

UK Belleek Collectors' Group

Newsletter

*Number 29/1
April 2008*



Spring Special Research Issue

Brian Russell on Masonic Ware: some fabulous previously unrecorded items

Tony Fox – Part 5 of Teaware: Shamrock pattern in all its variety...

Pat and Paul Tubb investigate more Belleek people

David Reynolds on the lookout for Belleek images in unexpected places

And... Glenda and Paul Norman on a peculiar New Zealand phenomenon.

Contacts:

Chris Marvell is the Newsletter editor. Please let him have your contributions for future Newsletters, comments, suggestions, letters for publication, criticisms etc. If you want, Gina Kelland is still happy to receive material for the Newsletter: she will be assisting Chris with her advice and proofreading. **If you are sending published articles please either get Copyright clearance yourself or enclose the details of the publisher so Chris can ask for permission.** You can contact Chris by email to editor@belleek.org.uk

Chris and Bev Marvell publish and distribute the Newsletter. Chris has set up a database which forms the Group's "digital" archive, keeping a record of relevant publications and photographs (including photos etc. gathered at meetings and not published in the Newsletter). Some or all of this information will be available on the Internet as our website develops - working with Simon Whitlock, we intend to publish all the back issues of the Newsletter and all of the research done by our Group members on our website. If you have questions about the publication and distribution of the Newsletter, contact Chris or Bev by email at publisher@belleek.org.uk.

The Group's Chairman is **Eddie Murphy**, email chairman@belleek.org.uk

Our Treasurer is **Brian Russell**, contact him by email at treasurer@belleek.org.uk

The position of Group Administrator is vacant at present so email to administrator@belleek.org.uk will come through to Chris Marvell who will pass it on to the most appropriate person.

Our website is administered by **Simon Whitlock** and can be found at <http://www.belleek.org.uk/>. To contact Simon, the Webmaster, send email to webmaster@belleek.org.uk.

There is a separate email address to make contact with researchers within the group. This is research@belleek.org.uk. For information on the annual raffle or to buy tickets, contact **Linda Murphy** at raffle@belleek.org.uk.

Credits

Photographs:	Pat and Brian Russell, Pat and Paul Tubb, David Reynolds, Glenda and Paul Norman and Chris Marvell.
Articles by:	Tony Fox, Pat and Paul Tubb, David Reynolds, Brian Russell and Paul and Glenda Norman.
Other material:	Linda Murphy, David Reynolds, Pat and Paul Tubb and Bev and Chris Marvell.
Acknowledgements:	The Fermanagh Herald, the Belfast Telegraph, the Impartial Reporter, National Geographic.

Forthcoming Events

12 th and 13 th April 2008	Cornwall Spring Meeting, hosted by Melanie and Simon Whitlock.
26 th and 27 th July 2008	AGM near Coventry, hosted by the Tubb family
11 th and 12 th October 2008	Blackpool, hosted by Josie and Steve Garnett
13 th December 2008	Christmas Party... near Derby, hosted by Bev and Chris Marvell ... the theme is to be "Oriental".

Newsletter Deadlines

Summer 2008: Deadline for articles and other material July 1st.

Cover Picture... A large Tureen (1st Black mark) from the Grand Lodge Service, Dublin.

This publication is made on behalf of the UK Belleek Collectors' Group. It is dedicated to improving our knowledge and appreciation of Belleek, the Ware and the Pottery. It is not for profit and intended for the members of the Group and those with like interests. We try to acknowledge and obtain permission for any material or images used. If however you feel that material has been used which breaches your copyright and this causes you a problem, please get in touch with the editor at editor@belleek.org.uk and the item will be removed.

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From the Editor...

This issue is the seventeenth of the Group's "new" Newsletters. Members of long standing will remember the "old" original Newsletters that Jan Golaszewski produced with much love, care and sheer hard work since the inception of the Group. The "new" Newsletter was devised to take some of the workload off Jan and ensure a publication would be made regularly by the Group. In this "new" format it has now been running for six years, over which time I have worked with Gina and Bev and of course with many other Group members to get the Newsletter published – usually even on time! I now have the responsibility of being Editor and I have to say that it is a pleasure and a privilege to do this.

I really need to explain. It is a pleasure because our UK Group contains dedicated and enthusiastic members who are consistently producing excellent and well researched material. This material is highly interesting and is also almost all new and original. The Editor's job is easy if there is good material to edit! It is much more usually the case that the Editor of this type of publication has to scratch around for material, implore Group members to come up with something and if all else fails, write it himself. Well this is certainly not the case with our Group. Not that I want to engender an air of complacency but there is now a profusion of wonderful articles coming from our membership. There is naturally quite a lot of work in editing and publishing all this material but it is truly a joy to see so much good work being done willingly by our members.

The reason that being the Editor is also a privilege is that I feel greatly honoured to be put into this position of trust by all of you. I hope we have built on the work that Jan started so that the UK Group Newsletter has become an important voice in the World of Belleek collecting, especially now that the BCIS no longer print and distribute the "Belleek Collector". Furthermore I am hoping and expecting it to go from strength to strength, providing new material, news and information to all those in the Belleek collecting world who want to read it.

Last year we published a Book celebrating the 150 years that the Belleek Pottery had been in existence. This has now completed its print run of 200 copies and there are only a very few remaining. Although very much an idiosyncratic publication, I hope it contains a great deal that is new and interesting. As part of "spreading the word" about Belleek, I would very much like our Group, or members of our Group individually, to go on to publish more of their own fabulous work, some of which is already complete, some of which is long-time work in progress and some of which is still in its infancy. The body of work is increasing all the time and we need to disseminate it widely – either through the Newsletter, Simon's excellent new Website or through other new publications.

Not since the Belleek Collectors' International Society (BCIS) was formed under the guidance and leadership of Richard Degenhardt in the late 1970's and then the formation of the UK Group in 1989 by Marion Langham aided by Jan Golaszewski and Brian Scott, has there been this level of new research and interest in discovering information about Belleek's origins, history, people and ware. Neville Maguire, another Group member, produced his own book last year. This book, "Belleek in Context", took as its theme a similar idea that the time had come to put Belleek Pottery into its correct place among the great creative potteries of Victorian Britain.

One hundred and fifty years is a long time. Belleek Pottery is still a very successful company. The UK Belleek Collectors' Group is now the standard bearer of those who have a stronger interest in Belleek than just admiring the beautiful ware, although of course this is a major reason why we collect in the first place! I would very much like to congratulate all those members whose interest in Belleek has inspired them to go out and do research, put pen to paper (or hand to keyboard) and then send me such splendid material to edit and publish. This benefits collectors worldwide – for the UK Group now has a truly worldwide span, with associates in the USA, Canada and New Zealand as well as other European countries.

Anyway, as I write this, with at least nine articles still to be included in this issue of the Newsletter and Easter approaching fast, I am very glad I am in such a pleasant predicament...

– so let the flow continue unabated... more articles, please! I'd particularly like some material from Associate members and those who don't normally attend meetings... so you don't feel left out.

- Chris Marvell

News from Belleek Pottery

Following the Pottery's decision to produce a very limited production run (20 pieces) of the "Figure of Erin" the following articles have been published in the Fermanagh Herald and the Belfast Telegraph.

An article on Belleek's Figure of Erin was published in issue 25-2 of the Newsletter (September 2004). The Erin pictured here is not the one mentioned in the press articles, merely an example of the first period figure.



Belleek Figure sold for record £8250

Wed 6th Feb 2008

The Number One marked piece of one of Belleek's most famous statues – The Figure of Erin – has achieved a record bid of £8,250, far exceeding its reserve price in a special online auction to mark the launch of the Pottery's 2008 Archive Collection.

The once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to own this exclusive piece received international attention, with interest from the United States, Canada, the UK and Ireland. However, the successful bid was made by a local Fermanagh businessman who is also a member of the Northern Ireland Chapter of the Belleek Collectors International Society.

The owner, who wished to remain anonymous, said he was delighted to hear the good news: "It is a real honour to receive the Number One Figure of Erin. I knew there would be a huge deal of interest from across the world, so it is fantastic to own such an exclusive and impressive piece of Belleek craftsmanship. She really is beautiful."

The new owner has been collecting Belleek pottery for over 35 years, with hundreds of pieces in his collection but believes that the Figure of Erin will definitely be a star attraction:

"Belleek has an enduring appeal', he went on, "and holds a special place in my heart because it is a local company which, for more than 150 years has been producing exquisite china with a unique translucency that is second to none. Every piece is stunning to look at and timeless in its beauty. My own passion for collecting Belleek will never disappear, and I feel privileged to keep such a landmark piece in County Fermanagh," he said.

The Number One Figure of Erin statue was painstakingly recreated by skilled Belleek Pottery craftsmen using original pottery moulds from the time when it was first introduced in the 1870s. Standing at 17.5 inches tall, she is one of the most intricate designs that Belleek has ever created.



Belleek's Head of Design, Fergus Cleary said that the auction response and result reflected the desirability and collectability of traditional Belleek:

"The Pottery was inundated with enquiries for the Number One Figure", Mr Cleary said, "and it is great news that a local collector will be taking her home. There was a total of 20 Figure of Erin pieces recreated for the 2008 Archive Collection and, since this special auction was announced for the Number One piece, we only have five Figures remaining."

Initially called, 'Hibernia Awakening from her Slumbers', the statue had a fascinating allegorical significance, symbolising the pottery and Ireland's embryonic entry into the world of industry which adds to her allure.

The Figure of Erin was designed by Dublin born sculptor, William Boyden Kirk (1824 – 1900). It was first introduced in the 1870s and displayed at the Dublin Exhibition of 1872. Only ever made to order, no more than 100 Figure of Erin pieces have ever been made.

The Figure of Erin stands in strap sandals on the Belleek flagstone, with the waves of Lough Erne washing them, and her robe flowing over an Irish Harp behind her and a Celtic cross to her left. She is unveiling an urn inscribed with the words, 'Belleek Pottery' representing the first ceramic piece to be produced there.

The logo for the Belfast Telegraph, featuring the words "BELFAST TELEGRAPH" in white, serif, all-caps font on a dark blue rectangular background.

Wednesday, February 06, 2008

Belleek goes potty as The Figure of Erin attracts record price

By Emily Moulton

A 19th century statue created by Belleek Pottery has fetched a record price at auction.

The Number One piece in Belleek Pottery's collection of The Figure of Erin was sold for £8,250 - exceeding its reserve price in an online auction to mark the launch of the 2008 archive collection.

Collectors from the US, Canada, the UK and Ireland registered their interest for the prized statue by bidding thousands of pounds, however the 17.5in statue, which was designed by 19th century Irish sculptor William Boyden, became the proud possession of a Fermanagh businessman who is also a member of the Northern Ireland Chapter of the Belleek Collectors International Society.

The new owner, who did not want to be named, said he was delighted he had outbid other collectors.

"It is a real honour to receive the Number One Figure of Erin," he said.

"I knew there would be a huge deal of interest from across the world so it is fantastic to own such an exclusive and impressive piece of Belleek craftsmanship - she really is beautiful.

"Belleek has an enduring appeal and holds a special place in my heart because it is a local company which, for more than 150 years, has been producing exquisite china with a unique translucency that is second to none. Every piece is stunning to look at and timeless in its beauty.

"My own passion for collecting Belleek will never disappear and I feel privileged to keep such a landmark piece in County Fermanagh."

Did You Know... ?

- David Reynolds

...The Royal Mail used to sell advertising space in stamp booklets.

Retailers Robinson and Cleaver had just such a space in a 1912 issue with four advert panes alongside four 1½d stamps showing the head of King George V.

Robinson and Cleaver are well known for having their own backstamp on Belleek items that they sold from the store in Belfast. As you can see from the advertisement, they also had a store in Regent Street, London.



The Belfast Department Store – the building still exists but is no longer operated by Robinson and Cleaver.



The Belleek Weekend in Wilmslow

Saturday with Myra and Bob

The October meeting was held in Wilmslow. We arrived for elevenses at Myra and Bob Roalfe's house where we were welcomed by our hosts with some impressive hospitality and some interesting Belleek items to look at. Bob is a keen gardener and chef, as can be seen from the flowers on show in the garden and the fabulous home cooking...





Saturday Evening at the Bull's Head...



...as you can see, the customary Saturday evening gathering went off extremely well at a local pub/restaurant.

From the top left hand picture, the food looks spectacular – it also appears that a good amount of Guinness was also consumed.



The Sunday Meeting....

Following morning refreshments, Eddie Murphy, the Chairman began the meeting by welcoming back Paddy and Tracy McKee to the Group. Following this, a one minute silence to allow us to remember three of our members took place. It was a welcome opportunity to remember and give our respect to Graham Houghton, Ruth Prior and Seamus Sweeny, all of whom will be very sadly missed.

We then moved on to other happier events: Beverly Marvell, Bob Roalfe and Francis Kiddle had celebrated special birthdays.

Francis Kiddle Presents: Stamps.

Francis Kiddle then gave us a highly entertaining talk on the subject of Stamps. This is a subject on which he is very well qualified – Francis is truly an important person in the World of Philately.

I hope we will get a full write-up of this talk when Francis has more time.



Some of the items that Francis presented were quite remarkable!
- Editor

Right a cover with Gladstone "silencing" Parnell – an item of significance to the Irish Home Rule debate in the 19th century.



Following the talk, to rapturous applause, Francis was presented with a little present by Eddie.



Patricia's Report from the Pottery

NI Group Meetings

Patricia McCauley said that it was nice to see that there are quite a few UK Group members attending Northern Ireland Group meetings, including Paddy and Tracy McKee at the Crossmaglen meeting and Eddie and Linda Murphy at the Carrickfergus meeting. It would be nice to have an extra joint meeting UK & N. Ireland, maybe at the Pottery, please get in touch with Eddie if you are interested. Hopefully this could take place either before June or after October .

