museum examples but had to wait a good while to find one I could buy. His colors pop and he is very eye-catching, looking almost clown-like.

Similar figures are in the Fitzwilliam Museum (C.990-1928) and the Victoria and Albert Museum (S.1024-1996).

Literature

For a similar figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 54.7. ❀

THE STAGE ROLL OF A Bavarian broom seller dubbed "The Broom Lady" is closely associated with an actress known in her day as Madame Vestris. Born Lucia Elizabeth Bartolozzi, (1797–1856), she acquired her stage name through her first marriage to the French ballet dancer Armand Vestris, who helped launch her career as a singer on the London stage in 1815.

By 1820, Madame Vestris was a star, and her remarkable legs as much as her voice brought her acclaim. In particular, her legs ensured her popularity in breeches roles. In 1826, she popularized the song "Buy a Broom," which she sang on the London stage attired as a Bavarian broom seller. That year, The German traveler Hermann Pückler-Muskau saw Mrs Vestris on the stage.

She is an excellent singer, and still better actor, and a greater favourite of the English public even than Liston. Her great celebrity, however, rests on the beauty of her legs, which are become a standing article in the theatrical criticisms of the newspapers, and are often displayed by her in man's attire....It may truly be said in every sense of the words, that Madame Vestris belongs to all of Europe. Her father was an Italian; her mother a German and a good pianoforte player, her husband of the illustrious dancing family of France, and herself

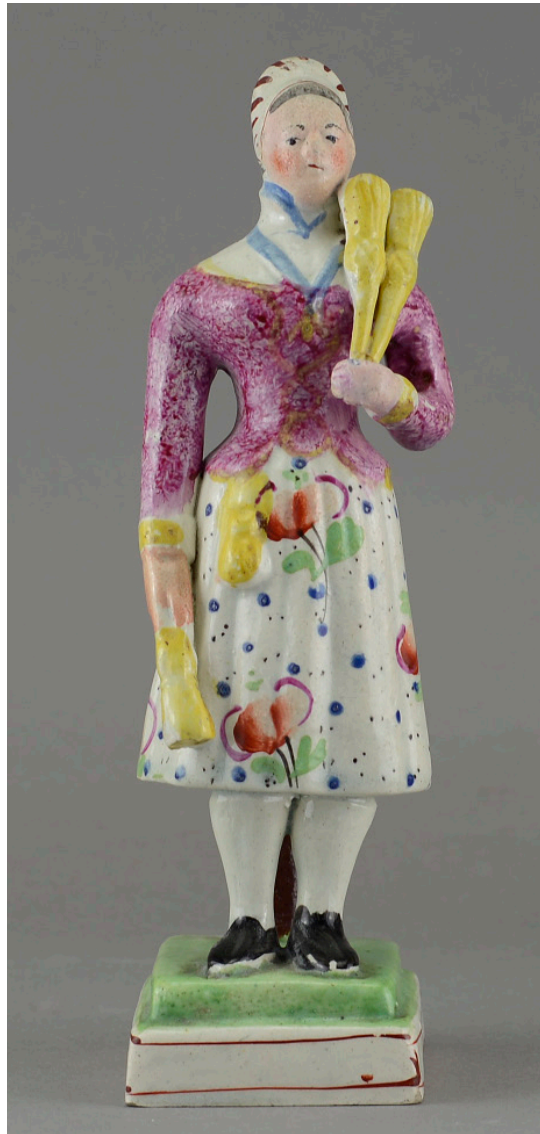
*an Englishwoman: any chasms in her connexion with other European nations are than filled up by hundreds of the most "marqant" lovers."*⁶

On November 1826, just two months after Madame Vestris's debut as the Broom Lady, the great comedian John Liston appeared alongside her on the stage of London's Haymarket Theatre. The two sang the ditty "Buy a Broom," together, with Liston parodying Vestris's performance. Both were attired as Bavarian broom vendors, with stocky Liston's standing in sharp contrast to lithe Madame Vestris. ❀

5.9.1

Mrs. Vestris as the Broom Lady

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,⁷ Staffordshire, c. 1830, H: 5.8 in., MBS-209



Notes

Engravings of Mrs. Vestris in her broom lady role inspired both Staffordshire pottery and Derby porcelain figures.

I acquired this figure at Bonhams Knowle in November 2005. Admittedly, I made the purchase with little enthusiasm because I don't find the figure rivetingly interesting, but I bought it hoping to later replace it with another that did pique my interest. Alas, I have yet to see the Vestris figure of my dreams, and I suspect none was made, but, to my mind, this, the "Sherratt" version, is as good as it gets.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 50.5. ❀



MADAME VESTRIS as a BROOM GIRL. c. 1826. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

5.9.2

John Liston as the Broom Lady

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1827, H: 6 in., MBS-590



Notes

This figure is really very rare, and until 2018 I had known of only two examples, both sadly damaged and in museum collections. In late summer of 2018, another came to auction, but I had to pass on it because of extensive restoration.

As so often happens with rare figures, the appearance of one on the market seemed to encourage another to appear, and just weeks later this figure came up at Woolley & Wallis. Whereas the other examples are titled "BY A BROOM," this one is untitled, but it's stellar condition won the day.

Similar figures are in the Victoria and Albert Museum (S.1001-1996) and the Potteries Museum (1493/106).

Literature

For the figures in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Potteries Museum see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, figs. 50.9-10. ❁



MADAME VESTRIS & M^R. LISTON, In their Duet "Buy a Boom."
Ingrey & Madeley, 1826. Courtesy the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

MARIA FELICITA MALIBRAN (1808–1836) WAS the world's first diva. Born Maria Garcia into a renowned Spanish musical family, she debuted in London in 1825. As a mezzo-soprano of extraordinary vocal range and power, she earned international accolades and adoration, and the leading composers of her time wrote music for her legendary voice.

Then, alcohol was thought to be a vocal stimulant and necessary for a perfect voice. Said one who knew her,

*That woman sir, wasn't a woman at all when on the stage; she was an angel and a fury by turns, as the occasion required. Wonderful! Wonderful! And do you know what she used, to keep herself up to the mark? Porter, sir—good honest porter; she would drink a whole bottleful just before going on the boards; and, by gad, you should have seen the world of good it did her!*⁸

In 1826, Malibran entered into a short-lived marriage with the Frenchman Eugene Malibran. In 1836, she sustained permanent head injuries when she fell off a horse. Thereafter, she performed a handful of times before collapsing on the stage in Manchester, UK, in September 1836 and dying days later.

In our time, the renowned Italian mezzo-soprano Cecilia Bartoli has used her knowledge of Malibran's life and personality to revive her bewitching style in performances that have showcased this long-dead diva's music and personality. ❀



M^{ME}. MALIBRAN GARCIA. J. Rogers after A. M. Huffman, n.d.

5.10.1

Maria Malibran

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, probably made by the “Sherratt” pot bank,⁹ Staffordshire, c. 1836, H: 7.7 in., MBS-522





Notes

Figures of Malibran are based on an engraving for the *Dramatic Magazine* after A. M. Huffman by J. Rogers.

Figures of Maria Malibran are elusive, and, although I have traced six, this is the only one I have seen on the market in my collecting career. I think the known figures were made by more than one pot bank. Two (including this example) are typical of most early Staffordshire figures, but four are decorated with gilding and seem to have whiter earthenware bodies. One of these four is decorated with under-glaze blue in a typical Victorian manner.¹⁰

The Maria Malibran figure has an interesting story because, for a long time, it was incorrectly identified. The example in the Fitzwilliam Museum (C.994-1928), bought in 1908 along with two lesser items for one pound and six shillings,¹¹ was thought at the time to portray Mrs. Siddons, but later it was believed to be the authoress Letitia Elizabeth Landon.

Complicating the issue of the figure's identity, Maria Malibran died shortly before Victoria ascended to the throne, and the “Sherratt” pot bank used the Malibran figure molds to make a figure of Queen Victoria titled *HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA*. Thus, understandably, collectors in bygone years thought similar untitled figures also portrayed the young queen.

