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The Spread of Printing on Creamware

Once the process of printing on creamware had become established in Liverpool, it quickly spread to Staffordshire where other potters were keen to decorate their creamware with prints in the same manner as Josiah Wedgwood. Initially the migration of Liverpool craftsmen assisted in this. The printer Henry Baker, mentioned slightingly by Sadler, appears to have gone to Humprey Palmer's pottery in Staffordshire where he became head enameller. The Liverpool engraver and printer, Thomas Rothwell, also went to Staffordshire where, according to Simeon Shaw, he too worked for Palmer.

There are four surviving early creamware pieces signed by Rothwell that may be Palmer products. However, Rothwell sold his signed copper plate engravings to other potteries such as Cockpit Hill in Derby [1]. Equally, there are pieces marked *Palmer Enamel Hanly* that are not signed by Rothwell as engraver.

How the technique of printing on creamware spread to the remoter potteries is not always clear. However, as the anchor rebus of Richard Holdship is present on some printed Cockpit Hill creamware and as he was living in Derby in the 1760s, he seems to have been the source of information there.

The engraver Thomas Radford also worked at Cockpit Hill and some prints signed by him are known [2]. He seems to have left Derby by 1777 and gone to Staffordshire where, according to Simeon Shaw, he produced the Prodigal Son prints for the potter William Greatbach [3].

The Leeds Pottery was printing on its creamware by about 1775 and a considerable variety of patterns were produced [4].

As an indication of how knowledge may have spread, it is to be noted that after Richard Abbey left Liverpool he is recorded at the Delftfield Pothouse in Glasgow in 1781 and in Sunderland in 1784. It is also claimed that he worked at a pottery in Paris.

The technique spread widely and overglaze printing on creamware, whether in black or other monochrome color or with added enamel colors, was to prove to be a very successful product and a huge range of subjects on teawares, dinnerwares, mugs jugs and bowls etc was produced into the nineteenth century.


1.


2.


3.


4.