150th Year

Patricia couldn't believe that we are already 3/4s of the way through this special 150th year. There has been lots of excitement and a big thank you to the UK for their support, there were over 30 UK'ers at the convention. Patrick Tubb had been particularly helpful to the organizers. The convention was quickly followed by the Prince of Wales visit, up until a few days before his visit all the factory knew was that a VIP with be coming. Camilla unfortunately was in hospital at the time and could not attend, but Prince Charles gathered up all her posies. The there was a special 'Antiques Road Show' with John Sandon there to make valuations with Fergus Cleary and Tony Harty (a well-known local dealer in Belleek) there to help him.

Another event. the Rose Isle garden opening had been celebrated with a 'Fun Day'. A dedication service was led by Bishop Michael Jackson. Paul, Pat and Patrick Tubb had been among the attendees at the service at the Church of Ireland church in Belleek and Paul had given a talk.

Sales

The special archive pieces had been very successful, accounting for 9.5% of Visitor Centre sales this year. So, following on from the popularity of this, 20 new archive items are to be introduced for next year including Erin, the 5 O'clock tea cup and saucer and the Florence Jug. There would be only 20 Erins made, 6 of which were already sold.

Patricia then showed the group new Christmas figures which were in the Pottery Visitor Centre shop for sale in August... already three thousand of them had sold and, as Patricia said, even male visitors were buying them! She had brought over a selection of these Christmas ornaments for us to see and which she left with us for our Christmas party raffle.

Presentations

Patricia then presented David Reynolds with a acorn trinket box in recognition of his three years as Chairman of the UK Group. Eddie Murphy, as the new Chairman, gave him a bottle of wine as a thank you. Also for Sheila Houghton a special gift of a lovely mauve scarf with the Belleek 150th Anniversary logo to show how pleased we were to see her at this meeting, also dinky Belleek shopping bags to Paddy & Tracy McKee to welcome them back into the fold. For good measure, Linda Murphy also received a shopping bag.





2007 Devotee Award

Then came the big moment for the devotee of the year: someone who had been devotee before... who could it be? The envelope was opened. On a card in big letters it said "Chris Marvell". The astonished Chris was presented with a piece was from the archive collection introduced to mark the 150th Anniversary, the Shamrock Platter. Warm applause was given. It was the first time the award had been won by someone who had won it before. All Chris's hard work for the Group, particularly on the newsletter was very much appreciated. Chris reminded everyone that the newsletter was a success only because he had plenty of willing help from his friends.



Following on with presentations, retiring treasurer Amanda Hilliard was presented with a mint dish.

BCIS Newsletter

This had been having a few technical problems, but hopefully these had been ironed out. This Newsletter is available to BCIS members on the Belleek Pottery website: <http://www/belleek.ie>.

Other Items

A few minutes were taken on questions and answers about what had been said in the Chairman's letter in the last issue of the Group Newsletter.



Collectors of Belleek with items for sale are getting in touch with chairman@belleek.org.uk and these lists will be circulated to the membership.

New membership forms were now available.

Also, Eddie would like to know which members are happy to receive their meeting information via email as this saves time, money and trees. Of course the newsletter will still be printed and posted.

It has been requested that pictures of members shown on the WEB site also give the members names for the benefit of people who don't know us so well. If you do not want your name to appear on the WEB site please let Eddie/Simon know.

The 2007 Christmas Party was to be on 8th/9th Dec, the same weekend as the Bowman Antiques fair at Bingley Hall near Stafford. Depending on Tony Fox's visit into hospital, will either be at his house near Macclesfield when we will all be asked to bring a plate of Xmas fare and a bottle or a meal out near Stoke followed by a visit to Eddie and Linda's home.



Following this a delicious lunch was served.

Assembled members in anticipation of Lunch...

- These notes on the weekend compiled by Linda Murphy and Bev Marvell.



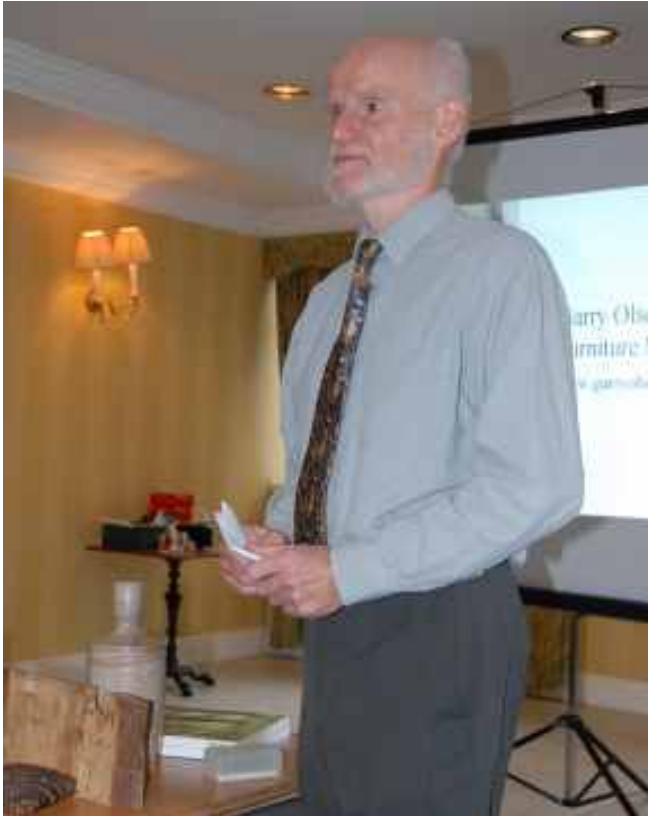
...Tracy, exhibiting the undoubted quality and artistry of the desserts... or did she just get two of them...?

...Our gracious hosts, Bob and Myra, taking a well-earned break from organising the proceedings.



Garry Olsen – The One Tree Project

After lunch Garry Olson gave his talk on the one tree project. As the name makes clear this was a project to take a single tree and have a dedicated group of craftspeople in wood to use their knowledge and skill to make as many and as varied objects from the timber of this one tree as possible. Shown here are some of the artefacts.



An aged oak in Cheshire was felled, and every last part of it was distributed to over 70 of Britain's leading designers and craftspeople who were asked to produce an object that demonstrated the beauty and diversity of wood.



Garry has written a book on the Project (available at amazon.com and many other booksellers). This book is a record of the collection of artefacts as wide ranging as furniture, toys, books, jewellery, carvings, sculptures, even ceramics fired with wood-ash glaze, that they produced.

The book has a foreword by HRH, The Prince of Wales.

Left: Following a wonderful talk, here is Eddie making a presentation.



The Bring and Tell

The theme was "Treasured Memories".

Jan began: firstly he said his treasured memory was a folder of the Stoke-on-Trent Belleek Convention in 1997. People had come from all over the world to our Convention and the folder recorded the facts - there were memorabilia, accounts, arrangements, photos, adverts, passport, fly sheets, and the lay out of the members' collections room, the Silent Auction room, a calendar, the menus, Eric Knowles and Graham Houghton's write-up of events - not to forget Marion Langham's special days and David and Christine Reynolds' engagement.



Joanna was next she showed a Lily tea pot she had brought from the silent auction at the Stoke-on-Trent convention she had many offers for it since but it was a treasured memory of the convention.

Myra was next she was going to bring an Imari bowl but thought our Newsletter was invaluable with picture of people enjoying themselves... Myra thanked Chris for producing their Treasured Memories.



Linda then showed a set of boules which brought back memories of Rossnowlagh beach - playing boules in the dark with Chris and Bev at 11 pm with all Eddie's (many) car lights on so we could see! Rossnowlagh Beach has memories for many of us being the location of the famous "Smugglers" Pub. David Reynolds also mentioned the Sandhouse Hotel there - where a group of Belleekers were nearly turned out because the staff thought they were "travellers" - as they were in shorts.

We all took a break for coffee or tea and resumed the meeting with the Bring and Tell winner being announced:- it was our Jan!

Finally, Francis, Myra, Bev and Bob were all presented with gifts. Then Neville's recent book "Belleek in Context" was mentioned, it was still for sale at £20 plus postage available from him directly or from Viewback auctions (see their website).

Brian Russell reminded us about standing orders because the price of membership is going up in January 14th by £5.00.

The meeting then ended with lots of hugs and kisses and safe journeys home.

- Linda Murphy



The 2007 Christmas Party



The Christmas Party was held at Denry's Restaurant in Burslem – Tony Fox had offered to host the party but it had been re-arranged because the date of Tony's operation had been altered. Denry's is a favourite haunt of the Group, located in the centre of the Town of Burslem in the heart of the Potteries. We had obtained our "usual" table in the cellar of the restaurant – an unusual and cosy venue.



Above: Patrick making the draw for the raffle and below you can see the raffle prizes...

The results: 1st prize (reticulated bowl), Josie and Steve Garnett, 2nd (Nile vases) to Eddie and Linda Murphy and 3rd (Neptune box) to David Baker





Some of the other happy prize winners are shown here...

...others are looking on expectantly.



Denry's is something of a local landmark; shown here (above right) is the 1930's glass which decorates it's frontage.

Finally, we get ready to face the cold outside and make our way home, laden down with goodies!



Armstrong and the Freemasonry

- Brian Russell

Robert Williams Armstrong joined the Freemasons Phoenix Lodge No.202 (now 173), London in 1855. He was initiated on the 8th of December 1855, getting his first Degree [1] on the 9th of February 1856. At the time of joining he was living at 10 Essex Street, The Strand, London (from 1851-1855) [2].

Armstrong started Lodge No.129 at Belleek in 1858 on the 17th June [3], along with three other people; Rev. James Benson Tuthill – Protestant Rector at Belleek, already a member of Lodges 215 and 891 (Enniskillen), Edward Athill and John Irvine. It is worth noting that John Caldwell Bloomfield was also a member of 891, getting his first Degree on the 7th January 1859, second and third within the same year.



Registration document for the Belleek Masonic plate design, 13th April 1878, No 320373. See my article on Belleek's registered designs on our Web site.

I have been informed by the Freemasons at Enniskillen Lodge 891, that up until 1932 they met at the town hall in Enniskillen when they had a new hall built which is still in existence (next to the Fire Station). And I have managed to find out that Armstrong and his fellow Freemasons of Belleek Lodge 129 met in Armstrong's house (Rose Isle) on the 3rd Thursday of each month (from 1858 to sometime before 1866).

In the minutes of the Grand Lodge, dated 30th April 1866, Belleek 129 Lodge was asking for permission to meet in the Belleek Fort as no suitable room could be found in Belleek Town. Permission was denied at first because the Fort was on the other side of the river in Co. Donegal, but finally granted. August 1868, when they had to leave the Fort, they moved to Bundoran, Co. Donegal as there was still no where available in Belleek, and in December 1880, they moved again to Ballyshannon, also in Co. Donegal.

Armstrong was not only a founder member, but also was the first Worshipful Master of Belleek Lodge 129. A letter was written by the Lodge Secretary, see page 23, asking for permission to re-elect Bro. Armstrong for a third consecutive session for the good of Masonry [4]. He also held the position of Treasurer of the Lodge in 1862 & 1863, giving his age as 40, (this checks out as he was born in 1823).

MASONIC PLATE PATTERN.—Brother R. W. Armstrong, Belleek Pottery, has made a handsome design for Masonic plate service, illustrating the Masonic lectures of the three degrees; and he has presented Ederney lodge 819 with a set. The designs are ingenious and artistic and the whole work is of great merit. Mr. Armstrong has taken the wise precaution to protect his work by registration.

In June 1878 the Impartial Reporter 'advertised' that Armstrong had made (and registered the design for) a Freemasons Dinner service (see clipping left) and that he had presented the Ederney Lodge (819) with a set. Armstrong had joined the Ederney Lodge in 1875/6.

Left: Newspaper clipping from the Impartial Reporter, June 1878

Right: The copper engraved plate of the Masonic design for transfer making – on the wall in the Belleek Pottery Museum

THE AMERICAN MASONIC EXCURSION Party purpose leaving New York on the 3rd July, and expect to be at Enniskillen on the 18th. Bro. O. Ternan P.P. S.O.W., is acting as Secretary for the local Masonic body; to accord our American cousins a fraternal greeting on their way. Captain Archdale has kindly placed his steam yacht 'Roselaro' at the disposal of the brethren in Enniskillen for a trip on the lake, as it is contemplated to bring the American party to Castledawell and Belleek.



Left: Another Newspaper clip from the Impartial Reporter

Another newspaper article also appears in the Impartial Reporter at roughly the same date concerning a visit by an American Masonic Party. The party left New York on the 3rd July 1878 and was expected in Enniskillen on the 18th (see clipping above).

It would be interesting to know who was in the party from the USA. It is almost certain that the Bro. O. Ternan mentioned was the same Dr. Ternan that later (during the second period) commissioned the important Ring Handle breakfast service painted with views of Ireland by Eugene Sheerin (part of which is now in the National Museum of Ireland, Collins Barracks, Dublin).

Right: Parian Ring Handle cup & saucer from the Ederney Lodge (819) set presented by Armstrong

The letter G in centre of the saucer stands for GOD & Geometry, in Irish Freemasonry, this 'G' is a very important symbol. The monogram 'ED' on the cup I believe is for Ederney (Lodge).



Right: 'Masonic' earthenware plate from Lodge 211 (Magherafelt, Co. Londonderry, since 1866) and its printed first period mark and registration diamond.

