

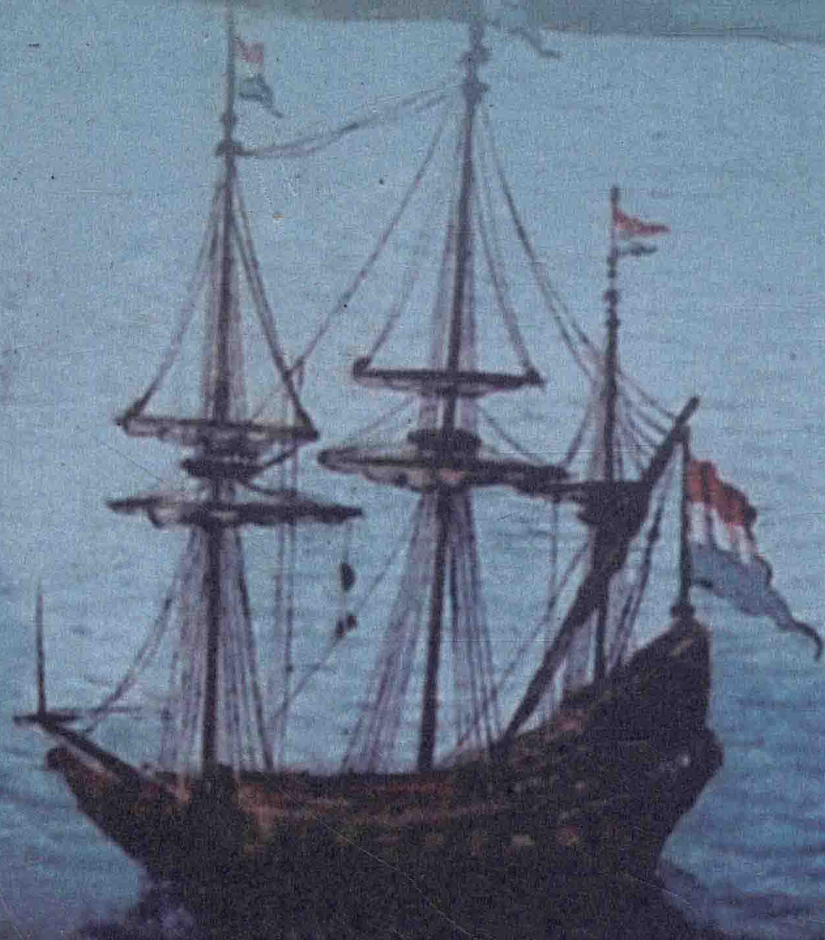
廣州定製

Specially Ordered in Canton
Chinese Armorial Porcelain
of the Qing Dynasty
from the
Guangzhou Museum
Collection

廣州博物館 編著
文物出版社

廣州博物館藏清代中國外銷紋章瓷





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纹章瓷，是中国明清外销瓷器的一种，因瓷器上绘有欧美个人、家族、社团、公司或城市的纹章而得名。它以欧洲来样图案为稿，经中国瓷匠之手绘制烧成，是欧洲纹章艺术与中国制瓷工艺相结合的产物。西方人来华定制纹章瓷始于16世纪上半叶，至18世纪渐趋普遍。这一时期，广州作为世界性的东方大港，是纹章瓷订购、烧制和出口基地。纹章瓷从这里起航，漂洋过海深入葡萄牙、荷兰、英国、法国、瑞典和美国等国家，引领了西方崭新的生活方式和奢华的艺术情趣。


相较于明清时期其他的外销瓷种，纹章瓷具有极高的艺术价值和丰富的历史、文化内涵，是清代中西瓷器贸易和文化交流的重要见证，可谓是外销瓷种中的“官窑”产品。首先，它不像普通贸易瓷那样直接来华采购，而是由西方订购者委托来华贸易的船长或大班等代为定制，一般需等下一个贸易季节或者更长时间才能送到买主手中；因特殊定制、耗时费工、质量上乘，普通纹章瓷价值是大宗贸易瓷的5至25倍，精细者则价高百倍，属于私人定制的“高端产品”。其次，每一件纹章瓷都可通过其所绘纹章，追溯到持有者的家族起源、信仰、重大事件等信息，尤其是两个家族的联姻、受封爵位或从事海外贸易获得重大成就等都会以定制纹章瓷的形式留下时代烙印，这是一般外销商品无法比拟的历史价值。最后，通过识别纹章瓷器上的纹章并结合贸易开展模式和生产周期，能准确判断瓷器的主人和烧制年代，为同时期生产的外销瓷提供极为难得的断代依据。

1757-1842年间，清廷实行“一口通商”，广州成为中国与欧美各国海外贸易的重要口岸城市，也正是在这一背景下，大批的纹章瓷订购和出口才成为可能。作为城市博物馆，我馆从20世纪末开始有计划地征集纹章瓷。纹章瓷的入藏，一是填补我馆馆藏的此项空白，二是进一步丰富反映清代广州口岸历史和中西文化交流的展品。此举得到了广州市委、市政府及市文广新局的大力支持，尤其是原市长陈建华专门划拨1000万元专项经费，用以从海外系统征集外销纹章瓷。经过十多年