Then in 1969, an example of this figure looking just like the “Sherratt” Queen Victoria but lacking the crown came to auc-

tion at Christie's. That figure was titled *MALIBRAN*, and this confirmed that others like it are indeed Maria Malibran. It sold for 500 guineas. Interestingly, the titled *MALIBRAN* figure itself is painted very like our Malibran.

I bought this oh-so-rare figure on eBay in 2014, and, as so often happens on eBay, paid a fairly hefty price. I was really pleased to have her as I had not handled this figure model before, and I was surprised at the size and footprint. She is quite beautiful, and I suspect “Sherratt” made her.¹²

Literature

For a similar figure on a typical “Sherratt” table base titled *MALIBRAN* as well as another similar figure decorated with gilding and having a whiter and later body see Pugh, *Staffordshire Portrait Figures*, Section E, plates 148, 149.

For a similar but perhaps slightly later figure with gilding see Harding, *Victorian Staffordshire Figures 1835–1875, Book One*, 193.

For the “Sherratt” figure of Queen Victoria, see

Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 66.1. ❁

TODAY, THE TERM “JIM CROW” is associated with the Jim Crow Era of racial discrimination that extended from 1877 to 1965 in the United States, but rare figures titled *JIM CROW* recall how those words entered our language.

In 1828, Thomas Dartmouth Rice (1808–1860), a young white New York bit actor, developed a shuffling, jiggling song and dance act that cruelly parodied the performance of a crippled old slave. Rice dressed in tattered rags, blackened his skin, and sang and danced to the ditty *Jump Jim Crow*. According to legend, this *Jump Jim Crow* act was instantly popular, and the lyrics evolved over time as Rice added verses to the chorus.

Rice’s act created a black minstrel stereotype that became wildly popular across America, and “Daddy” Rice is regarded as the Father of American Minstrelsy. His reputation spread to England, and in 1836, he debuted as Jim Crow in London. This performance was a sell-out, and *Jump Jim Crow* soon became an international song and dance sensation—and possibly the first international “pop” song. The tune was inextricably associated with the United States, so much so that when the American ambassador John Lloyd Stephens visited Yucatan in 1841, the welcoming band played *Jump Jim Crow*, mistakenly believing this to be the American national anthem.¹³ 🌸



Thomas Rice as Jim Crow at the Bowery Theatre, New York, 1833.
Courtesy the New-York Historical Society.

5.11.1

Thomas Dartmouth Rice as Jim Crow

Impressed and painted "JIM CROW", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,¹⁴ Staffordshire, c. 1836, H: 6.7 in., MBS-499



Notes

I bought Jim Crow from Malcolm Hodkinson in 2013, when he was paring his collection and kindly asked if I had any requests. I wanted this figure because it encapsulates the origins of a stereotype that influenced world history. The figure was formerly with Jonathan Horne.

Figures get filthy over time. If you hold a glass for a while, it soon becomes quite smudged and nasty, and because enameled figures get their shine from the glassy materials within their glaze, they get dirty just as quickly. Add to that, early figures have been exposed to all the grime that was in the air in the unregulated decades of bygone centuries. Today, that dirt can still sometimes be seen as a brown gunky coating in the nooks and crannies of figures, but often it is more subtle and it just dulls the figure. I wash my figures periodically—gently, using dish washing liquid—and they always shine, so much so that when the Staffordshire Figure Association visited our collection in Winston-Salem in 2014, the shine was a topic of conversation!

The Jim Crow figure inevitably is grasped by resting the thumb on the figure's thighs. When Jim arrived in our home, he was quite clean (understandable, given his fine provenance), but his pants were blotchy, with some parts appearing to be a matt dark yellow-brown, as if the enamels had been badly fired. It was dirt, but it was so ingrained that it took careful heavy-duty cleaning to reveal the yellow breeches, which are as bright as

the day they were painted.

A similar figure is in the Victoria and Albert Museum (C.39-2002).

Literature

For another figure like this, see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 45.2. ❀

JACK SHEPPARD (1702–1724) WAS A colorful criminal who rose to fame in London in the early eighteenth century. In 1723, young Jack, until then a model carpenter's apprentice, turned to crime. After four imprisonments and escapes, each executed with daring bravado, he was arrested for the final time. This time, he was weighed down with three hundred pounds of weights and kept under round-the-clock observation.

By now, Jack was immensely popular with the poorer classes, and his importance was such that the king's painter, James Thornhill, visited to paint his portrait. But on November 11, 1724, Jack Sheppard was hanged. Two hundred thousand people turned out to give their hero a celebratory send-off.

Jack Sheppard lived on in the hearts of the public as a folk hero, and after his death ballads and pantomimes romanticized him. His character inspired Macheath in John Gay's *The Beggars' Opera* (1728). *The Threepenny Opera* (a twentieth-century updating of *The Beggars' Opera*) included the song "Mack the Knife", which became a twentieth-century hit.

A melodrama by W. T. Moncrieff titled *Jack Sheppard, The Housebreaker, or London in 1724* was staged in 1825. The most well-known nineteenth-century reincarnation of Sheppard was in William Harrison Ainsworth's novel *Jack Sheppard*, published in 1839. ❁



MR. HARDING AS JACK SHEPPARD. Published by John Redington, 1839. Courtesy the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

5.12.1

Jack Sheppard

Impressed and painted "SHEPPARD", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, probably made by the "Box Title Group" pot bank,¹⁵ Staffordshire, c. 1830, H: 10.8 in., MBS-435



Notes

W. T. Moncrieff melodrama, *Jack Sheppard, The House-breaker, or London in 1724*, first staged in 1825, probably inspired this swaggering figure of Jack Sheppard.

I bought this figure at auction at Lockdales in October 2011, and it was not a bargain because the catalog identified it as Jack Sheppard, thereby letting the cat out the bag. No other example of this figure is recorded.

The figure appears to be from molds that were first used as early as around 1785 for figures of a shepherd. A shepherd of that type, decorated in colored glaze and probably made by Ralph Wood, is in the Victoria and Albert Museum (C.30-1940). Another decorated in under-glaze colors is in the Hunt Collection.¹⁶

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 59.1. ❀

THE PLAY *DOUGLAS*, WRITTEN BY John Home, was first performed in 1756, and it remained popular for almost a century thereafter on both the British and American stages.

The plot, based on a Scottish ballad, tells of Lady Randolph, who secretly mourns Douglas, her husband by a prior clandestine marriage, and their baby that she had sent away at birth. That baby is assumed dead, but a shepherd named Norval rescues and raises him. Eventually, Lady Randolph is reunited with her son, young Norval, who then takes his father's name. But Lord Randolph, thinking the youth is his wife's lover, is jealous, and attempts to take Douglas's life. As the tragedy unfolds, Douglas dies in his mother's arms and Lady Randolph takes her own life.

The child actor Master Betty (William Henry West Betty) was famous for his role as the young Norval. ❁



MASTER BETTY, *Costume of Y. Norval*. c. 1805.
Courtesy the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1800, W: 9.4 in., MBS-486



Notes

I will forever be crazy about this plaque with silky soft enamels so typical of the early enamels I enjoy. The scene is fascinating, and the characters themselves are both attractive and interesting.

The plaque portrays young Norval/Douglas on the right. The child prodigy Master Betty was beloved in this role, and the figure strongly resembles contemporary engravings of him as that character. The lady in the center is Lady Randolph; the actress's identity is unknown. The figure on the left is probably Old Norval or perhaps Lord Randolph.

This plaque along with a contemporary print of Master Betty as Young Norval that was the design source for the figure on the right sold at Bonhams, May 26, 2006 . I was smitten with it then and had helped unravel the scene for its catalog listing. I wished I could have bought it, but it sold very well, the buyer being Jonathan Horne, who featured it in his 2007 Exhibition, along with the print of Master Betty.

Jonathan sold the plaque and print into a private collection, but by 2013, the plaque alone was with Alan Kaplan in New York, from whom I bought it. Alan sent it to me in a large box with tons of peanuts, but unfortunately he did not double-box it. A sharp object pierced the box and scraped the very outer corner of the ceramic frame that is integral to the plaque. I hate damage, however minor to an otherwise perfect object, and Beky Davis restored it for me, being careful not to violate

the original material. I really think this plaque now has the perfect home because I appreciate it enormously.