Below: Marks from the plate (left) and the earthenware tureen shown on the cover of this Newsletter (right).



Note: there is an impressed first period mark and harp and crown. Also there is an impressed fractional number 35/78, which is generally held to indicate: week in the year and the year, which gives mid August 1878 - this is in line with the design registration date earlier in the same year.



This February, Pat and I went to our friends in Cavan, Ireland, for a few weeks to look after their cat (Mollie) whilst they went away on Holiday to Madeira. I planned that whilst I was over in Ireland I would spend my first couple of days doing Belleek research in Dublin with a Dubliner friend who would show me around the National Archives. Well, he walked me round the archives so fast that my little legs were unable to keep up with him ... and then we went on to keep an appointment with the Grand Lodge of Ireland.



Rebecca holding a very large earthenware meat platter



Above: Two large earthenware tureens and under plates (one missing its lid),

Right: The copper engraved plate showing the motifs (unregistered design) used on the tureens and meat plates (at the Pottery Museum)

Well, as I handled them I turned them upside down to look at the mark (first period) and noticed that the factory had used the Masonic plate registration diamond on them, which was a bit naughty as the symbols on these larger pieces are not of the registered design but show a different set of Masonic motifs - but who cares! ...if I could have got them out the front door without anybody seeing me, I would have been gone in a flash! What an amazing privilege to be invited to see these wonderful Belleek Masonic earthenware pieces.



A line up of Masonic plates (all with the turquoise rim - decoration No.599)



The symbols are as follows, starting from the top going clockwise:

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9. Chisel: - Together with the Maul, a symbol of education & discipline.
10. 24 inch gauge :- A symbol of the 24 hours in the day, six to serve God, six to work, six to serve a friend and six to rest in.
11. Obelisk: - The monument in the Master's Degree is often made in the form of an Obelisk.
12. Temple of Solomon.
13. All Seeing Eye: - Symbol of the Supreme Being and eternal watchfulness.
14. Blazing Star: - A symbol of prudence and Devine providence.
15. Triangle: - Symbolic of Deity.
16. Harp: - Ireland & part of the Belleek mark.
17. Horn of Plenty or Cornucopia:-Hence the symbol of abundance and as such been adopted as the Jewel of the Stewards of a Lodge, to remind them of their duty to see that the tables are properly furnished at refreshments.
18. Let there be light: - Genesis Chap I.V.3.
19. Mathematical equation, need for precision in Building in stone.
20. Level.
21. Plumb Line
22. Square: - Symbolic of Virtue.
23. Smooth Ashlars:-“Freestone as it comes out of the quarry”. In speculative Freemasonry adopted the Ashlar, in two different states, as symbols in the Apprentice's Degree. The Rough Ashlar, or stone in its rude and unpolished state, is embolic of Man in his natural state; ignorant, uncultivated, vicious. But when educated has exerted its wholesome influence in expanding his intellect. Which under skilful hands of the workmen, has been smoothed, squared and fit for its place in the Building?
24. The Seal of Solomon:-Star of David, most important in Royal Arch Masonry.
25. Key stone: - Essential Strength.
26. Stone Lintels.
27. Corinthian column: - Beauty is the symbolic of the senior Warden. Strength and Wisdom.
28. Euclid: - The 47th proposition of Euclid, better known as the Theorem of Pythagoras. The diagram of this theorem is important in that it is symbolic of the importance placed on the science of Geometry in Freemasonry. Geometry is a science integral to Architecture and therefore to Masonry.
29. King Solomon temple of Truth.
30. Acacia and Grave, Symbol of Immortality.
31. Hermes or Mercury: - Messenger of the Gods in classical mythology. Used as a badge of office for the Deacon of a Lodge.

Lodge minutes regarding Armstrong's Lodge 129, Belleek, Co Fermanagh.

Information received from the Grand Lodge of Ireland. The below is only a small sample of the minutes that I have received from Dublin.

Minutes of Grand Lodge. Lodge 129 - 3rd June 1858

A Memorial duly signed and recommended praying that a Warrant may be granted to Memorialists to hold a Lodge at Belleek in the Co Fermanagh and praying that if Warrant No? [6] be at the disposal of the Grand Lodge that, that No, may be issued to them.

The Board recommend that the Memorial be complied with on payment of the usual fee £7 and that Warrant No. ? be issued to Memorialists. Agreed to (129).

Minutes of Grand Lodge Board of G P [5]. Lodge 129 - 30th April 1866

A letter from Br. Capt. R.W. Jenkins stating that Lodge No. 129 Belleek, in consequence of the impossibility of getting a suitable room in the Town of Belleek wherein to meet, have met in Belleek Fort which is only divided from the Town by a river and bridge, but actually stands in the Co Donegal, and wishing, as W.M, to know if they are right in meeting in Donegal without having obtained the sanction of the G.L.

(Directions were given to inform the writer that the Lodge had no right to change its place of meeting without the permission of the Grand Lodge and refer him to Rule 85 pages 59&60 A.R.)

Minutes of Grand Lodge. Lodge 129 - 2nd October 1905

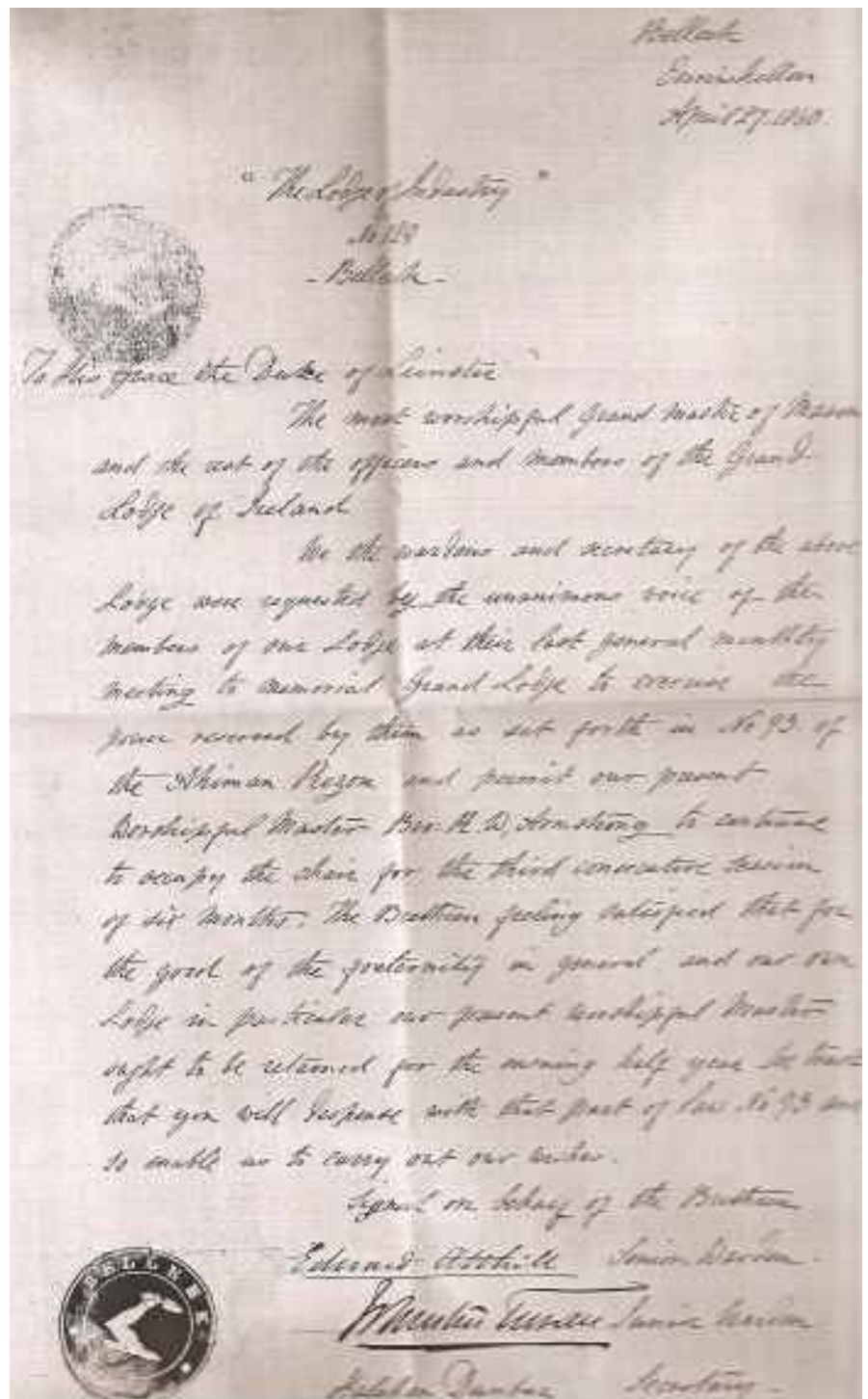
Letter from Lodge 129, Ballyshannon Surrendering the Warrant owing to the paucity of members. The Board recommended that it be received and held in Trust.

Surrendered, 10th October 1905.

This Lodge now is no longer in existence and has been closed for over 100 years.

This letter (right) was sent by the Lodge concerning Armstrong's re-election as Worshipful Master for a further 6 months.

The letter is addressed to His Grace the Duke of Leinster. Signed by Mr Edmund Atthill, Mr Johnston Teevan & Rev Halahan Dunbar.



List of Members to Lodge 129, Belleek and their year of joining

1858 (Founders)

James Benson Tuthill, Robert William Armstrong, Edward Atthill, John G. Irvine

1859

Rev. H. Dunbar, Robert Donaldson, William Irvine, James Johnston, Johnson Teevan, Newcomen Whitlaw, George Thornhill, Thomas Ross, John Reynolds Dickson, Hon. William B. DeMontgomery, James McFadden, John Fred Ormsby, Hugh Tuthill, Henry Dundas, John Caldwell Bloomfield, John Sheehan, Allen Armstrong, Thos. Selton

1860

Thomas Connolly, William McCaffrey, James Hall, Robert Reid, Francis Fawcett, John Alex Wray, Charles Eccles, Henry Woodzell, Wm. Henry Hozier, Jas. Caldwell

1861

William Garnier, Wade Foott, William Chas Rogers, Wier Johnson, Edward George Barton

1862

John James Marcus Cullen, Augustus M. Hayes, John Evans Cullen, Robert Samuel North, Alexander Flaws, Samuel Henry Stephens, William Cockrane

1863

William Baker, Thomas Framble, Edmund S. Walcott, John Rodgers

1864

Guy Wm. Fred L'Estrange, John Brooks, Charles D. George Roe, Robert Wm. Jenkins

1865

Thomas D. Paterson, Thomas Day, Abraham H. Thompson, Thomas H. Dickson, Philip Noyes

1866

Edward Richard Carolin

1867

Gordon Archdall [7], Robert Faucett [7], Robert E. Johnson, George Hamilton

Note. Robert Williams Armstrong also joined the 819 Ederney Lodge in 1875/6

Brian Russell – Member of the Belleek Collectors' Group UK

I would like to thank Rebecca Hayer for the supply of the information from the archives held by the Grand Lodge of Ireland.

Notes

[1] A Degree is a step, Lower (first - Apprentice) to Higher (third - Master) , that signifies a 'condition of knowledge'.

[2] In the Grand Lodge Register of Ireland there is also a record of an Armstrong joining in 1838 and one in 1848, a Robert and a William Robert.

[3] The Bellek Lodge was termed 'The Lodge in Industry'. I believe that there were different types of Lodges.

[4] You could only hold the position of Worshipful Master for two 6 month terms, hence the reason why permission was sought to extent this to a third term.

[5] G P - what this stands for is unknown.

[6] No? – No Warrant issue number had been issued yet.

[7] Name spelling could be suspect.

References

Grand Lodge of Ireland, Dublin – minutes, records and pictures.

Lodge 891 Enniskillen - pictures

Keith Cochrane – CD of Irish Masonic records

Brian Russell – Belleek Registered Designs

THE ASTLEY BROTHERS OF TRENT VALE & BELLEEK

- Pat and Paul Tubb

There are, to the authors' current knowledge, only three publications that provide a list of names for the Staffordshire men who went over to Belleek pottery in its early years. Each of these sources provides a little biographical detail for the men they mention, but they do not always agree amongst themselves in those details and it was to supplement this rather meagre fare that our series of articles was started. The three publications concerned are listed as the first three references at the foot of this article. However, this is not the place to go into the similarities and differences between the three sources, suffice to say that their similarity perhaps points to a common source for all three.

We have now reached the point when the best known of these early pioneers have been written about in recent newsletters and, indeed, in other parts of this newsletter there are updates of some of the information previously published. As the earlier articles have indicated, there are further historical investigations which can be made by more accomplished historians than ourselves and it is our hope that these articles might provide the starting point for some of that research.

We are now going to turn our attention to those whose names and history are even less well known and try to throw some light into their lives in so far as they are recorded in the public documents of their time. As we have often said, there are no census returns available for Ireland until that of 1901 so that we must cast our eyes into Birth, Marriage and Death records for evidence of these men spending time at Belleek and we have been fortunate to have the assistance of Frank Roofe of Enniskillen in searching such records for the immediate county of Fermanagh. As part of his work on our behalf he has identified three Astley children born in Belleek between 1870 and 1874, which fact has hastened our investigation of this family and is the genesis of this next article in the series. None of the three published sources of names, referred to earlier, mentions the Astleys but Fergus Cleary had alerted us to their being at Belleek so that we have been looking out for references to the family for a little while.

Our customary starting point is the 1861 census for Stoke on Trent and its neighbouring towns and there we find the Astley family in Trent Vale, indexed and recorded as Ashley, comprising a widowed mother, Sarah, a laundress; a daughter, Bessey [sic] a dressmaker and three boys, John a schoolmaster with Richard and Joseph both Potters Assistants. It is these two younger men who went over to Belleek and who both had children born there.