的努力，我馆已入藏一千余件此类藏品，从时间上看，包含了18-20世纪初各个时期的典型纹章瓷；从地域上看，涵盖了荷兰、英国、瑞典、美国等纹章瓷主要消费国；从文物器型上看，囊括了盘、碟、碗、杯、瓶等各种类型。更为重要的是，绝大部分甄选入藏的纹章瓷的订购者都是曾参与中国贸易、到过远东地区尤其是广州的各国东印度公司董事、大班、船员，也有许多是各国皇室成员、高官大臣或参与中国事务的要员，这些纹章瓷也成为他们与中国或广州交往的重要见证物。

作为外销商品，数百年来纹章瓷远销海外，国内传世品稀少，长期以来不被国人了解和认识。在征集过程中，我们系统收集国内外相关纹章瓷资料，与英国纹章瓷研究专家Angela Howard女士持续进行学术交流，开展了对这批珍贵新增文物的整理、分类和研究工作，并甄选110余件（套）精品纹章瓷于2015年举办了《辉煌印记——广州博物馆藏清代外销纹章瓷》展览。该书是在此次展览基础上增补更多未能展出的精美纹章瓷和研究材料，收录Angela Howard女士的学术论文和我馆同事的科普文章，集结成帙。一方面，与公众分享我馆纹章瓷征集、收藏和研究的初步成果，吸引更多学者加入纹章瓷研究之列；另一方面，让更多未能亲临观展的人士可以披图浏览、借文鉴赏纹章瓷瑰丽而绝妙的装饰技艺，领略其个性化的创作历程及跌宕起伏的海贸故事，从而加深对广州城市历史文化的认识 and 了解。

欧洲“奢”瓷，广州定制。作为纹章瓷的重要收藏文博机构，我们将不断加强对馆藏纹章瓷的整理、研究、展示力度，继续征集高价值的纹章瓷，进一步挖掘广州作为世界历史文化名城的重要史料和见证物，组织策划不同专题的特色展览，出版高质量的学术著作，让更多民众分享文物保护和利用的新成果。



广州博物馆馆长

2016年11月

Armorial porcelain, as a kind of Chinese exported ceramics in Ming and Qing dynasty, refers to those porcelain wares decorated with the arms and crests of European individuals or institutions. Painted by Chinese craftsmen according to patterns provided by the European customers, armorial porcelain is the successful fusion of European heraldry and Chinese ceramics. Orders for armorial porcelain started in the first half of the 16th century and came into vogue by the 18th century. Canton, as an international port city in the East at that time, was both the base and important place where thousands of Chinese armorial porcelain found their ways across the ocean to Portugal, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, France, Sweden, America and other regions, arousing the trend of a new lifestyle and luxurious artistic taste in the West.

Among all kinds of export porcelain, armorial was of higher artistic value and historical bearings, and serves as the enduring evidence of the trading history and cultural exchange between East and West. Orders for armorial porcelain were usually conducted by the captains and supercargoes of foreign vessels. From the time an order was placed it could take up to two or three years for the porcelain to be finally delivered to its European purchaser. Armorial porcelain was undoubtedly the most expensive and prestigious product of all. The cost might be up to 5 to 25 times as much as bulk cargo wares due to the long production period and high quality. Moreover, by identifying armorial devices painted on the wares, information about the owner or family can be determined, which in turn may reflect the historical or social background of a certain period. Combining the knowledge of China trade, we can fairly accurately date this porcelain, which can further provide an extremely rare basis for dating other export porcelain of the same period.

During the year from 1757 to 1842, when the “single-port policy” was enforced, Canton became a main hub where overseas trade has thrived as never before. It was under this circumstance that armorial porcelain was available in large quantities. In recent years, with Government supports, Guangzhou Museum was able to launch a special project of collecting Chinese armorial porcelain from overseas markets. We feel particularly grateful to Mayor Chen Jianhua, who authorized us a special fund of 10-million which is of great help to bring the related work to fruition. Over the past decade, we’ve successfully collected over a thousand typical pieces,

ranging from 18th to 20th century once ordered by the Netherlands, the Great Britain, Sweden and the US in different shapes, including dishes, plates, bowls, cups and vases. More importantly, these pieces have never been any ordinary table wares. They were mostly ordered by servants of East India Companies or members of European aristocracy and serve as a well-documented evidence of their prominent owners’ special connections with Canton and the China trade.