Literature

For this plaque see Horne, *English Pottery 2007*, 36. ❀

ROBERT BURNS (1759–1796) IS SCOTLAND’S most beloved poet. He rose from humble beginnings, and, although he died at the age of just thirty-seven, the work of his brief lifetime influenced later Scottish writers and Romantic Movement poets. Today, the people of Scotland consider him the greatest Scot of all time, and the existence of Robert Burns clubs worldwide attests to his enduring popularity.

Burns’s poem *Tam O’Shanter* (1791) is one of his best known works, and it was enormously popular in the early nineteenth century. It tells of Tam spending an evening with his drinking companion Souter Johnny, but, heading home in a drunken haze, he encounters witches and warlocks, with comic results.

In 1828, young James Thom (1802–1850), working as a grave-stone mason, secured a commission to cut life-sized figures of Tam O’Shanter and Souter Johnny. Thom modeled the statues as composites of various local characters. The statues toured from 1828 to 1830 and were exhibited in London in 1829 to critical acclaim. The exhibitions were so successful that cast makers quickly produced plaster replicas in miniature sizes. Also, sketches of the statues were sold at the exhibitions, and print makers capitalized on the popular theme. ❀



TAM O'SHANTER & SOUTER JOHNNY. Published by Tregear, London, c. 1830.

5.14.1

Tam O'Shanter, Souter Johnny (pair)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,¹⁷ Staffordshire, c. 1830, H: 7.3 in. (L), 6.7 in. (R), MBS-583



Notes

I have foolishly always dismissed figures of these two drinking buddies as rather boring because most of them are, yet each time I have looked at a "Sherratt" pair "in the flesh" I have been struck by their vitality and presence. My pottery wish list comprises the most elusive of figures, and so a "Sherratt" Tam and Souter slipped through the cracks.

Browsing eBay one night, I came across this figure of Souter Johnny. The asking price was a mere \$100, but, as the seller was open to offers, I couldn't resist making a lower offer. With the purchase under my belt, I bought a figure of Tam that John Howard had in stock to assemble the pair, and Ben and I are both very pleased to have them. They have a good footprint and stand well on our shelves.

Earthenware figures of Tam and Souter Johnny cannot predate 1828, and all derive from Thom's sculptures or an accurate intermediary source.

Literature

For a similar pair see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, fig. 37.4. ❀

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, probably made in Scotland, c. 1810. H: 7.1 in., MBS-211



Notes

I bought this plaque from the now-retired dealer Roy Bunn in January 2006. It languished on his small web site for a while, but I was drawn to its unusual colors and decoration, which I only later learned were typically Scottish. ❁



ROBERT BURNS. After Alexander Naysmith, published by Vernor & Hood, 1801. © *The Trustees of the British Museum*.

THE FLAMBOYANT BRITISH ARISTOCRAT GEORGE Gordon Byron, commonly known as Lord Byron, was one of the most influential poets of the Romantic Movement. His life was riddled with impropriety and excess and bedeviled by scandal and allegations of bisexual immorality. “I am such a strange *mélange* of good and evil, that it would be difficult to describe me,” he said.¹⁸

By the time of Byron’s birth on January 22, 1788, his father had squandered the family funds, and the family was almost destitute. At the age of ten, Byron inherited his title from his great-uncle. A fiery romantic at heart, he wrote poetry as a youth that reflected his turbulent passions. While at Trinity College, Cambridge, Byron lived extravagantly, loved ardently, gambled, and ran up enormous debts, but he also published his first volumes of poems.

In 1809, Byron, aged twenty-one, embarked on an eastern Mediterranean tour that forever influenced his work. In May 1810, to emulate the mythical Greek hero Leander who nightly swam across the Hellespont to visit his lover Hero, Byron swam across this four-mile straight now called the Dardanelles, and today an annual race is swum there in his memory. On his travels, Byron’s aversion to Turkey and admiration for Greece grew, and he was to become a life-long supporter of Greek independence.

Byron returned to England in 1812, and the first two cantos of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* were published that year. In this work, he created the concept of a Byronic hero rather like himself: a brooding, mysterious romantic, having erotic adventures in exotic locales. The public equated Byron with his hero, and he became a celebrity and the quarry of every society hostess. His lover, Lady Caroline Lamb, famously described him as “mad–bad–and dangerous to know”¹⁹ as he engaged in successive dalliances, including, it is believed, an incestuous relationship with his married half-sister, Augusta Leigh.

In January 1815, Byron, seeking normalcy, married the aristocratic heiress Annabella Milbanke, but by the time their daughter was born twelve months later, the marriage had fallen apart amidst rumors of mental derangement, bisexuality, marital violence, and sodomy, as well as allegations that Byron’s half-sister had borne his child. In April 1816, Byron fled England to live abroad. From there, he forwarded home a steady stream of work. His most famous poem, *Don Juan*, was published with successive cantos from 1819, and, although some deplored its immoral content, it was enormously popular.

Byron remained enamored with his vision of a high-minded Greece, and he passionately embraced the Greek independence movement as a romantically noble cause. He went to Greece in 1823 to fight for Greek independence from the Ottoman Turks,

but he fell ill there and died on April 19, 1824, aged thirty-six. For his support of the Greek cause, Byron is today revered as a national hero in Greece, but he was declined a Westminster Abbey burial because of his profligate lifestyle.

Today, Byron is remembered as the first international celebrity, the equivalent of a modern superstar. His life was one of contrast and self-destruction. This brooding aristocrat was a mesmerizing seducer and an exceptional athlete, but also an obese, dissipated drunk who walked with a limp and sought love in scandalous ways. Despite his unorthodox morals and opinions, he believed fiercely in heritage and classical tradition, and his genius crystallized society's problems into words with a romantic perspective. His work, although often erotic, addressed oppression and the importance of liberty, so freedom fighters across Europe embraced it. Byron's wife, Arabella, was a bluestocking with an aptitude for mathematics. In turn, their daughter, Ada Lovelace, was a brilliant mathematician who is credited with writing the first algorithm for processing by a machine and is considered to have been the first computer programmer. ❀

5.15.1

Lord Byron (bust)

Incised "Byron" and impressed and painted "GR", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,²⁰ Staffordshire, c. 1820, H: 5.8 in., MBS-458



Notes

Lord Byron rather fascinates me, although I think he was the worst of louts, even in the context of his scandalous times.

I bought this small bust through Andrew Dando in 2012 and was tickled to have it because of the motif on the socle. That motif, a royal coat of arms beneath the Prince of Wales's feathers, is also on a small box in my collection (no. 15.11.1) and on another like it, both of which are attributed to "Sherratt." This bust is also "Sherratt," and the painting of the socle is very much in the "Sherratt" manner.

I assume the initials GR are for George Rex, either George III or more likely George IV. Busts of Nelson and the Duke of York occur on the same socle.²⁰

Literature

For this bust see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 4, figs. 200.70–71. ❀



Lord George Gordon Byron. After T. Woolnoth, published by Thomas Phillips, 1824. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Sir Isaac Newton, the most acclaimed mathematician and scientist in the history of mankind, was born on December 25, 1642. He studied at Cambridge; thereafter, he produced groundbreaking work on mechanical and mathematical theory, optics, and gravity. His laws of motion and his law of universal gravitation, published in 1687 in his *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica*, established the foundations of modern science.

Newton was a socially awkward loner who never married, but his genius was acknowledged in his time. The Great Comet of 1680 was dubbed Newton's Comet in recognition of its significance to his work. This particularly bright, large comet was the first ever detected by telescope, and it struck fear into the hearts of those who saw it. In America and Europe, church bells tolled and people prayed, expecting their end was fast approaching. In the Province of New York, people fasted in an attempt to assuage God's anger. Newton, then working on his *Principia*, welcomed the comet as an opportunity for testing his new theory of gravitation. His work ushered in an age of reason, and in appreciation he was knighted in 1705. He died on March 20, 1727, and is buried in Westminster Abbey.

Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1343–1400) is known as the father of English literature. Born the son of an affluent London vintner, he spent his life in service to aristocratic and royal households

and traveled extensively. A prolific writer, poet, and translator, he is still revered for *The Canterbury Tales*, which is regarded as one of the most important works in English literature. Written in both verse and prose in the 1380s, this is a collection of fictional tales told by pilgrims journeying to St. Thomas Becket's shrine at Canterbury Cathedral. Almost a century later, William Caxton, the first English printer, published it, and his 1476 and 1483 editions rank among the very first books printed in English.