Joseph's birth is recorded in the Stoke on Trent registration district on May 2nd 1843 and Richard's in the same district in the third quarter of 1840, although his birth is recorded as Ashley. Both brothers consistently give their place of birth as Trent Vale, which the certificate says is 'near Stoke on Trent'. The boys' father is named as John and their mother's maiden name is Dix. Their father's occupation is simply given as 'Labourer'.

From their later careers it seems probable that they were both working for Goss & Peake at the time of the 1861 census although this is not, of course, recorded in the census return. The Pines book on the life of W H Goss [4] records Joseph Astley as the man who took over from William Wood Gallimore as one of the two modellers at W H Goss when Gallimore went off to America in the 1880s.

That they did, indeed, go to Belleek in the 1860s is born out by the birth of children to both of them whilst they were there. On the 8th of March 1870 John William Astley was born at Belleek to Joseph and Caroline. Later that same year on June 24th Robert Astley was born to Richard and Amelia. Finally, in 1876, on the 2nd of October, Edward Astley was born to Joseph and Caroline.

The brothers had married their wives in England, probably before going to Belleek, although there is nothing in the public records to say that they had not been to Belleek before returning to Stoke to marry. However, it seems to us unlikely that this would have been the case.

Joseph married Caroline Smith on August 7th 1865 at the Catholic Church of Our Lady of the Angels and St Peter in Chains in Hartshill. From the certificate we discover that Caroline was employed as a Burnisher and lived in Raglin Street, Fenton. Joseph's occupation is that of Parian Caster and his residence is given simply as Trent Vale. Both fathers are dead by the time of their children's marriage, John Astley being noted as a labourer and Enoch Smith as a Pot Presser.

The Catholic Church of Our Lady of the Angels and St Peter in Chains, Hartshill Road, Stoke where Joseph Astley and Caroline Smith were married in 1865.



Richard is one of the witnesses to his brother's marriage and he married Amelia Ash in the spring of 1867. Joseph and Caroline had two children born in Stoke on Trent in 1866 and 1868 respectively and they would have accompanied their parents to Belleek prior to the birth of John William there in 1870. If we take into account that the railway reached Belleek in 1867, the dates of marriages and children's births and the expectation that neither brother would have wished to subject their pregnant wife nor a new-born baby to the rigours of the journey then it seems most likely that the Astley brothers arrived in Belleek at some time during the middle months of 1869.

The family they left behind in Trent Vale would have been shattered when the schoolmaster son, John, suffered a debilitating stroke which seems to have happened after the other two sons left for Belleek because Richard hurried back at some point after Robert's birth in July 1870 and he, Amelia and Robert are recorded with the mother, Sarah, and John at Trent Vale Cottages in the 1871 census. The mother is recorded as an 'Ag Lab' rather than a laundress, possibly because agricultural labouring brought in more money now that John was unable to work and Richard had obviously been able to get a job as a potter on his return as this is recorded in the census.

Of course, it may be that life in Belleek did not suit Richard and Amelia and that is why they returned, relatively quickly, to Stoke on Trent. Or, again, Amelia's health may have been poor, as she died in the summer of 1872 back in Stoke. Incidentally, the son, Robert, is recorded in the census as having been born in Ireland, Mayo but, perhaps, we can excuse his grandmother who, as head of the household, would have given the information to the enumerator, for not being thoroughly familiar with the geography of Ireland. For whatever reason, then, Richard and his family did not remain long in Ireland and by the 1881 census he is a widower living in Prospect Row, Stoke on Trent with his son, now said to have been born in Ireland, Belfast, and his disabled brother John. Richard is recorded as a labourer but this may still have been within the pottery industry.

In the same 1881 census we find Joseph and his family, returned from Belleek, living at 60 Berrisford Street, Shelton and he is said to be a Potters Figure Maker. Caroline is with him and their eldest son, Joseph Aloysius is noted as a Potters Parian Caster. The two boys born in Belleek are said simply to have been born in Ireland and there is a second daughter, Mary Bertha, just 9 months old who had been born in Shelton. Given what we have said above, this would indicate that Joseph and the family left Belleek at some point between 1877 and 1880.



60 Berresford Street, Shelton where Joseph and his family were living in 1881 after returning from Belleek. Note the old style sash window still in the house nextdoor.

From the Pines biography of W H Goss [4] we know that Joseph returned to work for Goss and became, as noted above, a favoured employee who succeeded William Wood Gallimore as a senior modeller after Gallimore went off to America, probably in 1884. The Pines call Joseph Astley 'W H Goss's second pair of hands', so closely did they work together.

He is recorded in the 1891 census as a Potters Modeller when the family are living at 46 Seaford Street in Stoke on Trent. The eldest son,

Joseph Aloysius had married Emma Elizabeth Buckley in the autumn of 1883 [the index of marriages calls him Joseph Allaweckus, somewhat phonetically!] and he is a Potters foreman living with wife, four daughters and two sons at 33 Wood Street, Stoke on Trent according to the census. From the Pine biography again we know that Joseph Aloysius' wife, Emma, is the sister of Alice, the wife of Godfrey Goss. Alice, and probably Emma too, had been an employee of W H Goss and Godfrey married her in America.

46 Seaford Street, Shelton where Joseph and his family were living at the time of the 1891 census and where Joseph died in 1900.



33 Wood Street, Stoke where Joseph Aloysius lived with his family in 1891. Note the tiles above the door. Wood Street, off London Road, was renamed Shelburn Street in the 1950s.



Joseph and Caroline's other children are still with them and John William is noted as a Potters Mouldmaker, possibly working with his father at Goss, whilst Edward is a Potters Painter and may also have been at Goss. Both boys are this time correctly given Ireland, Fermanagh as their place of birth.

Richard is not recorded in the 1891 census, having died in early 1886 aged just 45 but his brother John and son Robert are living together at 14 Flash Lane, Stoke on Trent and Robert is working as a brickyard labourer. Robert's birthplace is given simply as Ireland.

Flash Lane, Stoke where John Astley lived in 1891 with Robert, his nephew who had been born in Belleek. Their house, No 14, would have been where the gable end of the Methodist Church now stands.

Joseph Astley is credited by the Pines with being the creator of many of the busts that were the characteristic and profitable part of the W H Goss enterprise at this time. Although the book says that Joseph died in 1902 his actual death certificate gives his date of death as December 29th 1900 and he is certainly missing from the 1901 census in which Caroline is recorded as a widow but still living at 46 Seaford Street. Two of the children are at home with her and Edward is



recorded as a Potter's Gilder while his sister, Mary, is a Potter's Paintress. Edward, indeed, had been the informant of his father's death from Cardiac Paralysis. His occupation had been listed as Potter's Modeller.

John William and his wife, Edith, were living in Clayton in 1901 and he is recorded as having been born in Ireland, Beleek [sic]. Like his father he is a Potters Mouldmaker and they have a son, Bernard, and daughter, Gladys, with them at this time. John William had married Edith Tolefree in the autumn of 1893.

In the same 1901 census Joseph Aloysius has moved to Woodville in Derbyshire and records his occupation as Furnace Stoker at Pottery. The industrial unrest of the 1890s had, according to the Pines, led him to leave W H Goss and find a better post in Longton but it would appear that he was forced to go further afield by the end of the century to find work and so support his large family. At which of the South Derbyshire Potteries he worked we cannot tell from the census return but Sharpe's, Bretby etc are all possibilities.

John, the schoolmaster who suffered a stroke back in the 1860s, is still alive in 1901 and lodging with an Edward Malpass at 10 Hill Street, Stoke on Trent while his nephew, Robert, has now moved apart from John and is recorded as a boarder and general labourer at 23 Newcastle Road, Stoke. It seems ironic that John should have outlived his able bodied brothers by so many years as he did not die until the summer of 1911 aged 72.

References:-

- [1] Marion Langham; "Belleek Irish Porcelain" Quiller Press Ltd; London UK 1993
- [2] Robert Arnold; "Belleek, The Green Stamp Years"
- [3] Irwin & Maxine Steinberg editors; "Belleek" the Jenks Manuscript; Los Angeles Chapter of the Belleek Collectors Society 1992
- [4] Linda & Nicholas Pine "William Henry Goss" Milestone Publications, Portsmouth 1987

Resources available for public searching:-

England & Wales Census returns per ancestry.co.uk
Birth, Marriage and Death Indexes for England & Wales made available by Office for National Statistics.
Birth, Marriage & Death Indexes for Ireland.

WILLIAM WOOLLISCROFT - ITINERANT POTTER?

- Pat and Paul Tubb

As recorded elsewhere in this newsletter, we obtained from Joyce House, Dublin the certificate for Ebenezer Swann's marriage to Eliza Guest in 1871 and this has led us to another potter who went from Stoke on Trent to Belleek, namely William Woolliscroft. The link is that William's daughter, Elizabeth Woolliscroft, is one of the witnesses to Ebenezer and Eliza's wedding. We are aware that Woolliscroft with its variants is a common enough name in the area of the Potteries in England so we set out to discover more about them.

The other witness was a Matthew Henry Pope and he will feature in a further article in the series in due course. Pope, of course, is one of the names given in the three lists of Staffordshire men who went to Belleek in the 1860s. However, just like the Astley brothers, William Woolliscroft is not named in those lists and neither, of course, is his daughter although she may have also worked in the pottery at Belleek as may her brother John, who in later years is recorded in the UK censuses as a mould maker like his father.

Whilst researching the family we have discovered that William and his wife, Mary Anne, had four children born in Scotland as well as two born in Ireland which, added to those born in Stoke on Trent, shows parents willing to take their young family around the British Isles to find work and hence provides the title for this particular article about the family. We cannot be sure at which potteries William worked in Scotland but the four children were born, one in Fife, two in Glasgow and the youngest in Bo'ness. The three youngest of the 'scottish' children were, consecutively, the sixth, seventh and eighth in the family but Jessie, born in the Dysart district of Fife during 1857, was the third and had two older siblings and two younger siblings born in Stoke on Trent. The 'irish' children were the youngest two of the ten children.

William had been born in Hanley in 1830 and was the son of another William and his wife Elizabeth [nee Robson]. Of his siblings only his brother, Joseph, survived into adulthood but we have been unable to ascertain any further information on Joseph during our researches. William married Mary Ann Price at the Chapel of Hanley on August 26th 1850. He is noted as a Potter living in Union Street and Mary Ann has no occupation given but was living in Dale Street. Her father, David Price, is said to be a wheelwright and William's father is called a Farmer.

Their eldest child, Elizabeth, was born the following year on November 7th 1851 and their first son, John, came along in the summer of 1854. The address for the family on Elizabeth's birth certificate is Union Street, Hanley and the father's occupation is recorded as Potter's Mould Maker.

As noted earlier, the family were in Fife for the birth of Jessie in 1857 but back in Stoke on Trent when Ellen was born in the autumn of 1859 followed by William two years later. In 1857 Robert Heron was producing Wemyss Ware from the Fife Pottery in Kircaldy and the Links Pottery [Methven's] was also in production in the town so that William might have worked for one or the other.

At the time of the 1861 census the family are recorded living at 2 Austin Buildings, Well Street in Hanley and the father, William, is a Mould Maker. Interestingly, he seems to have also been recorded in the Scottish census return for Alloa on the same day, where his occupation is that of Moulder & Mould Maker but his relationship to the head of the household is given as Travler [sic] and his birthplace as England. The most likely explanation for this dual recording is that he was, indeed, in Alloa at the time of the census in early April but his wife recorded him in the family home because that was his usual residence when he was not away 'travelling' to find work. There is no way of verifying this surmise and the two entries could refer to two different William Woolliscrofts of the same trade and age but, in our opinion, this is unlikely with a name as relatively uncommon, at least in Scotland, as Woolliscroft. The Alloa Pottery in Kirkgate, Alloa was in production at this time and William may have been investigating the prospects of work in that concern.

Following young William's birth the family moved to Scotland where Joseph was born on January 10th 1864 at 21 Oak Street, Glasgow followed by Mary Anne on April 12th 1866 at 6 Stackpole Place, Glasgow and Grace born on August 13th 1867 at McNair's Lane, North Street, Bo'ness. On the first certificate the father is noted as a journeyman potter but on the final two he is referred to as a Pottery Modeller. There are so many potteries operating in the Glasgow area at this time that it is quite impossible to ascertain at which of them William might have been employed.

But, in Bo'ness, there was only one pottery operating in 1867, the Bo'ness Pottery, which operated from 1766 to 1880 under various owners and using a variety of trading names. Robert Jardine runs a website about the Bo'ness Potteries and has been generous with help for this article. It would appear that, at the time William was working there, the works were being owned and managed by John Marshall and William McNay.

There is no sign of our William and his family in the 1871 census returns for England or Scotland, but we know that they were all over in Fermanagh because their last son, Arthur, was born in Belleek on April 8th 1870 and his sister, Frances, was born there on May 3rd 1871 whilst the oldest daughter, Elizabeth, was witness to Ebenezer Swann's marriage to Eliza Guest on October 2nd 1871. From the dates of birth of the children it would seem likely that William brought his family over to Belleek at some time in 1869 but whether they had moved back to the potteries in England before coming to Ireland or set off from Scotland directly we cannot, at this stage, ascertain. What does seem clear is that William was content to move his young family around the British Isles in search of a livelihood and it is a tribute to him and his wife Mary Ann that all ten children reached adulthood despite their numerous long distance house moves.