As export commodities, armorial porcelain wares have mostly been kept by consumers in the west. It is indeed rarely seen and noted in China until recent years. When collecting porcelain items, we also acquired background materials and keep contact with Mrs. Angela Howard, the British expert of armorial porcelain. Documentations in regular academic exchange, classification and research have also been launched, and an exhibition *Emblems of Glory: Chinese Armorial Porcelain of the Qing Dynasty from the Guangzhou Museum Collection* was successfully organized in 2015. This catalog is just based on the exhibition with an extension of items and research materials, including articles by Mrs. Howard and our colleagues. By this catalog, we want to share the fruition of the museum’s preliminary collection and help more people get a better insight of this topic. It can also provide a second chance to those who could not attend the exhibition for appreciating the exhibits and their unique and exciting stories behind, gaining a better understanding of Canton history and culture as well.

In the foreseeable future, we aim to maintain our leading position in armorial porcelain by expanding collection, organizing exhibitions and publishing academic works, in the hope that more evidence and materials of Canton as an international historical and cultural city can be found. At the same time, more people can share the achievements of cultural relics protection and utilization.

Li Minyong
Director of Guangzhou Museum
November, 2016

论文
Articles



From East to West

The Trade in Chinese Armorial Porcelain for the British Market

Angela Howard

What was Chinese Armorial Porcelain? This is a subject which is being explored and elucidated for the first time in a dedicated exhibition with ongoing research by a national public museum in China. Moreover, it is taking place in Guangzhou, the city from which this same porcelain was exported to western markets two centuries ago during the Qing dynasty, mainly during the reigns of the Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong emperors. Armorial porcelain, more than any other type of Export ware, identifies and commemorates the men who played such an important role in this extra-ordinary international trade between Canton and the West.

The word 'armorial', also known as a 'coat of arms', describes a pictorial device or badge which is unique to its owner, and which identifies him. The study and art of this subject is called 'heraldry'. Its original use in medieval times was in battle, when the identity of a person could not be seen inside the armour he wore. Later it evolved into a mark of personal possession and status on numerous decorative objects such as silver, seals, books, glass – and of course porcelain for the dinner or tea table in fashionable houses. A coat of arms was handed down from father to son, and was a symbol of pride and achievement. By understanding the meaning of the objects ('charges') on a shield and their positioning, of the colours, the various subdivisions and every tiny detail, we can read the stories which these armorials reveal. They will tell us of the identity of the owner; whether he is married (a double shield will indicate his wife), and perhaps who his ancestors were, or if he had children. The more complex the armorial, the more we can discover. From this information we can learn about his family, his career, and other important details of his life. Crucially, it will also provide us with firm dates – and we can extend this knowledge to learn much more of the wider history of the China Trade.

Although fine Chinese porcelain had been known in western Europe from at least the fourteenth century and individual pieces were often presented as highly prized and precious gifts to noble and princely collections, it was to be another three centuries before regular sea routes and patterns of trade would be mapped out by the maritime nations of Europe. In 1600 and 1602, first the British and

then the Dutch founded East India Companies which would trade with Asia, bringing back spices, tea and other luxury and exotic goods. Establishing a depot in Batavia, the Dutch were initially the more successful in their enterprise, but towards the end of the century their influence was waning. In England, however, in the aftermath of a disruptive civil war, the 1690s saw the start of a period of commercial development and growing prosperity. Another English East India Company was given a charter which was supported by the newly wealthy and influential merchants of London, who were eager to invest in profitable ventures and aspired to display their prosperous status with luxury items such as personalised table wares ordered from China. It was the catalyst for an unprecedented trade in armorial porcelain with Canton which in Europe would be dominated by the British throughout the eighteenth century.

The porcelain that was brought back to England on the ships of the East India Company was of two main types. The majority comprised the official bulk purchases of the company which included standardised designs in large quantities for the coffee houses and china shops of London, as illustrated by this blue and white cargo¹ of about 1640, recovered from a shipwreck (1). Although such bulk porcelain was additionally useful as ballast, it was always teas which were the principal and most valuable import of the East India Company itself.

Secondly, there was what was known as the Private Trade. These were all the specially commissioned orders, including all armorials, which were ordered individually through the captains and officers of the East India Company who were allowed to transport their own trade goods on the ships. Private Trade accounted for relatively little of the whole porcelain cargo by quantity, but a great deal more by value as these were the expensive, luxury items. Armorial porcelain probably accounted for only about 1-3% of the Private Trade and was generally the finest and most specialised of all the exported porcelain. From relatively few sets of plates and dishes produced at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the range of armorial items grew constantly in sophistication as new styles, shapes and functions were sought. By the end of the century a dinner display included

everything that could possibly be required on a fashionable western dining table, as illustrated by this service of about 1785 for Samuel Chase of Maryland (2). Such services could be upwards of 500 pieces.

Britain was by far the largest importer of armorial wares and during the course of the eighteenth century at least 5,000 armorial services came back to England – more than ten times that of any other country² and the equivalent of two services delivered every week for a century. This related in part to the social structure in Britain. The prosperity of the early to mid eighteenth century was driven by the London merchants which included the bankers, politicians, lawyers and professional men of influence – all of whom were major investors in the ships and cargoes of the East India Company. Their commercial profits allowed them to buy country estates, marry into the older aristocratic families who were anxious for a share of the wealth, and form a new ‘middle class’, eager to acquire luxury items such as armorial porcelain, which would confirm their success and social position.

