Add to My Gallery | Create an Album
View PDF

Printing at Liverpool: 3 Creamware

An important aspect of the Sadler and Green workshop was the printing of creamware. This was begun some years after the initial business of printing on delftware tiles had been established and indeed somewhat later than when printing on porcelain had been added. From about 1761, Wedgwood was sending creamware to Liverpool to be printed at the Sadler workshop **[1]**. This grew into a very large business and continued into the period when Green was running the printing business alone.

Other printers, such as Henry Baker, were also printing creamware in Liverpool about this time. However, Sadler had little respect for his capabilities as a printer and wrote to Wedgwood in August 1763: *Baker has printed some Teapots and sold a few. He'll never hurt us..... I know Baker does a deal of pencilled Teapots for the work here and I have seen some pieces of his printing but I am sure the Londoners would buy none of them at any price.* Henry Baker was previously a partner in Wm Reid & Co, where he was described as *an enameller*, a term used at the time to describe someone who decorated with enamels, either painted or printed. He may have been involved in attempts to transfer print on porcelain at Brownlow Hill before printing on Liverpool creamware. Later, he went to Staffordshire.

Richard Abbey who had been apprenticed to Sadler set up his own engraving and printing shop in Clieveland Square in 1773. As well as supplying engraved copper printing plates to other potters, he also printed on creamware blanks that he bought in **[2]**. In 1777 Abbey left Liverpool, not returning until about 1794 when he seems to have used part of a disused copper smelter as a printing shop for a short time.

A somewhat shadowy figure, Joseph Johnson, was also a printer of creamware **[3]**. Although he signed some of these pieces *J Johnson Liverpool* it would seem that he was actually located in the small town of Newburgh, some 15 miles away. He died in 1805.

The Herculaneum Pottery was established on the site of the old copper smelter in 1796 and was a large producer of creamware, much of which was decorated by printing **[4]**. This pottery continued well into the nineteenth century, with some creamware being produced until about 1830, after it had generally become unfashionable. This was probably to satisfy export markets.



1. Wedgwood teapot printed with *The Astrologer* by Sadler and Green



2. Creamware teapot with a print signed *Abbey Liverpool*



3. Creamware jug bearing print of Col Tarleton signed *J Johnson Liverpool*



4. Herculaneum printed creamware plate with impressed mark.