Chaucer played a pivotal role in establishing the use of vernacular English in literature at a time when French and Latin were the dominant languages for this purpose. He was the first poet to be buried in Westminster Abbey. ❀

5.16.1

Geoffrey Chaucer and Sir Isaac Newton (pair)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Chaucer (L) painted "Chaucer" on the reverse and impressed "155", Newton (R) impressed "137", attributed to Ralph Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1790, H: 12.1 in. (L), 11.9 in. (R), MBS-553





Notes

Figures of Newton and Chaucer are far more readily seen in museums than on the market or in private collections, and individual figures of one or other of these gentlemen are in several important museum collections. The Victoria and Albert Museum has a titled pair that has been there since 1874! (a titled *Newton* [88-1874] pairing with *Chaucer* [89-1874]). The Metropolitan Museum has long owned an untitled pair (Newton impressed "Ra. Wood Burslem" [43.100.19] and pairing with Chaucer [43.100.18]). I have noted only one other pair in a private collection.

The first Newton I handled was in Herbert and Nancy Hunt's collection in 2012, and I thought that photos fail to do the figure justice. I wanted one too! But Newton is hard to come by, and my first auction opportunity was in November 2016. I got up to bid in the early hours of the morning, but although I chased the figure to a high price, that was not high enough, and it sold to the trade.

Staffordshire figures are like buses in that they appear in twos or threes, so lo and behold, another Newton came to auction just weeks later at Chilcotts in Devon. Better yet, he had a companion figure of Chaucer with him. I again cut my sleep short to bid. We prevailed, and our pair arrived in Dallas some weeks later. It appears to be a true pair, having stood together always. Previously, it was in the collection of a gentleman named Hugh Thomas Appleton. He assembled his collection between 1930

and 1976, so some of the figures—many of which were Victorian dross—had been off the market for going on a century.

Figures of Newton are probably after a reduced-scale eighteenth-century plaster. All recorded examples have Newton holding a telescope in his left hand; this alludes to his work on optics, which culminated in his developing the reflecting telescope. Newton stands beside a celestial globe. The globe rests upon books from which hangs a page with an impression of a comet on it and the year "1680" painted beneath. This alludes to the Great Comet of 1680, also known as Newton's Comet.

Closely similar Ralph Wood figures of Newton are in the Fitzwilliam Museum (C.884-1928, C.885-1928), the Brighton and Hove Museums (HW970 impressed "Ra. Wood Burslem 137"), and the Victoria and Albert Museum (88-1874, titled *Newton* and pairing with *Chaucer* 89-1874). The Leeds Pottery also made Newton, apparently from the same molds as the Ralph Wood figures, and an example impressed "LEEDS POTTERY" is at Temple Newsam House (16.199/47). The Leeds figure differs in that a small apple is placed on the base, this being an allusion to Newton's discovery of the theory of gravity.

A near-contemporary image of Chaucer in Thomas Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes* of 1412 guided all future portrayals of the poet. The design source for earthenware figures of Chaucer is not known, but possibly a reduced-scale eighteenth-century plaster assisted.

Figures of Chaucer are rare, and I know of only one in a private collection, but similar figures of Chaucer are in the Potteries Museum, Winterthur Museum (2002.0030.028.001), the Art Institute of Chicago, the Brighton and Hove Museums (HW939), the Victoria and Albert Museum (89-1874, titled *Chaucer* and pairing with *Newton* 88.1874), and the Fitzwilliam Museum (c.883-1928, being impressed "Ra. Wood Burslem 137").

Literature

For the marked Ralph Wood figure of Newton in the Brighton and Hove Museums impressed "137" see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, 98; also Beddoe, *A Potted History*, 206.

For the titled figure of Newton in the Victoria and Albert Museum, see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, 98.

For the figures of Chaucer in the Victoria and Albert Museum and Potteries Museum, as well as figures of Chaucer impressed "137" and "155" see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 2, 100-101.

For the figure of Chaucer in the Brighton and Hove Museums, see Beddoe, *A Potted History*, 198.

For the marked and numbered Ralph Wood figure of Chaucer in the Fitzwilliam Museum, see Rackham, *Catalogue of the Glaisher Collection*, vol. 1, 117; vol. 2, plate 66B.

For the Leeds figure of Newton, see Walton, *Creamware and other English Pottery at Temple Newsam House*, 220, 222. ❁

Endnotes

1. Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1:34–35.
2. Hodkinson, *Sherratt?*; Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1:36–37.
3. Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 2: fig. 55.10.
4. Pückler-Muskau, *Tour*, 40.
5. Hodkinson, *Sherratt?*; Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1:36–37.
6. Pückler-Muskau, *Tour*, 40.
7. Hodkinson, *Sherratt?*; Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1:36–37.
8. *Time*, “Mr. Bonfig’s Protégé,” 6:52–53.
9. Hodkinson, *Sherratt?*; Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1:36–37.
10. Christie’s, South Kensington, February 18, 1985, lot 197.
11. <http://webapps.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/explorer/index.php?oid=76508>. In 1908, the figure was incorrectly identified as Mrs. Siddons.
12. The painting of this figure’s dress is atypical of “Sherratt,” but the same unusual decoration banding the base is also on the “Sherratt” Queen Victoria figure (made from the same molds as Malibran).
13. Senyak, *Banjo Camp*, 73.
14. Hodkinson, *Sherratt?*; Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1:36–37.
15. Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1:30.
16. Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 159.
17. Hodkinson, *Sherratt?*; Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1:36–37.
18. Blessington, *Conversations of Lord Byron*, 389–390.
19. In her journal of 25 March, 1812, quoted in Wintle, *Dictionary*.
20. The bust of Nelson is in the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich (AAA6028); the bust of the Duke of York sold at Law Fine Art, May 17, 2005, lot 300.20. Hodkinson, *Sherratt?*; Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1:36–37.

CHAPTER 6

Music



Extract from "Farmer Giles & his wife shewing off their daughter Betty to their neighbours on her return from school drawn by an amateur." James Gillray, 1809. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

PRE-VICTORIAN ENGLAND HAD TWO CLASSES of musicians and two types of music. The first type was considered an intellectual art; it had a continental grounding, and the “better” classes were its patrons. The second was pure entertainment for ordinary men and women. Between 1810 and 1835, the simple native music of the countryside, fairground, and ale house thrived alongside its up-scale continental cousin, and England was a musically rich land.

Continental musicians dictated music for the upper echelons of society, and musical soirées and the Italian opera defined their London music calendar. In smaller cities, genteel middle-class patrons funded choral societies and music festivals featuring the classical works of continental composers. For the middle class, “rational recreation” was the buzz phrase of the early 1800s. Such recreation was, by definition, improving, ordered, and controlled, and music, middle-class style, fitted the bill. Piano and song were for women only; manly contributions were limited to accompanying ladies on unladylike instruments, like the violin or flute. By now, vast amounts of published music had brought “rational” music into middle-class homes. Flowery English songs espousing valor, romance, and sentiment were what the middle class wanted.

Among the lower class music was generally robust rather than refined, and it went hand in hand with plainly worded

ballads addressing the full spectrum of life’s realities. By 1810, England’s body of folk songs contained thousands of ballads, many of which had been transmitted by oral tradition alone. Now printing presses were spewing out millions of broadside ballads for an increasingly literate population. Some ballads were centuries old, but many were newly written and of contemporary relevance. Often bitingly witty and bawdy as they poked fun and protested injustice, ballads appealed especially to the laboring class, and, as the popular song of that time, they became as much a part of country life as city life. Rural musical groups, mimicked in the figure groups the Potteries produced, sang these ballads to traditional folk tunes.