Let us look at some of the people who bought armorial services, and see how these orders establish a dating system which can be applied to all export porcelain. The first twenty years of the eighteenth century was initially a time of experiment. Only 83 services are recorded between 1695 and 1720 and of these, sixteen families ordered more than one service. They were almost all for officers of the East India Company, and for the London merchants and other investors in the Company. The three colour palettes in this period were Chinese Imari, of which there are thirty services; blue and white, in which fourteen services were made, with the remainder in translucent enamels (*wucai*) and iron-red with gold. These early services, up to the end of the reign of the Kangxi emperor, were all decorated with Chinese motifs. The coat of arms was usually placed within the overall design, often in a small, secondary position on the rim.

Several services were made in the Kangxi reign for East India Governors of India, one of the earliest, about 1703, being for Thomas Pitt, Governor of Madras, an example of which is in the exhibition. It was the first multiple service, consisting of about 200 circular plates and dishes, although no other forms. His colleague, Charles Boone, Governor of Bombay, ordered four services during this Kangxi period, which he took home to England when he left in 1720. Illustrated is a dish from one of these, decorated in Chinese Imari colours with his arms on the rim (3). These were typical designs of the period, almost entirely dependent on Chinese decorative motifs.

The practice of ornamenting the plates with an armorial placed four times round the rim is also a particular style feature of this 1710-1720 period. It can be seen on a plate made for John Horsemonden, a supercargo (merchant) on the East Indiaman *Marlborough* which in 1716 arrived in Canton (4). A very similar service was made for the captain of the same ship, Matthew Martin (4a). There is no doubt that both these services were ordered together while they were in Canton. Martin was a typical example of many captains and officers. He made a fortune from his trading, and when he retired from the East India Company he bought an estate outside London, established himself as a country gentleman and became a member of parliament (politician). Because all the armorial services were part of the Private Trade which was unofficial, there is an almost total lack of primary source material (original paintings, invoices, documents). However, records of sailings to Canton and lists of captains and supercargoes are invaluable in this respect as they provide firm evidence for the date of placing an order.

We can date many armorial services because of the heraldry, but there are two particularly important ones in this regard. The first was made for Thomas Pitt, Baron Londonderry, son of Governor Thomas Pitt of Madras whose Chinese Imari service is mentioned above. Looking at the illustration (5), this is what the armorial tells us:

- In 1717 he marries his wife – she is an heiress so her arms are shown in the centre of his armorial.
- In 1719 he is created a nobleman with title Baron Londonderry, and in 1728 becomes an earl (a title of higher rank). However, the coronet above the shield is that of a baron, not an earl.
- We also know that about 1721-22 the new soft pink enamels (*ruancai*) were introduced. Compare the Londonderry dish with another made with the arms of Lambert (6). This important service is the first which used small touches of the new pink enamel in a few places on the armorial. It has the arms of Sir John Lambert and must have been ordered before 1723, when he died.
- However, the service made for Baron Londonderry has no pink at all, even though it is an extremely prestigious service. Therefore it must have been made after 1719 when he became a baron, and before 1721 when the new enamels became available and would certainly have been used on

became available and would certainly have been used on such a prestigious service.

And because we can precisely date these Londonderry and Lambert services – we can extend the same reasoning to other services in similar style, even when they cannot be dated from their own evidence. It is also clear that the armorial itself is becoming more European in appearance. It is now much bigger and bolder, in the European baroque style, and usually placed in the centre instead of on the rim.

By 1720 the trade with Canton in armorial porcelain was well established. The next twenty years between 1720 and 1740 saw a dramatic increase in the number of table services ordered – from 83 to over 500. Between 1740 and 1760 this figure doubled again to over 1,200 services. The next examples illustrated are decorated in the distinctive ‘iron-red and gold’ style. This was the dominant colour palette of the 1720s. About 130 services were made in this style, all with extremely well painted armorials, and most with Chinese motifs around the rim. It is noticeable that virtually all the armorial services made during the Yongzheng and early Qianlong reigns are of extremely high quality. It is the period when European (baroque) heraldry and Chinese artistry and design combine together to the best advantage.

About 1720, a fine service whose heraldry gives us a great deal of information as well as illustrating key features of baroque design, was made for Sir Dennis Dutry of Putney, a wealthy London merchant and a director of the East India Company (7). Many of the services of 1720s were made for the merchant dynasties, and Dutry had married Mary Reneu, the daughter of a Huguenot wine merchant of Bordeaux. (The influx of Huguenot craftsmen and merchants in the 1680s from religious persecution in France had a significant effect on the life and wealth of London and many ordered armorial services.) The arms on the dish show a smaller shield in the centre of the main armorial, which indicate his marriage to Mary Reneu, an heiress. The tiny shield above this, which has a red hand, shows that he had been made a baronet in 1716 (a hereditary honour that conveys the title ‘Sir’). Dutry died in 1728. The porcelain is painted with translucent and not opaque enamels, so must have been made about 1720.