1883 O.S. map of Northwood, from the Local Studies section of the City Library in Hanley, showing Prime Street and other streets in the neighbourhood mentioned in this and other articles in the series. 97 and 93 Prime Street no longer exist. (Streets mentioned are underlined in red.)

William's eldest daughter, Elizabeth, married Patrick Stephens on October 11th 1873 at Northwood in Hanley, so the supposition is that the family were back in Hanley by then. They are certainly listed there in the 1881 census living at 97 Prime Street, Northwood, Hanley with seven of the children still living at home with their parents. The three oldest are the missing ones and Elizabeth's marriage has already been noted. However there is no sign of her in the 1881 census nor, indeed, of her husband. Of the seven left at home, Ellen and Grace are noted to be working as Paintresses whilst William and Joseph are Potters. The father is, as usual, recorded as a Potters Mould Maker. Mary Ann has no occupation listed and the two youngest are still 'scholars'.

The other two older children are not far away. John is living at 69 Rose Street, Northwood, Hanley with his wife, Martha [formerly Wilcox] and their five month old daughter Elizabeth. John, like his father, is working as a Potters Mould Maker. Jessie, too, is married to William Wood, a Glost Placer born in Bucknall, but is living even closer, lodging at 93 Prime Street with their two children, Alfred aged 1 and Mary Ann just four months old. At this time Prime Street was on the very edge of the Northwood area of Hanley with lovely views eastwards over the Staffordshire hills.

By the time of the next census in the spring of 1891 William and Mary Ann are still at 97 Prime Street so it would appear that their wandering days are over which indicates that William had found regular employment as a Potter's Mould Maker. As usual there is no indication in the census return as to which pottery company employed him. The sons, Joseph and Arthur, have followed their father as Mould Makers and are both unmarried and still living with their parents. None of the other children remain in the household but most of them are still in the potteries area.

As mentioned earlier Elizabeth married Patrick Stephens in 1873 but thereafter is missing from all UK records indicating that the pair of them probably either went back to Ireland or went even further to America/Canada or Australia/New Zealand. We have found no record of them in the US census returns so far.

John, however, remained in Stoke with his wife Martha and their family of five children. They are living at 91 Victoria Street, Hanley and have Martha's father, Job Wilcox a coalminer, living with them. Job had been born in Somerset and two of John and Martha's children were also noted as having been born near Bath. Why the family had relocated to near Bath in the mid 1880s can only be surmised as Job himself had come to the potteries early in life and married a girl from Penkhull.

Jessie's whereabouts have proved impossible to discover in the 1891 census. Neither she nor William nor the two children are indexed.

Ellen married a William Cooper in the summer of 1886 and is either living in Reservoir Road, Longton or at 68 Bolam Street, Byker, Northumberland. Both possible husbands are working in the pottery industry and without buying a birth certificate for one of the children it is impossible to be certain which Ellen and William Cooper is the right one.

William is much easier to trace as he is lodging at 38 Vincent Street in the house of Thomas Leat. His occupation is given as a Potters Placer. He married Eleanor Healey in the summer of 1900 and they are listed as living at 20 Gate Street, Hanley in the 1901 census from which we also discover that Eleanor was originally from Carlisle in Cumberland and was then employed as a Potter's Thrower. The next brother, Joseph, is living at home with his parents.

Mary Ann married William Smallwood in the summer of 1888 and is living at 16 Victoria Road, Fenton at the time of the census. The couple have no children and William is noted as a Potters Placer whilst Mary Ann is a Dressmaker. From further investigation we have discovered that Mary Ann died in the early part of 1892 and we think it was in connection with the birth of her only child, a daughter Gertrude, who is living with her father and his parents at 42 Victoria Road, Fenton at the time of the 1901 census return.

We have found no sign of Grace in this census but she had married early in 1887 to either a James Bentley or an Edward Barnett. Without buying the marriage certificate or finding Grace on the census index it is impossible to say which man she married.

Arthur, as we have seen, is still at home with his parents in 1891 and, we think, he married a Mary Evans in the autumn of 1895. They are recorded in the 1901 census as living at 12 East View, Hanley with their 3 year old daughter Edith. Arthur is noted as a Potters Mould Maker and was born in Ireland whilst his wife hails from Flintshire.

This just leaves Frances to be accounted for and she is living with her husband, Richard Walters, whom she married in the summer of 1890, at 81 Moston Street, Hanley. She is described as a Dressmaker, like her sister, and Richard is a Potter's Flower Painter and he was born in Fenton. As for Frances, her birthplace is given as Ireland with Belleek crossed out and replaced with what looks like Belfast in another hand altogether. Perhaps the enumerator or the checker had never heard of Belleek and so assumed that Richard had spelt Belfast wrongly!!

Views of 81 Moston Street, Hanley where Frances Walters, born in Belleek, was living at the time of the 1901 census.



To return, finally, to William who had taken his young family over to Belleek in the late 1860s he would, we are sure, have been proud of the success his children made of their lives and would, as time went on, feel that his moving them around to Scotland and Ireland had probably not affected them adversely in the end. He finally settled in Northwood and many of his children stayed close and would have been near enough to console each other when William died on May 17th 1897 aged 67. The informant of the death is his son, Joseph, who by then was living at 91 Victoria Street whilst William's place of death is recorded as 124 Prime Street. Their mother, Mary Ann, had died in the autumn of 1892 aged 64.

If you ever get the chance again to go with Fergus Cleary into the Mould room at Belleek, as we did two summers ago, let your imagination run riot and think which of the old moulds William Woolliscroft or Sam Scarlett might have actually made. If only the moulds could talk, what a tale they might tell!!

Finally we would like to record our thanks to Jill Dixon, of the Woolliscroft One Name Study, for her response to our request for information and to Margaret Wilson from Australia whom we contacted via Rootsweb who also has information on the family. As mentioned in the text, Robert Jardine has helped with information about the Bo'ness Pottery and our own David Reynolds has provided invaluable information regarding the Scottish Pottery companies within which William Woolliscroft may have plied his trade.

Other references used

UK census returns via www.ancestry.com
UK BMD indexes via FreeBMD web site
1883 Ordnance Survey Map of Northwood
Irish BMD indexes from GRO Research Centre, Dublin.
Scottish BMD indexes through www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk

UPDATING EARLIER ARTICLES.

- Pat and Paul Tubb

As time has gone on and we have uncovered further information on the pottery workers about whom we have written in earlier newsletters it has become necessary to write this article to update that information. In some cases the new information corrects earlier assumptions, in other cases it is new and corroborative information that was not available to us at the time we put together the earlier pieces.

As we have said before, we are dependant on what is becoming an army of collaborators who delve into records on our behalf and unearth gems of information for us to include in these articles. The delving goes on and we continue to be grateful for the contributions of Nan Brennan in Chicago, Faith Dressler in Florida and Scott Andersdon with Judi Wells in Pennsylvania each of whom have come up with interesting details from America for those of our subjects whose later careers were on the other side of the pond. In the UK, too, we have been helped by group members and other contacts who respond to our requests for information on various message boards. Then, too, there are those whose help has been garnered by personal contact, one of whom, Frank Roofe of Enniskillen, has been particularly helpful through his local access to records in Fermanagh.

In this article we hope to summarise the new information we have received on the subjects we have covered so far. We will deal with each one in the order in which the articles appeared in previous newsletters and give the reference to the volume and edition for each one.

William HENSHALL [Vol 26/3 Oct 2005]

As mentioned in Pat's account of the 2007 convention, we met up with Agnes Dolan, Patrick Montgomery's great niece, from whom we learnt that, after Patrick Montgomery's death, Rose [nee Henshall] went to Scotland to live with Agnes's family there and died in the Maryhall district of Glasgow on December 16th 1947. The informant is her brother, Ernest, whose address is given as "Gower House", Stone, Staffordshire.

From Agnes we also learned that William's other son, Albert, became a director of Stoke City Football Club and we have found that he actually earned some notoriety when, as Chairman in 1960, he sacked the club's manager, and replaced him with Tony Waddington, who went on to become the club's most successful manager ever.

As for Agnes herself we have recently heard from Patricia McCauley that she passed away on St Patrick's Day this year.

We have also discovered that William Henshall had another son whose birth was registered in the Ballyshannon registration district, but without any name, and whose subsequent death certificate in the same year of 1874 gives his name as William. This infant death and, presumably, burial may also have been a factor in keeping the Henshall family in Belleek at a time when others of the English Potters were leaving for their Staffordshire homes.

William Wood GALLIMORE [Vol 27/1 March 2006]

Our correspondents, Scott Anderson and Judi Wells in Pennsylvania are in the process of writing an article for the Potteries of Trenton Society [POTS] newsletter as a follow up to the one of ours that appeared in that newsletter last August. This will concentrate on the lives of the Gallimore family in New Jersey so we think that we will leave this update until their article is published, when we should be able to give you all a great deal of information from Trenton. This will concentrate on the lives of the Gallimore family in New Jersey so we think that we will leave this update until their article is published, when we hope that it may also be published in this newsletter for all of us to enjoy.

William BROMLEY [Vol 28/2 July 2007]

In some ways this is the most exciting of the new information we have to offer. Firstly we have discovered that William and his wife, Ann, did, as we had surmised, have another son. This is John born at West Parade, Mount Pleasant, Fenton on March 12th 1863. The father registered the birth on April 11th 1863 and described himself as a Parian Manufacturer. This John is, we are sure, the one that E A Barber refers to as coming with his father from Belleek to Ott & Brewer in Trenton in 1883.

William and Ann's daughter Jane, died at Commons in Belleek on June 25th 1869 aged just 14 years. The cause of death on the certificate looks like 'Anasacea' but we are not familiar with any such condition. She is described as a Potter's Daughter and it was her mother who registered the death but, unusually, not until July 16th.

A happier event for the family was the marriage of Fanny to James Mulhearn in the Roman Catholic Chapel of Pettigoe in Co Donegal on April 13th 1874. James is called the son of a farmer of Drimasmiller, Belleek and Fanny is noted as the daughter of a figure maker at the Pottery, Belleek.

We have also discovered John's marriage certificate which shows that on January 22nd 1882 John Bromley an 18 year old Potter living in Belleek married Margaret Moohan of Clyhore in the Roman Catholic Chapel of Ballyshannon in the County of Donegal. We feel sure that these pieces of information confirm our suspicion that the Bromley family remained in Belleek from the 1860s through to the 1880s and, probably, never returned to either Worcester or Stoke on Trent. No further information on John has yet come to light from any census returns in the USA which leads us to suspect that he and Margaret may well have returned to Ireland and may, indeed, have lived in or near Belleek. We need to do further work on this.

Superintendent Registrar's District								
1882 Marriage solemnized at the Roman Catholic Chapel of <i>Ballyshannon</i> in the Registrar's District of <i>Ballyshannon</i> in the County of <i>Donegal</i>								
No.	When Married	Name and Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Residence at the Time of Marriage	Father's Name and Surname	Rank or Profession of Father
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
	22 January 1882	John Bromley	18	Single	Potter	Belleek	William Bromley	Potter
		Margaret Moohan	18	Single	Housewife	Clyhore	Robert Moohan	Surgeon

Married in the Roman Catholic Chapel of *Ballyshannon* according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church by me:

This Marriage was solemnized between us: *John Bromley* and *Margaret Moohan*

In the Presence of us: *James Mulhearn* and *Allen Montgomery*

James Mulhearn P.P.

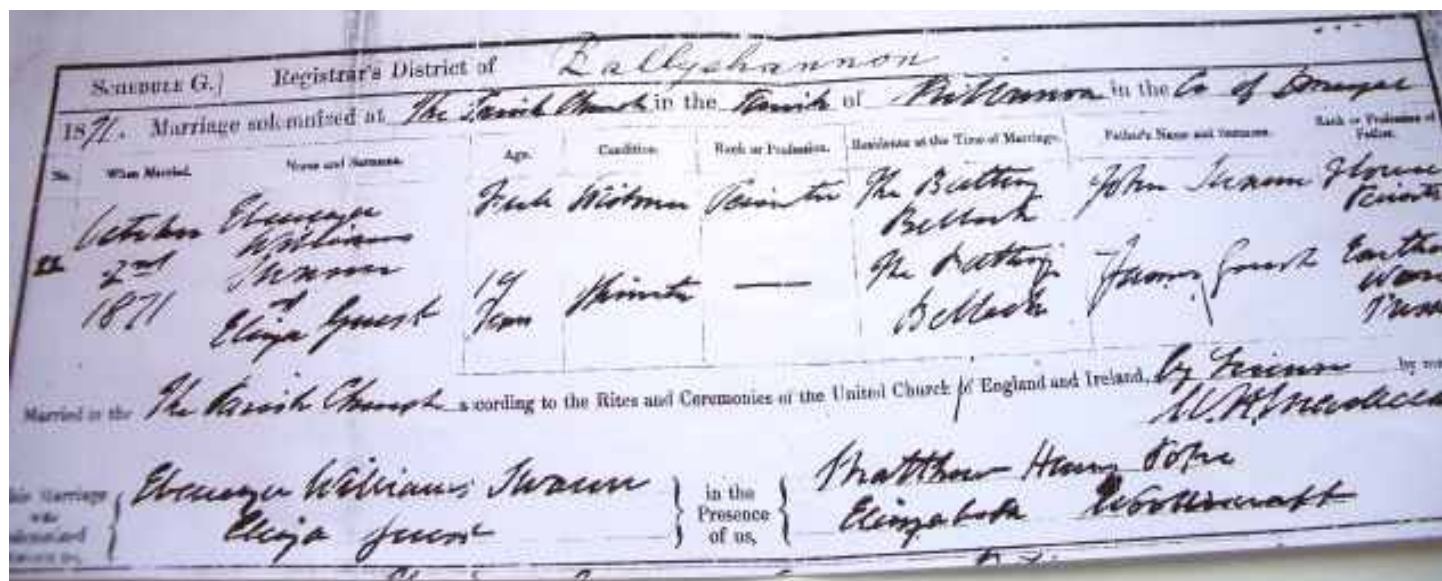
Marriage certificate (1882) of John Bromley and Margaret Moohan

Scott Anderson and Judi Wells have also discovered for us that the younger William Bromley died and was buried in Trenton even before his father died. His death is recorded in a newspaper obituary as occurring on October 9th 1885 aged just 26 years. He is buried in the family plot at Greenwood Cemetery, Trenton NJ. From the same source we discover that the father, William Bromley, died of "potter's consumption".