By 1825, middle-class reformers were intent on extending rational recreation to lower-class people, who they believed were dissipating their leisure in lewd pastimes that included traditional music and song. In this spirit, churches, temperance societies, and mechanics’ institutes organized musical performances, which they deemed more sober and uplifting than the bawdy song and amateur music of fairs and public houses. Employers and churches encouraged, and even subsidized, glee clubs, brass bands, and church choirs as civilizing influences on the lower class. They quickly discovered that working people liked lofty music and many were well acquainted with the works of Haydn and Handel. Classical

music in the cottages of commoners did not signal the demise of folk music. Folk groups, playing by ear centuries-old instruments, such as bagpipes, triangles, bells, horns, and fiddles, remained part of village life, their music frequently accompanying singing or dancing. In the 1830s, music halls opened, and songbooks eventually displaced lone broadside ballads.

Some Staffordshire figures of musicians are decidedly continental in their appearance. These are generally after porcelain figures, and they reflect the continental music that the better classes enjoyed. On the other hand, most musician figures mirror the traditional musical entertainment that is part of England's heritage. Tambourines, triangles, pipes, fiddles, tabors, guitars, horns, and a host of simple musical instruments in the hands of amateur musicians have been an age-old source of pleasure. Figure groups titled *Rural Pastimes*, *Songsters*, or *Village Group* attest to the rural significance of unpretentious, uniquely English melodies and tunes. ❀

6.1.1

Gentleman Piper and Lady Harp Player (vase)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the “Leather Leaf Group” pot bank,¹ Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 10 in., MBS-449







Notes

This vase is taller than most others of its kind because the shell-shaped spill vase has been placed atop a raised plinth. In 2012, I bought it from my friend Mike Smith, who had bought it from the dealer David Boyer a few years previously but had tired of it.

I could not believe my luck when Mike parted with this vase, and I considered using it for the main image on the dust jacket of the first volume of *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840* because I rate it that highly. My friend Nick Burton thought otherwise. On a car trip back to his home in Leek after photographing the museum collection in Wisbech, Nick convinced me that a bocage figure was a more appropriate choice.

A similar vase is in the Hunt Collection.

Literature

For this vase see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, figs. 26.154–55.

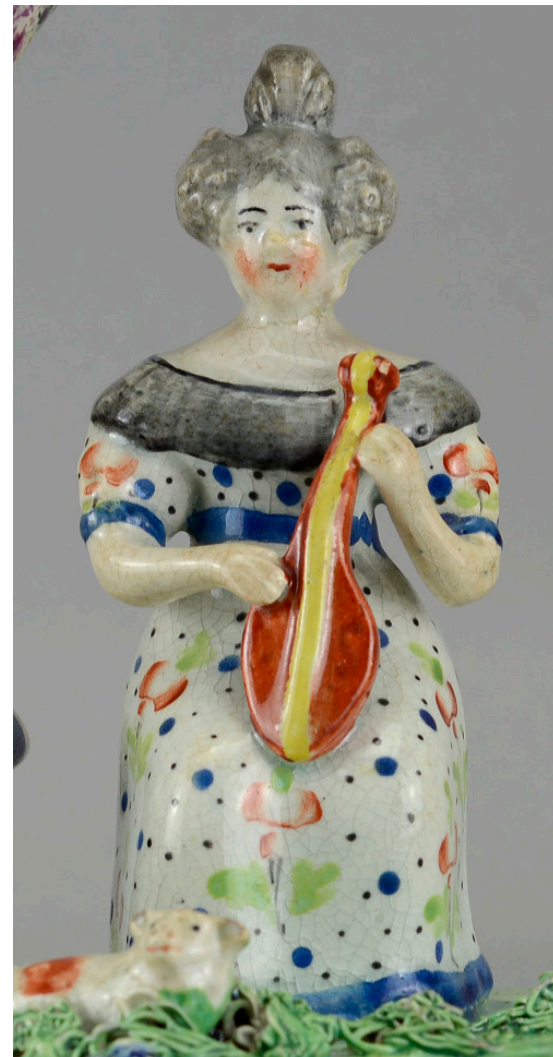
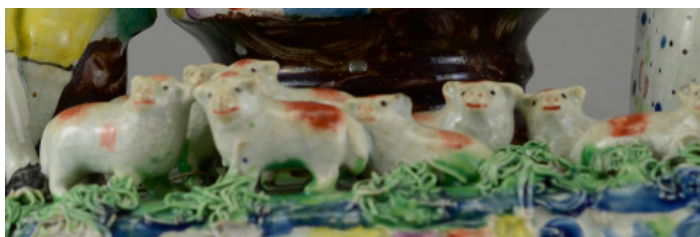
For a similar vase in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 222. ❁

6.1.2

Gentleman Piper and Lady Lute Player (vase)

*Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,² Staffordshire, c. 1825,
H: 8.8 in., MBS-529*





Notes

This unrecorded vase was one of our first purchases in our new Dallas home. I bought it from Bob Moores of Nestegg Antiques in May 2015. He asked me about it when it came into his stock, and I told him everything I knew, adding that I would like first shot when he had priced it. The Brighton and Hove Museums has a pair of musician figures from the same molds as those placed on this vase (HW866, 867).

Literature

For a pair of musicians from the same molds in the Brighton and Hove Museums see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.15; also Beddoe, *A Potted History*, 186. ❀

6.1.3

Gentleman Piper, Lady Lute Player (pair)

*Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,³ Staffordshire, c. 1830,
H: 5.1 in. (L), 4.9 in. (R), MBS-177*



Notes

I bought this pair from Malcolm Hodkinson, the “Sherratt” expert, on my first visit to him and his wife Judith in their London home in early 2004. I was intrigued by their display of small “Sherratt” figures and appreciated Malcolm parting with this pair for me. It was quite an unforgettable day, the first of many together, and the friendship I forged and the knowledge I gleaned from Malcolm encouraged me to push ahead with my work.

Literature

For these figures see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 246; also Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.6. ❀

6.1.4

Shepherd Piper and Shepherdess

*Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,⁴ Staffordshire, c. 1825,
H: 4.6 in., MBS-582*



Notes

I photographed this small “Sherratt” group in Elinor Penna’s home on Long Island home in 2007, but life got in my way when it appeared at auction in late 2017. Fortunately, it went into David Boyer’s stock, and from there onto our shelves. I know of only one other like it.

Literature

For this figure group see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.19. ❀

6.1.5

Gentleman Piper (2)

*Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,⁵ Staffordshire, c. 1825,
H : 4.1 in (L), 4.3 in. (R), MBS-604*







Notes

In spring 2019, my heart skipped a beat when I spotted these two figures on John Howard's site and instantly recognized them as an unusual variation of a figure from the "Sherratt" pot bank. These two close-to-identical pipers are not what you could call a pair, but they have probably lived side by side for almost two centuries, and it is satisfying to let that continue.

At first glimpse, a "Sherratt" siren went off full blast in my head, but, as always, I enjoyed pinpointing the features that support the attribution. It is satisfying when all the puzzle pieces come together, but I am left wondering why two male pipers would be "paired" in this manner. Given the choice, wouldn't you have paired the male piper with his female companion? Oddly enough, I have encountered another instance of this. A male piper in our collection (no. 6.1.9) had lived companionably with his look-alike "since birth"....until we acquired one.

Literature

For a similar piper see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.17. ❀



The lone piper was presumably modeled to pair with a shepherdess.

6.1.6

Lady Lute Player, Gentleman Piper (pair)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1830, H: 5.2 in. (L), 4.9 in. (R), MBS-254



Notes

These small figures are very “Sherratt”-like, but I have not been able to nail an attribution. I bought them from Elinor Penna when Ben and I first visited her Long Island home in April 2007.

Literature

For these figures see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.2. ❀

6.1.7

Gentleman Fiddler, Lady Tambourine Player (pair)

*Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,⁶ Staffordshire, c. 1825,
H: 4.7 in. (L), 4.3 in. (R), MBS-311*



Notes

These are most uncommon figures. The lady also occurs on some bigger “Sherratt” menageries and, in one recorded instance, on a trumpet spill vase.

I bought these two small figures together from Elinor Penna at the Staffordshire Figure Association meeting in Alexandria in September 2008, having previously seen them at her house. I have also recorded a small “Sherratt” Turk on this base (no. 12.1.2, also shown alongside), and perhaps he was intended to stand with these figures.