A service was made about 1725 with the Welsh arms of Wynne

impaling (indicating a marriage) Gosling, with a boldly painted armorial in the prevailing baroque style (8). The service was ordered for Robert Wynne of Garthewin, a lawyer and barrister, who married Diana Gosling of London. She was 20 years old at this time and it was almost certainly their wedding service, often a reason for ordering new tableware.

Also at this time a fine tea and dinner service was made for Peter King, which is of documentary importance to Canton. He was of humble country birth, the son of a grocer in Exeter, but his mother’s cousin (the famous philosopher and enlightenment thinker John Locke) sponsored his education and he became a London lawyer and politician. Through his abilities he rose to high political office and became Lord Chancellor. He was created Baron King of Ockham in May 1725 and his armorial porcelain, which shows his baron’s coronet, must have been ordered immediately afterward (9). It would generally take at least two years between ordering a service from England and its delivery – and we know the very day on which it waited on the dock in Canton, ready to be shipped. It is one of the most important services because it is one of the very few which is mentioned in the official records of the East India Company. A page in the Canton Diary³, dated 20th December 1727, describes leaving the “River of Canton” and gives details of the contents of the Private Cargo belonging to Captain Francis Gostling, commander of the ship *Prince Augustus* which included “5 chests of China ware with Arms of the Lord King and some other Gentlemen” (10). The armorial service for one of these ‘other Gentlemen’ mentioned, was in fact for Lord King’s daughter (9a). The same arms of King are here placed in a diamond form (called a ‘lozenge’ in heraldry) which indicate the armorial borne by an unmarried lady.

It is an indication of the continuing popularity of Chinese wares in England throughout the century, that exactly forty years later Baron King’s youngest son, Thomas King, ordered another service for himself. Thomas inherited the title of Baron (a rank in the nobility) in 1767, and his own armorial service shows this coronet, together with the arms of his wife, Catherine Troye, on a small shield in the centre (indicating she is an heiress). He died in 1779 and thus this second service must have been made between 1767 and 1779. It is another example of close dating through the use of heraldry.

By 1730 the iron-red borders were out of fashion. The establishment of enamelling workshops in Canton and introduction of new technologies, which included the ability to use pencilled black enamel on export porcelain, brought a dramatic change in a new decade in which some of the finest armorial services were produced.

Five sumptuous services made between 1730-35 demonstrate some of these new techniques, with fine geometric diaper-work, rich opaque enamels, and in the centre on three services – a brilliantly painted peacock in shades of turquoise, one of the representative colours of the Yongzheng period. It was also the start of a new fashion for reserves or ‘windows’ on the rim containing scenes, flowers and Chinese birds. The dish illustrated (11) has the arms of Mr Lucy Knightley of Fawsley (one of the historic houses of central England in Northamptonshire) who had married an heiress, Jane Benson in 1725. She died in 1731 which again dates the porcelain to no later than these six years.

During that same period another special service was made for Sir John Elwick (12), a director and investor in the East India Company who died in 1730. This is the earliest dateable example of the use of a landscape design in pencilled black enamel on export porcelain. This new technique had been experimented on for some time, and had been reported by the Jesuit missionary, Father Xavier d’Entrecolles, who toured Jingdezhen in 1722, to be not yet satisfactory. By 1730 it was in production and would prove invaluable on later services of the 1740s and 1750s.

In a decade of exceptional services, what this author considers to be the very finest and important of all British armorial services – both for historical interest and extraordinary Chinese craftsmanship – was made. It has the arms of Lee quartering Astley (a ‘quartering’ indicates an ancestral marriage with an heiress) and uniquely on the rim are detailed scenes of the City of London and the port of Canton – the two most important points at each end of the eighteenth century China Trade route to Europe (13). The service was made before 1734 for Eldred Lancelot Lee of Coton Hall, a country gentleman of Shropshire in the English midlands. He had married Isabella Gough in 1713, when he was 62 and she was 23, and they had eleven children in the eleven years before his death in 1734. How did such an exceptional design come to be ordered? Isabella was the sister of Harry Gough – one of the greatest of the early China Traders, who had first gone to China in 1692 at the age of 11 with his uncle where he was known as the ‘white-haired boy’. He followed a typical career route of supercargo and captain, later becoming a lawyer, member of parliament and chairman of the East India Company. He ordered at least ten armorial services while trading with China, and his influence is evident in the design and order of this unique service for his sister.

The view of the City of London (13a) copied an engraving, which was printed on the title page of *The London Magazine* from 1732 onwards (14). The

view on the porcelain is extremely well detailed and is a testament to the skill of the Chinese painters. It shows the City of London looking across all the boats on the River Thames, with London Bridge on the right. St Paul’s Cathedral and many of the other churches are quite identifiable on the porcelain. The view of the Pearl River and the Canton waterfront (13b) on the other two sides of the plate would not have been difficult for a local painting workshop who would have painted from real life rather than an engraving.