Scott and Judi have also consulted the Trenton City Directories in the State Library and there they discovered that William Bromley, potter, is listed in 1884, 1886 and 1887. Thereafter his widow, Annie, is listed between 1888 and 1895 during which period she moved from the house at 354 Brunswick Avenue to one at 662 Washington Avenue. From this it seems likely that Annie left Trenton at some time around 1894 or 1895 but we have no inkling as to what her destination was. It is interesting to note that John is not listed in these directories, which may be another indication that he and Margaret returned to Ireland.

Ebenezer Williams SWANN [Vol 28/3 Oct 2007]

On a visit to the research room in Joyce House, Dublin last October we finally discovered the wedding certificate relating to Ebenezer's marriage to Eliza Guest. This took place on October 2nd 1871 at the C of I parish church in Ballyshannon. He is described as a painter and a widower living at The Battery, Belleek and 'of full age'. Eliza is a 19 year old spinster with no occupation listed but also living at The Battery, Belleek. Fergus Cleary, Head of Design at Belleek, tells us that this does not mean they actually lived in the fort, rather they would have been living in one or other of the small cottages which stood alongside the fort on the mound. The witnesses to the marriage were Matthew Henry Pope and Elizabeth Woolliscroft. Pope is listed on all three lists as one of the Staffordshire men who went over to Belleek in the 1860s and Elizabeth has generated the article on her father and his family that appears elsewhere in this newsletter.



Marriage certificate (1871) for Ebenezer Swann and Eliza Guest

We recorded in the earlier article that their second son, another Ebenezer Williams, had been born at 52 Spring Street, Longton in 1874. We have since discovered that, at the time of the 1871 census, this house was occupied by James and Elizabeth Guest and their two young children. Consequently it would appear that, on returning from Belleek, Ebenezer probably lodged with his brother in law and also that, as we surmised but dismissed in our earlier article, he may very well have left his pregnant wife and a young son in the care of her brother and his wife whilst he went off to reconnoitre the work situation in the United States and that he did land at Boston in December 1873 from where he would almost certainly have visited Edward in Sandwich and Frederick in Trenton. The fact that Eliza is recorded as having registered the young Ebenezer's birth probably indicates that, by February 10th 1864, his father had still not returned from this expedition.

Neither Neville Maguire, author of the recent book 'Belleek in Retrospect' nor anyone else, to our knowledge, has found any other item decorated and signed by E W Swann apart from the 'bird' déjeuner set. We think this is probably because, when he went to live in America, he became a decorator of oil lamps, both glass and ceramic. His elder brother, Edward John, worked in the glass company at Sandwich on Cape Cod and his younger brother, Frederick, was also involved in this trade and with ceramic lamps in Trenton. Scott Anderson and Judi Wells, our correspondents in Pennsylvania, have sent us an excerpt from an article highlighting 5 prominent pottery businesses in Trenton and dated April 14th 1890. In common with many American references to the family, even in the census returns, the surname is spelt variously with either one 'N' or two.

The article says:

"In making this review of leading industries in Trenton, special attention is directed to the works of Swann & Whitehead, manufacturers of fine vase [sic], center draft and hanging decorated shades, founts etc., also decorated dinner, tea and toilet sets in china and earthenware. They are the originators and patentees of decorated opal founts. They are the sole owners and patentees of the Trenton Center-Draft Lamp. The goods manufactured by this firm are justly celebrated and always fully up to the growing artistic tastes of the people. Messrs. Swan & Whitehead are both thoroughly practical men, having had many year's experience, and fully understand the wants of their customers. Energetic and industrious, they justly merit the liberal patronage which they receive, and their business is characterised by promptness and reliability."

The Swan & Whitehead Lamp which is now in the possession of our correspondents, Scott & Judi. Right: the whole lamp.



The Swan & Whitehead Lamp: left, some detail from the decoration and the company's logo imprinted on the cover of the oil receptacle.

Brother Frederick is listed frequently in the Trenton City Directories between 1877 and 1899 as an art decorator. In 1882/3 he is a partner in the firm of Swan & Tatler on Rose Street. In 1884 Whitehead joins the company and between 1886 and 1891 the company name is now Swan & Whitehead.

In 1888 they moved their premises from Rose Street to Perrine Street and these premises were expanded again in 1890. In 1892 they have taken on a new partner to become Swan Whitehead & Clark and in the following year Frederick is now a director in the American Lamp and Brass Company which is housed in the same Perrine Street premises. In 1894 American Lamp and Brass move to another new location in the same part of town but, by 1896, Frederick is back at Perrine Street with the Swan & McLewee Manufacturing Company. In 1899 Frederick is listed as president of Moses, Swan & McLewee. Between 1885 and 1887 the directories list him as living across the Delaware in Morrisville, PA which is still, even today, almost a suburb of Trenton. In 1888 and 1889 he is living in Chambersburg, a city now part of Trenton itself.

The cooperation with Tatler links the Swann family to one of the best known 'names' in Trenton decorating history and it would appear that for a few years Frederick was a partner of W H Tatler whose company continued in Trenton until the 1950s. W H Tatler's father, Elijah Tatler, had come to the US from England and is reported to have worked at Copeland's in Stoke as did the Swanns also.

It is obvious that Frederick was involved in a number of enterprises during these twenty plus years and that his part in these undertakings was not inconsiderable. However none of his ventures lasted for any great length of time and, eventually, Moses, Swann & McLewees was in receivership in 1903.

It is clear, too, that Ebenezer was involved in the same trade and worked with or for Frederick in some of these endeavours. As mentioned above, we have not found his name on any piece of decorated American Belleek that has come onto the ebay market in the last year or so and thus it would appear that his decorating talents were employed on other ceramic and glass ware objects. From an obituary in another Trenton newspaper regarding young Ebenezer's drowning in 1891 we learn that he was with his brother and another friend at the time and trying to see how many times he could swim across the canal, but also, at the tail end of the obituary "*The father is a decorator in the employ of Swann & Whitehead*", so he was, effectively, working for his younger brother.

Thanks to Scott and Judi we have also, we think, solved the mystery of Ebenezer's third wife. They have found information from a marriage certificate from Brooklyn in 1902 which gives – Groom; Ebenezer Williams Swann aged 58, widowed. Third marriage, born Staffordshire, England; residence Trenton NJ; father John Swann, mother Eleanor Williams. Bride: Elizabeth Guest aged 56; widowed and this was her second marriage. Maiden name Barton; father John Barton; mother Elizabeth Locker. The marriage took place at St Mary's Church, 230 Classon Avenue, Brooklyn NY. From our researches in England it transpires that this is the Elizabeth Guest with whom Ebenezer left his second wife, Eliza, at 52 Spring Road, Longton whilst he went off to investigate prospects for work in America. As had happened when he married Eliza, he married Elizabeth quite quickly after his earlier wife died, and this time the new wife was his former wife's sister in law.

Elizabeth also had a daughter named Eleanor so that our surmise in the earlier article is, almost certainly, correct and is further supported by the marriage certificate of Elenor Elizabeth Swann, Ebenezer and Eliza's daughter, to William George Rose, a grocer, in Trenton NJ on October 2nd 1900. Both bride and groom are recorded as being born in the US and the marriage seems to have been conducted by a Baptist preacher in the house at 627 Brunswick Avenue. One of the witnesses is John J Swann, Elenor's oldest brother who had been born in Belleek.

In 1899 this snippet appears – "*William Swann, of Brunswick Avenue, a presser, formerly employed at Willett's, has accepted a bench at Morris & Willmore's making jardineres.*" William Morris is reputed to have been trained at Belleek and Francis R Willmore had been trained at Worcester and they were the joint founders of The Columbian Art Pottery Company in Trenton NJ. We hope to provide you all with more information about Morris and Willmore in our offering for the next newsletter.

We have not yet found for certain how, or if, this William is related to Ebenezer, but it is possible that he is a son of Ebenezer's brother, Charles, who is recorded in the 1900 census as a Pottery Printer but not living in Brunswick Avenue.

Finally, the newspaper archives that Scott and Judi have been trawling through on our behalf have unearthed a couple of stories that indicate something of the sort of life which Ebenezer led in Trenton. In 1906 he is listed, along with several other owners who are also in the pottery industry, as being assessed for the paving of Brunswick Avenue. A year earlier he appears in a story as taking on the local dog catcher because Swann's dog was accused of running loose and being captured by the dog catcher. Both Ebenezer and the dog catcher ended up in court and were both fined!!

- *Pat and Paul Tubb*

Belleek and Royal Mail

Postage Stamps

- David Reynolds

Belleek Pottery first received a mention by Royal Mail on 26th July 1994 when a "prestige" book of stamps was issued containing various values of Northern Ireland stamps and between the pages of stamps, interleaving pages of pictures and information about the Province and its industry. A small picture and very brief description of The Belleek Pottery appeared amongst the local industries (right), however there was no Belleek illustrated on any stamp.

It was some years later when Royal Mail issued a new set of four definitive stamps dedicated for use in Northern Ireland and first sold on 6th March 2001, the highest value of the four stamps showing a section of a Belleek basket, the value of 65 pence being the worldwide postage rate for a letter weighing up to 20grams. Various first day covers were produced for use with this stamp issue, and some are illustrated here.

Firstly a private cover with the four stamps and cancelled in the Post Office at Belleek, also franked with the Belleek Pottery mailing label.



The next illustration shows a limited edition cover, and the picture is in fact a printed silk panel on the envelope showing a Chinese tea urn on stand. The Royal Mail postmark is the special cancellation used only on the first day of issue at Enniskillen and depicts a woven basket base.



Next is the same silk cover, but this time signed by Eric Knowles, who many will remember was the UK Group's Guest of Honour and after-dinner speaker at the Gala Banquet on the last night of the BCIS International Convention in Stoke on Trent in 1997.

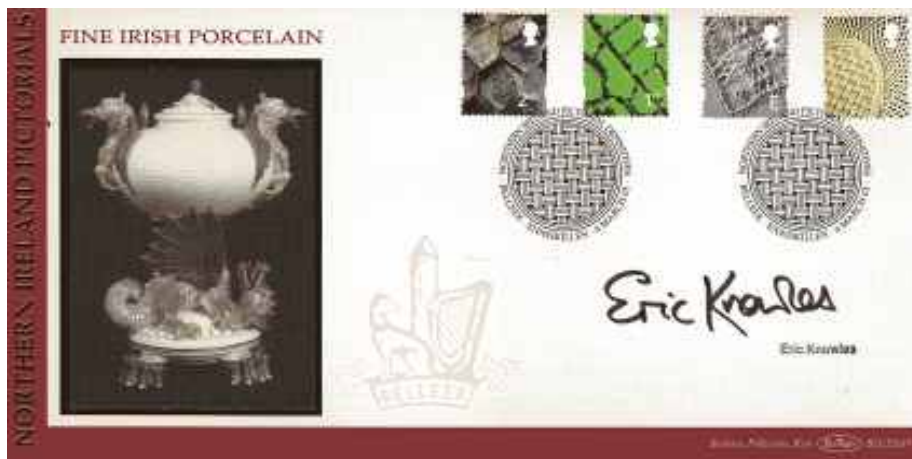
On 14th October 2003 Royal Mail postal rates increased and the Northern Ireland stamps were subjected to price change, the Belleek basket stamp now costing 68 pence.

As with the 2001 issue, a set of stamps was sold in a presentation pack, as illustrated right.

There have been further Royal Mail price increases imposed and the Belleek basket stamp cost 72 pence in 2006, and then in 2007 it became 78 pence.

In November 2006 Royal Mail issued a miniature sheet of four 72 pence stamps, one each from England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, the sheet being themed "Lest we Forget" in connection with Remembrance Day commemoration and remembering the battle of The Somme in 1916. A similar sheet issued in 2007 remembers Passchendaele in 1917 (below right).

A third "Lest we Forget" miniature sheet is due to be issued in November 2008 and which should contain the same four United Kingdom regional stamps, the Belleek basket overseas letter rate stamp seems set to remain in use for the foreseeable future so keeping Belleek very much in prominence on mail sent worldwide from Northern Ireland.



Belleek Black Mark Tea Ware - Part 5

Floral/Plant Continued

-Tony Fox

We have already covered Grass, Finner, Cone and Artichoke from floral/plant design motif group in Part 4. Now in Part 5 we will look at four more patterns in this group; Shamrock, Harp Shamrock, Lily (High) and Low Lily.

Shamrock

This is without doubt the most well known tea ware pattern in the Belleek range and together with baskets epitomises Belleek in respect of the general public. Michael Maguire was reputedly its designer and the modeller was possibly William Gallimore [ref. a], Neville Maguire [ref. i] proposes that Shamrock was introduced mid 1880s. Surprisingly, this is not one of Belleek's registered designs.

The design utilises shamrocks as the main design motif resting on a basket weave background. The shamrocks and handles are hand painted. The tray is oval having multi lobes of different sizes interspaced around the periphery.