Literature

For these figures see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, figs. 26.22, 26.25. ❀



6.1.8

Gentleman with Barrel Organ

*Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Sherratt" pot bank,⁷ Staffordshire, c. 1830,
H: 4.4 in., MBS-407*



Notes

For me, finding one of these small “Sherratt” figures is a true collecting coup. This musician stands well within my small “Sherratt” band (see alongside). I have recorded only three examples of this figure as a free-standing figure, one being on the same red-white-blue base as the small “Sherratt” musicians,⁸ so perhaps these figures were intended to form a band of sorts.

The molds for this figure were put to good use in the Potteries, for this same man is also on some “Sherratt” menageries (see 10.1.3) and within performing animal troupes made by other pot banks (see 13.1.5 and 13.1.6).

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.23. ❀



Italian organ grinder. *The Penny Magazine*, February 1833.



6.1.9

Shepherd Piper

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the “Big Blossom Group” pot bank,⁹ Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 5 in., MBS-206



Notes

I bought this shepherd and his flock from Malcolm Hodgkinson when I visited him in London in late 2005. Although it is uncommon, Malcolm actually had two closely similar examples. He had bought them together from the dealer John Reed. The shepherd and his animals are a self-contained little world that exudes restfulness. I always feel a great tranquility when I hold this figure.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.26; also Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 297. ❀

6.1.10

Gentleman Piper, Lady Guitar Player (pair)

Impressed and painted "PIPE PLAYER" and "GUITAR PLAYER", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, made by John Dale and impressed "T. DALE BURSLEM", Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 4.6 in. (L), 4.4 in. (R), MBS-464 (L), MBS-176 (R)





Notes

I was over the moon when I bought this lady guitar player in a lot with some unwanted lesser figures at Christie's New York in January 2004. I knew then that marked Dale figures are rare, and this was the first I had seen for sale, the first I was ever to touch. But I was familiar with the guitar player figure because the only other known example, in Hanley's Potteries Museum, is illustrated in the literature.

To say I was, and still am, enchanted with this figure is an understatement. She sits in the palm of my hand, creating her own little island, her own serene world. I find the bright yellow-green that Dale favored for bases particularly cheerful and eye-catching, and Dale figures have since become firm favorites.

At that point in my collecting "career," my lengthy relationship with dealers Ray and Diane Ginns had ended, and Nick Burton had started assisting me. I particularly appreciated his integrity and commitment. He was my eyes in the UK, but, even more importantly, he was the person who helped me evaluate the pros and cons of every potential purchase. His standards are high, and, to this day, I can always count on him to give it to me straight. Of course, I called Nick right away to tell him about my sweet little *GUITAR PLAYER*. Our relationship was a breath of fresh air. I didn't have to hide a purchase that had not gone through Nick's hands. Rather, he encouraged me to buy from anyone who had anything that met

my standard, with or without his assistance, and he delighted in seeing the collection grow in the right direction.

Within a few weeks of acquiring the *GUITAR PLAYER*, Ben and I visited Malcolm and Judith Hodgkinson in London for the first time (see 15.7.1. Notes). We got onto the subject of Dale figures, and Malcolm pulled out this *PIPE PLAYER*, which he then owned. In 2012, after a serious illness, Malcolm decided to pare their collection, which is without doubt the finest reference collection ever assembled, and he sold *PIPE PLAYER* to me. I always think that the yellow stain in the pipe player's crotch (where the enamels have discolored) looks like he had a little accident! I know of no other example of this figure.

GUITAR PLAYER was exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007.

Literature

For these figures see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 239; also Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, figs. 26.31–33.

For the guitar player in the Potteries Museum see Halfpenny, *English Earthenware Figures*, 229. ❀

6.1.11

Lady Guitar Player, Gentleman Piper (pair)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Blue Group" pot bank,¹⁰ Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 4.3 in. each, MBS-251







Notes

This pair is similar to my much-loved Dale pair (no. 6.1.10) from slightly different molds. The back of each bocage is unpainted, which is consistent with a “Blue Group” attribution. I bought them at auction at Hales in April 2007. The auction took place as Ben and I drove up from North Carolina to New York to see Elinor Penna’s stock of figures. Lo and behold, Elinor had a pair by yet another pot bank, and I bought that pair too, but have since parted with them.

It is very unusual to find two pairs on the same theme within a week, and I have not seen another pair for sale since. Staffordshire figures are like buses: one doesn’t come for a long time, and then they turn up in multiples.

Literature

For these figures see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.35.

For another pair in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 218. ❀

6.1.12

Lady Guitar Player, Gentleman Piper (vases, pair)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to John Dale, Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 5.7 in. (L), 5.8 in. (R), MBS-487



Notes

I was aware of such figural vases because I had long admired a pair in Malcolm and Judith Hodgkinson's collection. I was not to see another example of either vase until late 2013 when, amazingly, not one but two almost identical pairs came to auction in quick succession. I bought the first pair at Dreweatt Neate, and a dealer friend subsequently bought the second, but he traded the poorer of my two figures for his better one so that I would have a fine pair. Interestingly, the female figure also occurs with a bocage and marked with John Dale's mark.

Literature

For a similar pair see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.45.

For the female figure with bocage and marked Dale see *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.41–42. ❁

6.1.13

Gentleman Piper and Lady Lute Player

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1830, H: 8.7 in., MBS-154





Notes

We bought this group at Sotheby's in July 2002, with Ray and Diane Ginns executing a commission bid. This early purchase has held up well in our collection, and its enduring quality made it a keeper. It was exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007.

Literature

For this group see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 240; also Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.65.

For a similar group in the Sharp Collection see Sharp, *Ceramics Ethics & Scandal*, 146. ❀

6.1.14

Gentleman Bagpiper and Lady with Triangle

Impressed and partially painted "VILLAGE GROUP", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Box Title Group" pot bank,¹¹ Staffordshire, c. 1830, H: 8.7 in., MBS-89





Notes

This group is another early purchase that has retained its shelf space because of its lovely quality. We bought it in January 1996 from Ray and Diane Ginns. By then, collecting at a distance was becoming a little easier. Whereas in the 1980s overseas phone calls had been very expensive—I would sometimes awaken to call in the small hours of the morning to get the “cheap” phone rate that was still well over a dollar per minute—by the mid-90s, calls could be made for mere pennies a minute. Also, email was more commonplace, but photography was still not digital and scanners remained expensive (our first scanner cost around \$1,000!), so pictures of potential purchases needed to arrive by snail-mail.

This figure group was exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007.

Literature

For this group see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 236; also Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.77. ❀

6.1.15

Gentleman Bagpiper, Lady Lute Player (pair)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Tunstall Group" pot bank,¹² Staffordshire, c. 1825, H: 7.1 in. (L), 7 in. (R), MBS-165





Notes

1780–1840, vol. 1, fig. 26.127. ❀

Diane and Ray Ginns bought this pair of musicians on our behalf at auction at Mallams in June 2003, and they were among the figures that we collected from them on Portobello Road that summer as they no longer wished to mail to us without using a professional shipper. As hand luggage regulations then were not particularly restrictive, I carried our “stash” so as to avoid the cost of shipping.

I always look at these figures with a touch of sadness because they were the last purchase Ray made for us. At that time, prices were pulling back from the peaks of the 1990s, and he was amazed at how reasonably he bought them. Prices of Victorian figures were tumbling too, and those prices, unlike the prices of earlier figures, remained in a free fall for several more years.

These figures are derivatives of earlier Derby figures. I dislike most musician figures that are Derby derivatives because they generally look so continental in their dress. However, this pair has a rather rustic look as well as the engaging earthiness that I find appealing. They were exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007.

Literature

For these figures see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 241; also Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*

6.1.16

Turkish Musicians (vase)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the “Patriotic Group” pot bank,¹³ Staffordshire, c. 1830, H: 7.5 in., MBS-445



Notes

We bought this trumpet spill vase from John Howard in 2012. I had missed a similar vase at the Margaret Cadman sale at Christies, South Kensington, in October 2002 and had not found another that appealed to me until I saw this one. I think that may have been because they are usually quite pink, and I far prefer this combination of red and yellow with the soft orange interior.