The accession of the Qianlong emperor in 1736 saw an expansion of trade between China and its western trading partners. All the major maritime nations now had factories in Canton (England, Holland, France, Sweden, Denmark) while Portugal and Spain traded from Macao and Manila. Some of these enterprises lasted longer than others, but the demand for armorial wares was, as always, dominated by the British. By the 1740s Canton itself was becoming the centre of enamel decorating as well as trade, and this greatly speeded up production and delivery.

Innovation and fashion were key demands. New shapes and styles of decoration were constantly sought, and widening cultural exchange meant increasing design influence from the European manufactories, particularly Meissen, who in turn incorporated Chinese motifs into their own wares – all of which fanned the flame of ‘Chinamania’ in Europe. The craze for ‘chinoiserie’ dominated fashion and interior design for most of the century, and in particular was the inspiration for the rococo style of the 1740s to 1770s. An interesting service from this period of trade expansion with Europe has the arms of Minchin of Ireland (15). It is extremely finely painted by the Cantonese craftsmen indicating that a special design was sent to China, and demonstrates the transition from baroque to rococo in a thoroughly European style. The rim pattern copies a baroque design introduced by Claude du Pacquier at the Royal Vienna Manufactory (which became widely used on Chinese export porcelain of the 1740-50 period) while the heraldic cartouche is completely rococo in its asymmetrical design.

During the 1740s and 1750s the technique of decoration by fine pencilled black enamel was at the height of its appeal in Europe as it proved ideal for copying the popular mythological engravings and scenic prints, and also for copying bookplates. This was a form of artwork which was readily available and very easy to send to China. These printed bookplates were placed inside the books in a gentleman’s library to show ownership. It is estimated that between 15% and 20% of all armorial services for the British market either

directly copied bookplates, or were derived from them, so they are an extremely important aspect of the designs that were sent to the decorating workshops in Canton.

A dinner service bearing quite a complex armorial was made about 1750 for George Montagu, Earl of Halifax (16), which copies in every fine detail his bookplate (17). The arms show his earl's coronet and supporters (the griffins either side of his shield), as well as the arms of an ancient ancestor, and also the arms of his wife, Anne Richards, who was heiress to an enormous fortune. It is quite remarkable that a Chinese craftsman, who knew nothing of heraldry or of England and its traditions, could reproduce so accurately this arcane armorial 'language'.

About 1740, what is often considered the most important British armorial service, and also the most elaborate and the most expensive, was made in two batches. It is the only service where both the original design and the two invoices still survive (18). The paper design was drawn by the distinguished artist Arthur Devis, and on the back is written 'The Arms of Leake Okeover Esquire, of Okeover, near Ashbourn in the Peak in the County of Staffordshire – a pattern for China plate. Pattern to be returned.' The first invoice, dated 1740, was for 70 plates and 30 dishes – costing the enormous sum of one pound each (the equivalent of about two weeks' wages for the average workman).

Three years later, a very different service was designed for Admiral George Anson. Britain was at war with Spain at the time, and Admiral Anson was sent to the Pacific to capture the Spanish galleons. While there he discovered the breadfruit tree on Tenian Island, which was drawn in a sketchbook by his artist. Returning to England via Canton, he stopped for a month during the trading season and his sailors won praise for fighting a major fire in the city. He was invited to meet the Chinese Viceroy of Canton. The sketch of the breadfruit tree was used for an armorial service for Admiral Anson (the porcelain now owned by the National Trust in England). This design, known as the 'Valentine Pattern', would become famous, entering the Chinese painting repertoire for at least thirty years, and was used extensively on non-armorial export porcelain as well as armorial services. The key features were a central breadfruit tree wrapped round with a flower garland, with a faithful dog on one side and usually two doves on the other side. It represented fond thoughts of home by those overseas. It appeared in many forms on a number of other armorial services – the earlier services with a full central design, but later the design reduced to a small rim vignette. The dish illustrated (19) has the Valentine Pattern in the centre with

the arms on the rim. It was made for the marriage in 1747 of George Cholmondeley, Viscount Malpas and Hester Edwardes. Above the arms is the coronet of a Viscount, one of the five ranks of the English Peerage or aristocracy.⁴ The 'shell and scroll' border design on the dish for Viscount Malpas originated from the new decorative fashion for rococo in Europe, and is usually limited to the period 1747-55. A non-armorial plate illustrates how this too can be dated to this period – firstly by the use of the Valentine Pattern in the centre, and secondly by the shell and scroll border (20).