Tray (top), No.6, BII

The handles of the teacups, cream, teapot and kettle are formed of shamrock stems bound in groups with coloured reeds. Strap work binding also appears on the teapot and kettle



Dejeuner Set (right) with medium teapot and large Kettle, cream and sugar, and teacups and saucers (low shape), No.6, BII

Belleek has probably made more Shamrock, in the greatest variety of forms, over the longest period than any other pattern. What better emblem than the shamrock to advertise Belleek's Irish pedigree and stir nostalgic emotions overseas. A great marketing symbol that has lasted over many years and fashions.

The overwhelming majority of Shamrock production was hand painted with the familiar medium green alternating with light green leaves and brown stems and handles. However, the green colour combination does vary subtly throughout the periods, Neville Maguire [ref i] has documented some of these variations, and this can in fact make a set difficult to match up. Neville has also been studying the changes in the moulding over time [refs j and k]. The moulding went from intricate and crisp during early periods to a simpler form in later periods, saucers could have 6 sprigs of shamrock on earlier examples, but this was dropped gradually in favour of the normal 3 sprigs we see today. Also, Shamrock has 2 distinct shapes of teacup, low and tall shape, strangely this is the only pattern where the customer had a choice of teacup shapes.

Decoration:

The usual decoration way is 2-tone green, but can also have a gilt rim (No.6 as seen on the previous page). No monograms or crests have been recorded.

Shamrocks are not always green! It appears that during the early days of Shamrock production Belleek experimented with other decoration ways that included gold or black or lusted or cob shamrocks and these can be very striking. These colour ways usually occur on the tall shape, but may also rarely be seen on the low shape. After this initial trying out of other colours, Belleek settled down and stuck mainly to green.

Tea set (top right) with tall shape teacups and saucers, No.2, BII



Tall shape teacups and saucers (right) in a variety of decoration ways, all BI



Shamrock decoration ways on BI & BII (below, left to right):

No.2 Gold shamrocks & rim

No.4 Cob (faded now) shamrocks & gold rim

No.6 Usual green shamrocks & gold rim

No.8 Black shamrocks & gold rim

No.9 Green 2 tone lustre (faded now) shamrocks



Decoration way No.9 has green lustre 2 tone shamrocks [ref f], they suffer in the same way that Grass and other lustre painted decorations do in that the green fades over time through purple to pink and finally might disappear altogether (see Chris Marvell's article on lustre [ref h]). Unusual colour ways with painted shamrocks are usually seen in the first period, not many examples in the second period and usually on the tall shape. In the first and second periods this pattern is occasionally seen unpainted in plain ivory.



Left: Cream No.9 showing very nice unfaded green lustre, BI



Right: Teapot ivory BII



Cup and saucer (above) with strange pink wash, BII

Tea set (left) with green and teal shamrocks and teal rim, no decoration way number, BII (not lustre decoration)

Cup and saucer (right) Cob shamrocks No.4, BI

Kettle (below) and coffee cup and saucer (bottom right) showing the usual green shamrock decoration



Later, in the Art Deco era, Belleek must have felt keen competition from the modern Clarice Cliff genre 'jazz age' ceramics (1928s +) and so they adapted, quite delightfully, the Shamrock blank to a Deco interpretation. These Deco decoration ways appear for the first time in the 1937 catalogue under the section 'Our New Decorations'. Instead of painting the blank with shamrocks, they were replaced with jolly brightly coloured flowers and platinum gilt rim and handle which would have been expensive to produce. Deco painted flowers were introduced in BIII on the low shape.

Tea set (right) with low shape teacups and saucers, No.140, BIII

Shamrock Deco 'flower' decoration ways on BIII (below, left to right):

No.117 Yellow flowers, black/orange centre

No.135 Bright orange flowers, black/green centre

No.140 Orange flowers, green centre

No.153 Mauve flowers, black/orange centre

No.185 Blue flowers, orange/yellow centre



Right, Trios in low shape, No.153 & No.185, BIII

Periods:

All periods. May have a retailers mark.

Forms:

Tray, Kettle (large, medium and small), Teapot (large, medium and small), Cup and saucer (tea low and tea tall shape, moustache, breakfast and coffee), Sugar (both uncovered and covered: large and small), Cream (large, small), Slop bowl (large, medium), Coffee pot (1928 catalogue). The Shamrock pattern has an extensive range of tea ware items and as such there are an adequate number of pieces to comprise a dejeuner set together with accessories, i.e. kettle and slop bowl.



Harp Shamrock

This pattern is readily distinguishable from the Shamrock pattern, although it utilises shamrocks as the main design motif. The shape of the body is trefoil suggesting a shamrock leaf and the background is fluted with a hint of shell. The tray is circular having six large lobes with shell shapes and fluting on to which sprays of hand painted shamrocks rest.

Tray (top) BII and Dejeuner set (below) BII & BIII



The handles on the teacups, cream, teapot and kettle are in form of an Irish harp.

Close-up of handle

Decoration:

Harp shamrock tea ware has only been seen painted in 2 tone green (as per the usual Shamrock pattern) and rarely also with a gilt rim and gilt handle/foot detail (see cup above and set below). Like Shamrock, no monograms or crests have been recorded



Dejeuner set (left), gilded BII

The 1937 catalogue under the section 'Our New Decorations' illustrating Belleek's Deco decorations, shows a Harp Shamrock cup and saucer painted in the same decoration way as Shamrock No.185 (blue flowers), but an actual example of this has not been seen to-date.

Periods:

BII, BIII, BII/ Ireland Mark. May have a retailers mark like Robinson and Cleaver.

Forms:

Tray, Kettle, Teapot, Cup and saucer, Sugar covered (large and medium), Cream (large and medium), Slop bowl. The Harp Shamrock pattern has a reasonable range of tea ware items and as such there are an adequate number of pieces to comprise a dejeuner set together with accessories, i.e. kettle and slop bowl (although these 2 items only seem to have been introduced in BIII).



Lily (High Lily)

This pattern is sometimes referred to as High Lily in order to distinguish it from the Low Lily pattern even though the two design motifs are different. The Corrigan manuscript [ref a] says this is a first period design, but we have found no evidence to support this.

The teacups, cream, sugar and slop bowl are modelled in relief to represent the open flower petals of the water lily. The teapot and kettle are round and are similarly modelled overall with water lily petals. The tray design is circular and suggests flattened lily leaves and has a slightly scalloped effect around the rim. Two different forms of saucer have been recorded, the normal form is modelled as flower petals to match the wares above, but there is also a rarer more refined water lily leaf saucer design to match the tray, the reason why alternative saucer designs exist is unknown. The rarer version of saucer is probably earlier.



Tray (top), ivory, BII

Dejeuner set (right), green tint BII

Tea set (below), unusual green, cob and gilt with rare lily leaf saucer design



The handles on the teacups, cream, teapot and kettle are relatively smooth and finish with an internal curve at the topmost point of attachment to the piece.

Close-up of handle (right)

Decoration:

Ivory, pearl lustre, cob, tinted pink, green, or blue all with and without gilt rim. To-date, an example with a butterscotch tint has not been seen, nor has any with a special or elaborate decoration way, or monogram, crest or armorial.





Tea set (above), pink and gilt



Teacup and saucer (above) with blue tint and usual saucer design

Periods:

BII Only. The Lily pattern is shown only in the 1904 catalogue.

Forms:

Tray, Kettle, Teapot, Cup and saucer (tea and coffee), Sugar (large and small), Cream (large and small), Slop bowl. The Lily pattern has reasonable range of tea ware items and as such there are sufficient pieces to form a dejeuner set together with accessories i.e. kettle and slop bowl.



Teapot (above) ivory (plain)



Kettle (above)



'Cup and tray' (above right)

Coffee cup and saucer (right)

All pearl and cob, BII



Low Lily

The design motif on this pattern is less readily identifiable as resembling a water lily than the Lily pattern. Like the Lily pattern, the Corrigan manuscript [ref a] says this is a first period design, but again we have found no evidence to support this.

The shape of the teacups, cream and sugar are lower than the corresponding pieces of the Lily pattern and rims are quite serrated. The tray is of oblong form and also has an upturned rim.

The other distinguishing feature of this pattern is the handles on the teacups, cream and teapot which are almost of the Ring Handle pattern form, but with strap work binding

Tray (above) BII, Dejeuner set (right) BII & BIII, all pearl lustre and cob



Close-up of handle (left)



There are however some similarities between the Low Lily and Lily patterns.

Look at the form of the trays, each with 6 flattened overlapping water lily leaves. Also the teapot spout details are very alike.



Left: Close-up of Low Lily & Lily tray

Right: Close up of Low Lily & Lily spouts



Decoration:

Pearl, cob, tinted pink, green, or blue all with and without gilt rim. To-date, an example with a butterscotch tint has not been seen, nor has any with a special or elaborate decoration way, or monogram, crest or armorial.

Cup green and gilt (right), Cup and saucer pink tint (below right), Cup and saucer green tint (bottom right). All BII



Periods:

BII and BIII. The Low Lily pattern is shown in the 1904 and 1923 catalogue. The full dejeuner set is absent from the 1928 catalogue, with only the cream and sugar remaining.



Forms:

Tray, Teapot, Cup and saucer (tea only), Sugar and Cream. The Low Lily pattern only has sufficient tea ware items to realise a dejeuner set. To date there is no evidence to indicate that this pattern had a kettle or slop bowl.



Teapot (above left) with blue ribbon to handle, BIII

Cream and sugar (left), ivory, BII

References

- a. Corrigan Manuscript – Campbell and Jenkins
- b. Langham – Belleek Irish Porcelain
- c. Degenhardt – The Complete Collectors Guide and Illustrated Reference, 1st and 2nd editions
- d. Fergus Cleary – The Belleek Pottery Old Photograph Album
- e. Various old Belleek sales catalogues (1904, 1923, 1924, 1928, 1931, 1937).
- f. Bev Marvell – Belleek Painted Numbers, see UK Belleek Collectors' WEB site
- g. Tony Fox – A Rare Third Period Mark, UK Belleek Collectors' Group Newsletter #27/2 Jul 2006
- h. Chris Marvell – The Belleek Lustre project, UK Belleek Collectors' Group Newsletter #27/3 Oct 2006
- i. Neville Maguire – Discovering the Shamrock, Belleek Stoke-on-Trent Convention souvenir programme
- j. Neville Maguire – Painting on Belleek and other Irish porcelain, UK Belleek Collectors' Group Newsletter #28/1 Mar 2007
- k. Neville Maguire – Belleek in Context

Questions raised in previous articles, Part 4

- Grass:
 - Does anybody know of a larger size of tray or one which is oval (with the lobes 'filled in')?
Yes, a 17 by 14 inch tray has been reported since the last Newsletter
- Finner:
 - Are there any non-BII examples?
Yes, since the last newsletter we have seen an example of a cup with a BI mark!
- Cone:
 - What BI examples can we find?

Questions raised from this article Part 5

- Harp Shamrock:
 - What BI examples can we find?
 - Are there any non-BIII examples of the kettle or slop bowl?
 - Can we find an example with a different decoration way?
- Lily (High):
 - Are there any non-BII examples?

Patterns to be covered in Tea ware Part 6

Completion of the Floral/Plant design motif group:

- Thistle
- Ivy
- Thorn

Does anybody have tea ware with a colour/decoration way not listed in these articles? Let us know!

These articles describe what we know TO DATE, please if you have further information get in touch with Tony at research@belleek.org.uk, he would be very grateful to receive it.

WE NEED YOUR COMMENTS & HELP – ANY FEEDBACK WOULD BE GREAT!

...And a **very big thank you** to all those whose pictures I have included.

- Tony

Ebay Auction Report- some exceptional Items of Belleek

Antique Ornate Flower Round Basket

The original owner lived to be over 100 years old and cherished this piece. Its ornate flowers are delicate and beautiful! The glaze and color resembles a piece of polished mother-of pearl, truly breath taking... hair line cracks on the underside on 4 of the loops but all the pieces are in tact. 9 inch round approx 2 inch tall.

Sold for US\$404.62, EBay seller iwasborn2sell
Period unknown



IRISH BELLEEK WOVEN 9" ROUND BOWL, TWO STRANDS IVORY

...a woven two strand, 9" round bowl in ivory. The strands are made to look like roping. Trumpet flowers, vines and leaves.. C1955 'BELLEEK IRELAND' & 'R' in circle....Bowl is in wonderful condition.

Sold for US\$658, EBay seller dansko53
Period unknown

Antique Belleek Ornate Covered Basket

... three strand base instead of the four strands which were brought in later. Identification pad impressed with BELLEEK CO. FERMANAGH. The beautiful array of flowers, leaves and thistles are minutely designed with extensive detail to each enhanced by the smooth and rich glaze... creamy white, with repair on side of the cover and on the rim there is missing edging.

Sold for US\$550, EBay seller goantiqueslive
Period unknown



SUPERB ANTIQUE BELLEEK FRAME 1891-1926

Antique Belleek oval picture or mirror frame decorated in high relief with floral garlands. With 2nd black mark (twice) 1891-1926. Containing original oval bevelled mirror.

Sold for US \$1,026.01
EBay seller scrapdixon
Second Period





Rare Belleek Kneeling Angel Font - 2nd Black

Rare Belleek kneeling angel font ... no chips or cracks ... 6-5/8" high by 4-1/2" long by 2-7/8" wide and has second black mark. Each wing has a pin hole in it for the firing process so that the piece will not crack. Usually when this piece is seen the back foot is raised off of the platform. This happens during the firing process. This foot is firmly on the base.

Sold for US\$900

EBay seller Zel1
Second Period

Rare 1st Black Mark Lithophane Unrecorded

... Belleek Lithophane of the inside of a Cathedral.