Literature

For this figure group see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.145 and dust jacket. ❀



6.1.17

Lady Tambourine Player, Gentleman Piper (pair)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, both made by James Neale & Co, she impressed "NEALE & Co", Staffordshire, c. 1785, H: 8 in. each, MBS-398





Notes

I especially love pre-1800 enamel figures. Most are as well executed as porcelain figures, yet they retain the engaging warmth of pottery—and nobody did it better than Neale. Here the superior enamels, almost silky to the touch, are typical of Neale.

I have noted a mismatch in the colors on the bases and tree trunks of all similar pairs of Neale musicians. It seems the figures were painted individually, rather than in pairs, and perhaps the first buyers were free to choose whether they wanted to acquire a single figure or a pair.

I bought this pair from Aurea Carter in January 2011. At that time, we owned a Neale male piper (no. 6.1.18) but had not yet found a lady companion for him.

Literature

For these figures see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.167. See also 105. *Literature*, following. ❀

6.1.18

Lady Tambourine Player, Gentleman Piper (pair)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, both made by James Neale & Co. and impressed "NEALE & Co", Staffordshire, c. 1785, H: 8 in. each, MBS-329 (R), MBS-505 (L)





Notes

When I saw this piper bedecked in glorious Neale enamels coming up at auction at Keys in January 2009, I itched to hold him. To top it, he was marked and perfect (aside from a slight nick at the end of the pipe which simply does not count). I never fail to admire the animal-skin print on his manbag.

Subsequently I bought the lady at Northeast Auction in October 2013—also with no repair or restoration. In the interim, I had bought another pair (no. 6.1.17). Although I don't normally duplicate, I decided to keep both pairs because they are absolutely superb, both give me much pleasure, and I would be hard-pressed to pick a favorite.

As noted on the similar pair of Neale figures in our collection (no. 6.1.17), the bases and trunks are not good matches, and I have observed that other similar pairs of Neale musicians seem to have been painted individually, rather than as true matches.

A similar marked Neale pair was exhibited in Jonathan Horne's 1981 Exhibition; another pair is in the Potteries Museum (280.P.1949, she being marked); and a marked piper is in the Wisbech and Fenland Museum (1900.41). I know of no other examples.

Literature

For the male figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.169.

For another pair see Horne, *English Pottery*, 1981, no. 27.

For the marked figures in the Potteries Museum and Wisbech Museum respectively see Halfpenny, *English Earthenware Figures*, 147. ❁

6.1.19

Lady Lute Player, Gentleman Hurdy-Gurdy Player (pair)

Both painted "Flemish Music", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, both made by Ralph Wood and impressed "Ra. Wood Burslem", Staffordshire, c. 1785, H: 8.9 in. (L), 9.4 in. (R), MBS-415





Notes

This pair was formerly in the collection of Wynne Hamilton-Foyn, whose collection was dispersed at Bonhams in 2011, and I bought the pair from Aurea Carter later that year. At that time, I already owned a numbered pair (no. 6.1.20), but this pair is marked, so it beckoned me.

I first met Wynne Hamilton-Foyn in 2006. He wrote, inviting me to see his collection. That summer, en route to the Staffordshire Figure Association meeting in Birmingham, Ben and I stopped in Cirencester to meet Wynne and his wife Jean at their beautiful home, which was exquisitely decorated with carefully selected early oak and brass, Jean's collection of early needlework, and, of course, early pottery.

Wynne by then was in his eighties, and he walked with difficulty because of an injury he sustained jumping from a plane in World War 2. Jean, a retired mathematics teacher, had worked at Bletchely Park during that time, so she clearly was no mental slouch, and I am acutely aware of how much we all owe quiet heroes like Wynne and Jean. Despite his handicap, Wynne guided us to the third floor of the house, where many of his figures were stored; all were carefully cataloged.

Wynne's chief interest was Ralph Wood. He was convinced that the supposition Pat Halfpenny published in the 1990s (claiming that the figures traditionally attributed to Ralph Wood were largely made by John Wood) was incorrect, and

he spent years meticulously assembling evidence to both rebut that belief and to substantiate his conclusion that Ralph Wood had made these figures. Around 2009, he put his research on file at libraries with figure holdings.¹⁴ A summary of sorts was later published,¹⁵ but Wynne was displeased with it.

Wynne liked nothing more than to talk about Ralph Wood, and in this world there are not many willing listeners on that subject, but I was one, so we had many long conversations that would have had the eyes of all but the most enthusiastic pottery scholars glaze over. Wynne left not a stone unturned in his research, and his argument holds sway with anyone who listens to it. I learned a lot from him, and, inspired by his work, I compiled an update to the list of numbered figures published by Falkner in 1912. My paper on Ralph Wood was published in the Wedgwood Society of New York's *Ars Ceramica* in September 2016.

In 2011, Jean and Wynne moved into a retirement community, and their collection was sold at Bonhams, London. By then, I knew the collection well because I had photographed it. I previewed the sale with Malcolm Hodgkinson, and I was very sad to see all those figures clustered into assorted lots. Wynne told me that he had offered his research papers on Ralph Wood to Pat Halfpenny, but as she had not taken him up on the offer, he mailed all his work to me, and I am honored to have it and to know him and Jean.

Another similar male musician with the Ralph Wood mark is in

the Potteries Museum (285.P.1949).

Literature

For these figures see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.170-171.

For the marked figure in the Potteries Museum see Halfpenny, *English Earthenware Figures*, 139. ❀

6.1.20

Lady Lute Player, Gentleman Hurdy-Gurdy Player (pair)

Each painted "Flemish Music", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, both impressed "132", attributed to Ralph Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1785, H: 8.8 in. (L), 9.2 in. (R), MBS-223





Notes

Nick Burton bought this pair for us at auction at Moore, Allen, and Innocent in June 2006. This was our first pair of Ralph Wood figures, and although I later acquired a similar marked pair (no. 6.1.19), these are keepers. They came out of a private collection and had previously been purchased from Andrew Dando's father, Gordon, who had a shop in Bath for many years. Like so many Ralph Wood figures, they exude a tranquil beauty.

Literature

For these figures see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, figs. 26.172–173. ❀

Gentleman Hurdy-Gurdy Player

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, made by Enoch Wood and impressed "Enoch Wood & ..." (illegible), Staffordshire, c. 1820, H: 7.4 in., MBS-9



Notes

In February 1986, Ben, Andrea (then just two), and I were stuck in snowy weather in the Tunbridge Wells area, and, while Ben and Andrea waited in the car, I popped into Dunsdale Lodge in Westerham, where the dealer Alec Scott's shelves were packed with earthenware figures and Tobies. I really didn't understand what I was looking at, and Mr. Scott was not particularly communicative. I did buy two pastille burners (since sold) as well as two books by Griselda and John Lewis (still treasured).

Later, I bought this figure from Mr. Scott by mail—Polaroids provided such nasty images in those days—but he was not particularly interested in helping me, and he certainly lost all interest after I wisely rejected two poor pairs of dandies groups that he offered us.

The impressed “Enoch Wood & ...[illegible]” beneath this figure is otherwise unrecorded and is probably intended to read “Enoch Wood & Sons.” Enoch Wood operated with his sons Enoch, Joseph, and Edward as Enoch Wood & Sons from August 1818 until his death in 1840.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*; also Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.177. ❀

6.1.22

Gentleman Hurdy-Gurdy Player, Lady Lute Player (pair)

Painted "Flemish Music" and "Mate", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to Dudson, Staffordshire, c. 1810, H: 9.3 in. each, MBS-570





Notes

In 2011 or 2012, I was in London and hopped on the train to Bath to spend the day with Andrew and Jan Dando, who had just moved into their new home in Bradford on Avon. After one of those lovely pub lunches that England excels at providing, Andrew took me to see a collection belonging to a long-time customer named Jack.

There were several treasures in Jack's collection, and I was particularly taken with his Flemish musicians with huge cloaks, the likes of which I had not seen before then. The light playing on the cloaks' flowing expanse showcased the beauty of the colors and glaze, and the figures' totally original condition added to their allure. Not long after, Jack died, and in 2017 his son decided to pare the collection, so the Flemish musicians came into Andrew's hands and onto our shelves.

Despite their sophisticated subject, the figures exude a naive appeal, and I think I will be perpetually mesmerized by their cloaks. They are like slabs of newly rolled pastry, and I suspect they were fashioned by hand rather than in molds. I attribute the figures to Dudson and have recorded a lone example of a similar cloaked female figure on a base banded with only a brown line, which would be consistent with a Dudson attribution.

The figures have collection labels for the Brook-Hart Collection.

Literature

For these figures see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, figs. 26.187–189. ❀

6.1.23

Lady Hand Drum Player, Gentleman with Castanets (pair)

Both painted "Spanifh Dancer", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, impressed "73" (L), "71" (R), attributed to Ralph Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1785, H: 8.3 in. (L), 7.8 in. (R), MBS-417





Notes

I bought this fine pair of musicians from John Howard in the summer of 2011. I was intently studying Ralph Wood at the time, and John knew it and told me about these when they came into his stock. This is the only enameled pair of these figures that I have been able to record. A similar female figure is in the Potteries Museum (262.P.1949). The female figure is also recorded impressed “72”.¹⁶

Literature

For these figures see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.194. ❀

6.1.24

Gentleman Bagpiper

Painted "Bag Piper", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, impressed "21", attributed to Ralph Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1785, H: 8.3 in., MBS-343



Notes

I watch for Ralph Wood figures with impressed numbers and was lucky to find this not particularly common one on eBay in June 2009. It always strikes me as a particularly realistic model that has caught the piper in motion.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.196. ❀

6.1.25

Gentleman Piper, Lady with a Cat (pair)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to Ralph Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1790, H: 6 in. each, MBS-579



Notes

I was thrilled to discover this pair of figures oozing Ralph Wood attributes hiding in a mixed lot at Eldridges in the summer of 2018. The figures are particularly rare, and I had not hitherto documented decorated versions of either. However, an undecorated pair (in the white) is in the Southport Museum. Both museum figures are impressed “Ra Wood Burslem,” and the boy is also impressed “78.” Also, after acquiring this pair, I recorded a lone figure of the boy impressed “80”.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 238; also Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.202.

For the marked pair in the white in the Southport Museum see Halfpenny, *English Earthenware Figures*, 86.

6.1.26

Lady Tambourine Player

*Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, possibly made by Enoch Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1800,
H: 9.9 in., MBS-14*



Notes

We bought this figure in my early collecting days from Arthur Danielson and Leo Fantini. These two gentlemen lived in a lovely old house in Raleigh, North Carolina, and the spacious lower floor accommodated their stock. Twice a year, they stood at the so-called Antiques Extravaganza in our city of Winston-Salem, about 100 miles away.

Both Mr. Danielson and Mr. Fantini were drawn to Georgian period decorative furnishings, so I used to scour their stand for bits and pieces for our home, and more than once Ben and I drove to Raleigh in search of a piece of furniture. I particularly liked Mr. Fantini, a large man with an Italian accent and a big personality. After he died, I no longer visited the shop, but by then the Antiques Extravaganza had shriveled to almost nothing.

This figure has had the expected restoration to the raised tambourine, which I was not told at the time I bought it, but I expect Mr. Fantini and Mr. Danielson didn't have the expertise to detect it. It was exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007.

A similar figure is in the Victoria and Albert Museum (104-1874).

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 238; also Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.202.

For another see Rackham, *Early Staffordshire Pottery*, plate 94. ❁

6.1.27

Lady Tambourine Player, Gentleman Bugler (pair)

Impressed and partially painted "SHOW WOMAN" and "SHOW MAN", lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the "Patriotic Group" pot bank,¹⁷ c. 1825, H: 5.9 in. each, MBS-397



Notes

I bought this pair in lovely condition on eBay in December 2010 for a pittance. Little figures of this sort are dismissed as “ordinary,” but they are extraordinarily uncommon in anything approaching reasonable condition, even more so when they are a true pair. I have yet to record another pair of show people from this pot bank.

Literature

For these figures see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.220.

For a similar pair from another pot bank in the Hunt Collection see Schkolne, *Holding the Past*, 225. ❀

Gentleman Bugler

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, impressed "16", probably made by Enoch Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1820, H: 5.6 in., MBS-167



Notes

We bought this little showman through Ray and Diane Ginns at Bonhams, Ipswich, in June 2003, and it was among the last purchases we collected from them at Portobello Road that summer. I like his colors and crisp bocage and have always thought him pleasingly perky. Because he has great presence, I placed him on the spine of *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*.

This figure was exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007.

Literature

For this figure see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 244 and dust jacket; also Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.226. ❀

6.1.29 Musical Quartet (vase)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, Staffordshire, c. 1810, H: 9.5 in., MBS-156



Notes

Loosely dubbed a “songsters” spill vase, this piece was formerly in the collection of the dealer Margaret Cadman, which sold at Christies, South Kensington, in October 2002, and Ray and Dianne Ginns executed a commission bid for us. Margaret Cadman resided, I think, around Brighton, but by the time we started collecting, she was no longer active. I was told that her stock was removed for the sale from cabinets that had been painted shut.

This vase differs from similar spill vases in that the central vase has been set lower down. It was exhibited at the Mint Museum of Art, *Mirth and Mayhem: Staffordshire Figures 1810–1835*, November 2006–April 2007.

Literature

For this figure group see Schkolne, *People, Passions, Pastimes, and Pleasures*, 235; also *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, fig. 26.236. ❀

6.1.30

Gentleman Piper and Lady Shepherdess (vase)

Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to Ralph Wood, Staffordshire, c. 1785, H: 14 in., MBS-527





Notes

I bought this early unrecorded group for \$300 on the hammer (against an estimate of \$150) at Alex Cooper in December 2014. It bothers me that such a splendid object got so little “respect” at auction, and I was, and still am, over the moon with it. The handles have been restored, but the group is structurally intact with no major breaks through the body or base and only the expected restoration to the extremities. At fourteen inches tall, it is an object of extraordinary beauty.

Ralph Wood also used these figures and animals in other contexts. The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, has a pair of vases of the same style but without the musician and shepherdess on the bases.

Literature

For other Ralph Wood groups using these figure and animal models see Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures 1780–1840*, vol. 1, figs. 26.160-164 and vol. 3, fig. 114.1-3. ❀

6.1.31

Lady with Hurdy Gurdy

*Lead-glazed earthenware with enameled decoration, attributed to the Leeds Pottery, Yorkshire, c. 1785,
H: 7.5 in., MBS-608*



Notes

The summer of 2020 found us locked down at home in an attempt to avoid contracting Covid. I confess I thrived on the isolation and relished the freedom from burdensome shopping and social engagements. This s unusual little girl with a hurdy-gurdy came our way that year, and it was one of only two purchases we made in that period.

This fine figure came up at Woolley and Wallis. Most auction houses would have lumped it into a lot with unremarkable figures, but, to its credit, Woolley and Wallis gave this little lady a lot of her own. She is special because she is a Leeds Pottery figure, and those are almost as rare as hen's teeth today. Although unmarked, bidders recognized her worthiness, and she did rather well. Andrew Dando kindly procured her for me, and as she needed no restoration, she arrived on my doorstep quickly.

I love the few early Leeds figures we own, and I find them mesmerizingly attractive. Their pinched facial features are distinctive, and the enamels are particularly pretty. Other points of similarity are the use of dotted dress pattens and watery brown enamels on the bases. Perhaps these features will open my eyes to other unmarked Leeds figures in the future. No photo can ever adequately convey their delicate beauty, and they top my list, just one notch ahead of Neale figures.

Unusual on this figure is the tree stump behind her that extends into the base, something I have not seen before.

The companion figure is a boy with a tambourine, and a marked pair is at Temple Newsam House, Leeds.

Literature

For a similar figure at Temple Newsam House see Walton, *Creamware and Other English Pottery at Temple Newsam House*, 224. ❀

Endnotes

1. Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1:31–33.
2. Hodkinson, *Sherratt?*; Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1:36–37.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1: 26.24 for that figure.
9. ———, 1:41.
10. ———, 1:29.
11. ———, 1:30.
12. ———, 1:38.
13. ———, 1:34–35.
14. Hamilton-Foyn, *Ralph Wood Figures?*
15. Dunsmore, *This Blessed Plot*, 120.
16. Falkner, *Wood Family*, 104. Falkner does not indicate whether the figure was color-glazed or enameled.
17. Schkolne, *Staffordshire Figures*, 1:34–35.