Another decorative border feature which appears only between about 1755-62 and is thus useful as a dating tool, is the parrot, and parrot/shell motif. Three examples show a progression of design during this period, all with the parrot. The earliest (because of the *bianco-sopra-bianco* white enamelled decoration on the rim) was probably the octagonal plate with the arms of Hotham impaling Morley (21). Unusually this service includes both circular and rectangular dishes and was possibly ordered through Richard Hotham, later a managing owner of a number of ships which traded with Canton. The second has parrots at the side and a shell at the base. This extremely fine service (with a particularly decorative rococo armorial cartouche which was clearly painted from a special one-off design) was made for David Michel of Kingston Russell in Dorset (22), whose two sisters married the two sons of Eldred Lee and Isabella Gough (who had ordered the service with the views of London and Canton). The third plate is from a rare service with Jewish arms. It must have been ordered not long after 1760 as the arms were granted that year to Jacob Franco, a London merchant and second son (denoted by a tiny crescent on the shield, the sign of a second son) of Moses Franco (23). The palm tree on the shield represents a marble monument in the Jewish synagogue in the Italian city of Leghorn. The granting of arms (in other words, being awarded a new coat of arms) was often the reason for ordering an armorial dinner service.

A particular feature of heraldry is a 'pun' or play on words through a form of rebus. This was a visual aid to easy identification and can be recognised on many armorial services. Several examples are illustrated. The first is a fine plate of the Yongzheng reign (24) with Dutch arms, showing that this was a feature common in European heraldry as well. The name Tuineman in Dutch translates to 'man inside an enclosure' – which is exactly what is painted on the shield. Daniel Tuineman of the VOC (Dutch East India Company) had visited Canton on his ship in 1732, thus confirming the date of order. The second is a coffee pot of about 1750 (of an unusual shape introduced first at the Meissen porcelain factory

in Germany, and then sent to China to copy) with the cockerels indicating the name Badcock (25), a family from the west of England. The third is a plate of about 1755 with the arms of Sunnybank (26). The shield has a shining sun above a 'bank' or mound of rocks. All these features aided instant recognition.

By the third quarter of the eighteenth century, porcelain from China was available to a much wider market and its appeal had filtered through all levels of society. It was now bought by country families far distant from London; by professional men such as lawyers and clergymen, and by military and naval officers. Its popularity had also spread into civic society in London – particularly to the Lord Mayors and the 'Livery Companies' of the city. These were the ancient trade guilds or associations. About half of the 98 Lord Mayors of London in the eighteenth century all ordered Chinese armorial porcelain for tableware, and at least 80 services were made for about half of the 77 Livery Companies. Illustrated is the second of three dinner services made about 1775 for the Fishmongers' Company (27), one of the most prestigious and the fourth oldest company in rank. It was founded in 1272 – at the time of the Yuan Dynasty and Kublai Khan.

Even drinking societies and taverns ordered porcelain from China, such was the demand. A punch bowl of about 1760 has a 'pseudo-crest' of a black lion, with an inscription 'John Hayward in Water Lane, Fleet Street' (28). The Black Lion tavern was owned by a livery company, the Ironmongers' Company, and John Hayward was the landlord.

A service with exceptional heraldry (although only two pieces are known) was made about 1770 for Doctor Anthony Askew, a famous classical scholar and a member of the Royal College of Physicians in London (29). The armorial shows his own arms of Askew with seven other ancestors on the left of centre. On the right are the arms (above) of his first wife who died, and also (below) his second wife, together with some of their ancestors. On the reverse of the tea canister is his crest and motto (29a). It is a complex piece of heraldry, which has been painted in remarkably accurate detail by the workshop in Canton. As well as ordering porcelain, his likeness was made in clay by the Chinese craftsman Chitqua, who came to London to work in 1769 and returned to Canton in 1771 (29b).

Armoial services made for the American market are often grouped together with British services since they were also based on British heraldry. They fall into two categories, divided by the American War of Independence (1775-1783) between Britain and its former colony. Before that date a number of services were made for men associated

with the American colonies either in government, the military, or through commerce and plantation ownership. These all had to be ordered through London and brought back on the ships of the East India Company because they held a monopoly on trade with Canton. The taxes levied on imports from China, particularly on tea but also on porcelain, became a prime cause of resentment in the colonies. One of the most extraordinary and unusual services is that with the arms of Alexander, Earl of Stirling (30). It was made about 1770 for William Alexander, who was born in New York and later became a friend of George Washington and a General in his army in 1775 where he fought with distinction, eventually commanding all the North American forces. However, his deceased father had emigrated from Scotland and was a claimant to the ancient aristocratic title of Earl of Stirling. William Alexander returned to Scotland in 1756 to claim the earldom, but was not successful. Nevertheless, he considered himself the rightful heir and always called himself 'General Alexander, Lord Stirling'. His dinner service, ordered in China before the outset of the war, has an earl's coronet and the 'supporters' belonging to the title. It is one of the most exceptional for the American market.