In the left hand corner you can see a person walking in amongst the arches. This lithophane has the 1st black mark... I took this lithophane to Ireland with me and had Fergus Cleary at the Belleek Pottery look at it and he told me that it was Belleek and that it was an unrecorded piece. It measures 2 3/4" by 4 1/4", wonderful condition.

Sold for US\$520

EBay seller antiques4u
First Period



IRISH BELLEEK MENU STAND 1ST BLACK MARK - VERY SCARCE!

Belleek table menu stand is quite scarce and highly desirable. Unlike the very fine and translucent porcelain typical of Belleek, this piece appears to be made of earthenware. I base this conclusion on the weight of the piece, which is quite substantial. Still faint, but readable, Filet of Sole and Roast Duck were the entrees of the day, many, many years ago. Excellent condition.

Sold for US\$760

EBay seller jonlr
First Period

A BELLEEK SHELL-FORM PORCELAIN COMPOTE

...with a mermaid and seahorse base, crack, repair, 13"h

Sold for US\$350

EBay seller dawsonandnye
Period unknown





Rare Belleek Griffin On Shell Figurine - 2nd Black

...measures ~7-1/4" high by 6-1/4" wide (measured at the shell) by 5" deep. The griffin's wing tips were broken but they were smoothed off before I had purchased the piece. There is a firing crack on the shell and one of the shell "points" has a rough spot. There is the remnant of the second black mark on the base. The loss of the wing tips is minor as I have only seen this piece without the wings.

Sold for US\$1826.01, EBay seller zel1

Second Period

Belleek 1st ECHINUS CREAM JUG MINT

Delightful 1st period Echinus jug which is unmarked but does have a registration lozenge on the base. Item is mint. However unsure if this jug was a prototype model as you can see that the handle on the jug is not complete.

Sold for £114.35

EBay seller ardlongfield

First Period



RARE Second Period Belleek FF Cup c1920

Exceptionally rare Second Period Free State Army mug. Good green 2nd period mark. We are intrigued by this mug. Suddenly in the 1920s Ireland is divided and a border installed...Did the people at the Belleek factory decide to look for business from this new army? We have'nt seen this mug before and can find no reference to it.

Sold for US\$316.44

EBay seller irish-celt

Second Period

RARE 1ST PERIOD BELLEEK EARTHENWARE FOOD WARMER DISH

..with gravy well. Unusual turquoise decoration, nice 1st Period mark. Hole for filling with hot water to keep warm. 35 cm long x 22.5cm wide x 7cm tall. Some visible crazing to top, unfortunately a restoration to one side underneath the rim not visible from top

Sold for £74, EBay seller brambleauctions

First Period



1st PERIOD BELLEEK EARTHENWARE CHAMBER POT

This Earthenware chamber pot was produced by Belleek during their first black period (1863-1891) making it one of the 1st Grecian transfer decorated products from this now famous factory. Although known as the "First Black Period", this early mark was produced in various other colours including this Brown example. Condition; One base chip as pictured, otherwise no other chips and no cracks. (approx) 8 1/2" diameter, 6" height.

Sold for £213

EBay seller kittys-collectables

First Period

**FABULOUS 2ND PERIOD BELLEEK HAND
PAINTED DESSERT PLATE**

Dessert plate, also monogrammed LMc or McL. 1891-1926. 22.6cm across. Unfortunately this plate has been broken and has an old staple repair. No other chips. Wonderful poppies surrounded by rich gilding. No apparent signature.

Sold for £71

EBay seller bramblesauctions

Second Period



**Antique Irish Belleek porcelain painted plate 2nd
period**

Very unusual antique Belleek plate, 10" in diameter and has the black mark of the 2nd period painted bouquet of yellow roses and green leaves painted in theexcellent condition

Sold for £255, EBay seller ianjeannesuk

Second Period



**Belleek Ruffle Nappy Serving Bowl Pink 2nd
Black 1891**

Part of a prominent large New England estate private collection of antique black mark Belleek, all mint. This nappy serving bowl features deeply fluted/scalloped edge, hand painted twig handle.. 6 3/4" incl. handle x 5 1/4" x 1 1/4".

Sold for US\$510, 2nd for US\$932.50, 3rd US\$597

(Three of these were sold separately)

EBay seller racar1212

Second Period

Editor's Note: these items appear to be examples of a very unusual and hitherto unrecorded handled shallow dish in the Low Lily pattern.





**Rare Belleek antique crested teapot
'Limerick'**

Rare Belleek 2nd period crested tea pot with coat of arms for Limerick, Belleek crested ware is highly sought after and I have not seen this example before,. stands approx., 70mm tip of spout to end of handle approx., 140mm. Condition very good

Sold for £265,

EBay seller ickle_betty

Second Period

Lace Tea pot 4 1/4" H

"Lace" tea pot with lid. Spout does have small chip on lip! Tea pot is very rare!

Sold for US\$405

EBay seller louis44wayne

Second Period



Unusual & Rare Belleek Teapot - 2nd Black

...very unusual & rare Belleek teapot that has no chips or cracks. ...beautiful handpainted designs that almost seem to be oriental. 5" high by 8-3/8" wide incl. spout and handle. The colors are very nice on this piece.

Sold for US\$931.01,

EBay seller zel1

Second Period



Six Unusual Handpainted Belleek Cups & Saucers

Lovely handpainted fine Belleek China with black mark. Six cups 3" tall and 6 Saucers 5 1/8" in diameter. ... beautiful, unusual pattern that I have not seen before. All in excellent condition, some wear to gold rim.

Sold for US\$1225,

EBay seller tavernonthehill

Third Period



Belleek Creamer and Sugar Bowl

Beautiful Belleek creamer and sugar set. Pitcher has a green handle, 4" tall. Sugar is rimmed in green, 2" tall. No chips or cracks

Sold for US\$89.88

EBay seller bobals_wife

Second Period

EARLY BLACK MARK BELLEEK PITCHER RED CELTIC DÉCOR

Very nice small cream pitcher- interesting red cartouche celtic design on front. Measures 2 3/4" in height, excellent condition. Beautiful detail and color!

Sold for US\$725.01

EBay seller gosilvergo

Second Period



Finner Tea Service 14 pc

Bought by an elderly gentleman in New York in 1960...price then was \$3000. Complete and unspoiled, not a chip, hairline or any other fault.

Sold for US \$10,800

EBay seller desertpete4

Second Period



Editor's note: it is extremely rare to see a complete dejeuner set in Finner pattern, hence the high price realised by this set.

Belleek and National Geographic

-David Reynolds

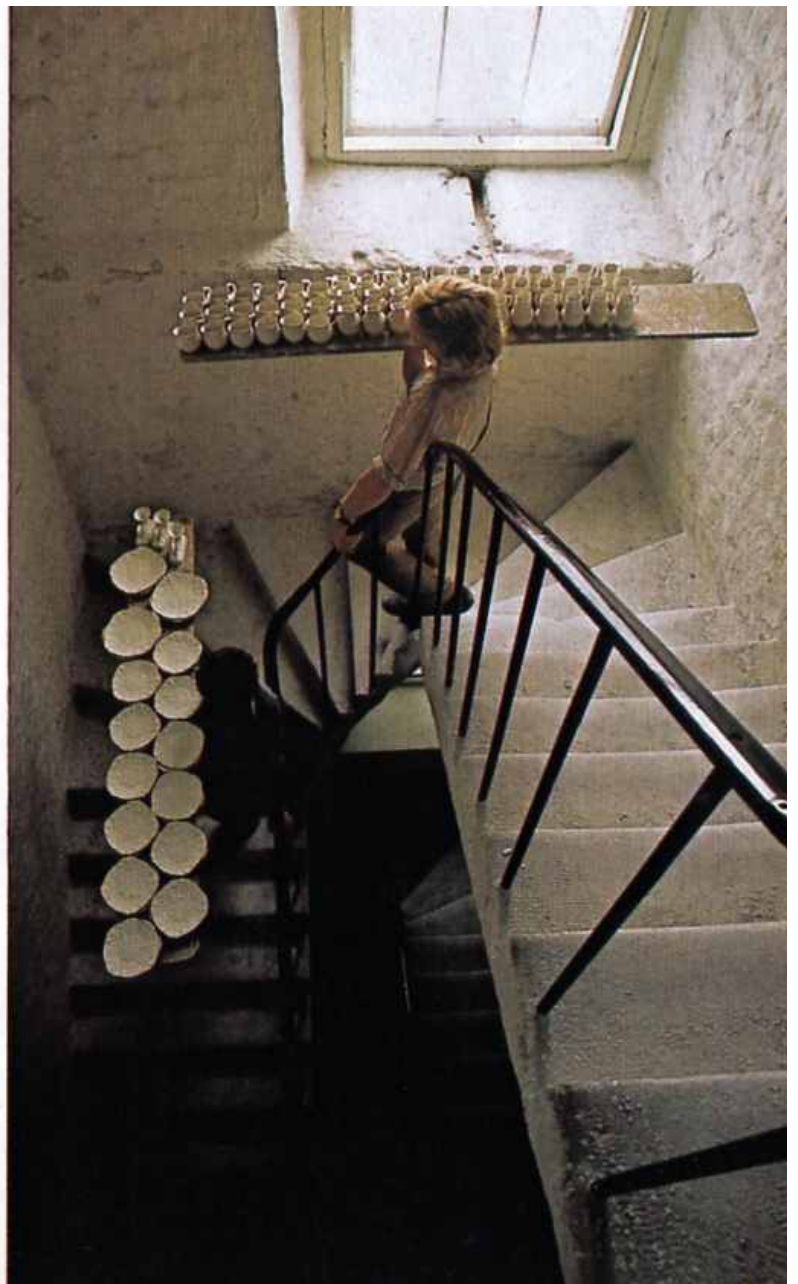
The April 1981 edition of National Geographic contained an extensive item on Northern Ireland, the troubles as they were then and the economy of the Province. The following photograph shows how wares were being carried down the stairs from the work rooms to the kilns at ground floor level. The photograph has a note stating that the Pottery had weathered the recession and political turmoil of the 1970's.

Clearly visible on the lower ware board are Mask plates and three seahorse spills. The upper board is loaded with cream jugs, Thistle, Cleary and Ribbon patterns.



Bunk beds for oysters at Cuan Sea Fisheries on Strangford Lough (left) keep crabs away from baby oysters in lower trays as workers harvest adults. The new oyster farm brightens a somber seafood industry faced with diminishing stocks of prawns, herring, whiting, salmon, and cod.

At Belleek Pottery in County Fermanagh, trays of eggshell-thin china (right) head for a kiln. The 124-year-old firm weathered the recession and political turmoil of the 1970s that drove unemployment in Northern Ireland past 15 percent and pushed British economic subsidies to 1.4 billion dollars a year.



Photograph and article copyright National Geographic 1981.

And Finally... When Green Goes Black

- Glenda and Paul Norman

Here in Rotorua, New Zealand, when we first found a green stamp Belleek with a black or blackish mark we thought it was a clumsy attempt at forging green to black for a better price. Talking with local antique dealers and collectors it is now our belief that our sulphurous atmosphere is to blame.

Rotorua has boiling mud pools, hot water geysers and natural hot springs. With all this thermal activity the city is sometimes unkindly called 'rotten egg town' or worse. Having lived here over twenty five years we can't smell anything. Of course it helps that our home is ten miles out of the city and only a rare Easterly wind brings us the fragrance of Hells Gate thermal area, about a mile away as the odour drifts.

It has long been known that silver goes black in Rotorua. Our family silver, what little there was, is in the custody of distant relatives. Chrome or nickel plating reduces the discolouration but cleaning silver is an unrewarding chore. You learn never to buy used electronic equipment from Rotorua and our cutlery is stainless steel and small mother of pearl spoons are handy.

Birmingham silver 1905 silver pig pincushion and mother of pearl spoons.



Recently we purchased a small collection of six pieces of locally owned Belleek.

The one first black mark and two second black mark are perfect.. The others are all second green, or more correctly started out from the factory that way. Some of the green has degenerated to a total black that is crusty to the touch. The most intriguing is a piece that must have rested half against something for fifty years and is horizontally split green to black.



The six pieces of the local purchase

We have been reluctant to scrape or treat these marks with chemicals. However we have heard of some collectors and dealers putting their Belleek through the dishwasher. We tried with the saucer of the Shamrock Pattern duo and the result was outstanding. The before and after photos show the black has disappeared completely leaving a fresh, sharp green logo. Even the colour of the painted shamrocks has improved. We do not know the chemistry and we are aware that using bleach on earthenware will harm the body of the china. It is tempting to dishwasher clean the other discoloured pieces and to try a second black mark piece where the painted decoration looks dull. We hope to get a more qualified opinion before we risk damaging any more of our collection.

Maybe our experience is not unique and other collectors have found similar colour changes in Belleek marks. It would be interesting to find out if other regions, atmospheres or that the marks may simply change due to age and chemistry of the paints used.

Whatever the result our original thoughts of forgery and tampering with the marks for a fraudulent gain in the value remains a concern. It would be very easy to claim a first green was a third black and simply erasing the circled "R" on 2nd green could have a similar result for the unscrupulous. However we hope we have acquired genuine pieces of green going black and if somewhat oddities at least the change is due to natural causes.



Before; The black before the dishwasher



After; After the dishwasher the green appears.



Half; The piece with the split Black and Green.

The Normans' amazing discovery – how to make a Black mark Green – this only works in special parts of the World, Rotorua, New Zealand being one of them! ...you can even have half of each.

Right: Sulphur and other mineral deposits at Wai-O-Tapu, near Rotorua. Below: Hell's Gate Thermal Area, Rotorua