After Independence, porcelain decorated with British coats of arms did not appeal to republican America, and a new form of decoration representing a new identity had to be found. Thus various emblems, which had their origins in heraldry, were used instead – such as a pair of doves instead of a crest, or a floral shield surrounded by a gold-lined cloak on a blue background, often in combination with a monogram, or with gold stars on a plain blue border. Other patriotic themes included the American eagle, or representations of the Great Seal of the United States, and numerous variants on the arms of the State of New York. This general grouping can also be called 'pseudo-armorials' (see note 5).

The first American ship to arrive at Canton was the *Empress of China* in 1784, and one of the first services to be ordered by the supercargo Samuel Shaw was decorated with the Insignia of the Society of Cincinnati (a society of officers who had served in the American army during the Revolutionary War) part of which was given to George Washington and is still today at his home in Virginia. The border of this service was in underglaze blue with butterflies and flowers, and came to be known as the 'Fitzhugh' pattern. The style emerged in several forms between 1780-1800 and was to become enormously popular with both English and American buyers. It combined a standard blue border on porcelain made in Jingdezhen, with gilding and enamelled arms which could be added quickly later in Canton. At least 170 services were made to this design.

The name itself was taken from the Fitzhugh family, a number of whose members had traded with Canton. In the 1780s it was represented by Thomas Fitzhugh, President of the Select Committee of supercargoes in Canton, and later a director of the East India Company. Despite their name being later given to a design used so frequently on armorial wares, the Fitzhugh family never ordered an armorial service themselves. However, other colleagues did – including Daniel Beale who was Prussian Consul⁷ in Canton in 1786, and who founded the firm of Cox and Beale there in 1787, later to become part of the historic international trading company of Jardine Matheson. The Beale service, with crest of a unicorn's head, is illustrated by a hot water dish – a shape which appeared only in services at this time (31). Another extensive service in this Fitzhugh style was made for John Roberts, Chairman of the East India Company, who lived both in Canton and Macao for many years, where he had a Macanese family. The popularity of the underglaze blue Fitzhugh design developed in the early nineteenth century into a range of colours including orange, green, yellow, pink, brown and grey – most of which were employed on American services.

Apart from the Fitzhugh design, the prevailing fashion in Europe for the last twenty years of the eighteenth century had been for the neo-classical designs influenced by the excavations and new discoveries in Rome and Athens. Armorial designs were much simpler and more austere, and the typical colours of the plain border styles were blue and gold. It was in this period that the unique Chadwick service (32) was made – the only service to be painted on the back with the name and place of decoration 'Canton in China, 24th January 1791' (32a). Two separate batches were made: one group with four quarterings, the other with six quarterings – all have the same inscription and date on the back.

However, by the end of the century everything was changing. By the 1790s, the fashion for importing porcelain from China was declining fast, and tablewares could be bought at home from British manufacturers such as Josiah Wedgwood. Import duties were raised to over 100% by the end of the century, while war with France made maritime trade more difficult. This all contributed to the decline of both East India Company imports and, more importantly, the Private Trade.

This caused considerable difficulties in Canton and workshops had little business. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century England had commanded 70% of Europe's trade with China, but whereas 950 British armorial services had been ordered between 1780-1800, only 137 were ordered in the early years of the nineteenth century, which

continued to reduce in number. Almost certainly as a result of the shortage of work, and in an attempt to gain more orders, there was a startling change in the quality and decoration of dinner wares produced, employing innovative Chinese design rather than the old European-inspired ones. These services made in the Jiaqing and early Daoguang reigns combined Chinese flowers and scenes with rich *guangcai* enamels, such as on a bowl from a tea service with the Scottish crest of the Erskine family, with colourful tobacco leaf flowers on a black background (33). Other striking designs of this period included elaborate and highly detailed scenes of Chinese figures on colourful backgrounds, often painted to the edge of the plates without any additional border style; each piece of the service with a different scene. From this new style of decoration comes an exceptional tureen from a service made for the Irish Caulfeild family (34).

Although the American trade continued, these were some of the last designs of high quality that would be made for the British market. A fashion that had lasted for 120 years, and had produced over 5,000 armorial services, was finally coming to a close. This fine porcelain had not only decorated the fashionable tables of Britain with the exquisite artistry of the Chinese craftsmen, but had played a major role in almost two centuries of trade, co-operation and cultural exchange between East and West.

So what is the relevance of Chinese armorial porcelain today? The Private Trade in Export porcelain was by its very nature unofficial: it was virtually never itemised in East India records and logs, and individual trading records are long lost and receipts destroyed. Nor does any record of the procedures of this historic trade exist in China since the goods were exported out of the country. Armorial porcelain, however, was not only the finest quality and most expensive type of Private Trade, but it is the commodity that we can still identify today from its heraldry, recreating the story of this joint human enterprise from the information it reveals. Its ability to precisely date different types of decoration, shapes and styles provides a framework for the dating and examination of all other export porcelain, while bringing into context historic events. Two hundred years after the end of the trade, these same pieces have a new part to play in a modern day co-operation between East and West of shared knowledge and research. It leaves a unique legacy.

Bibliography:

All of the British armorials referred to above can be found illustrated and described in the following two books: