

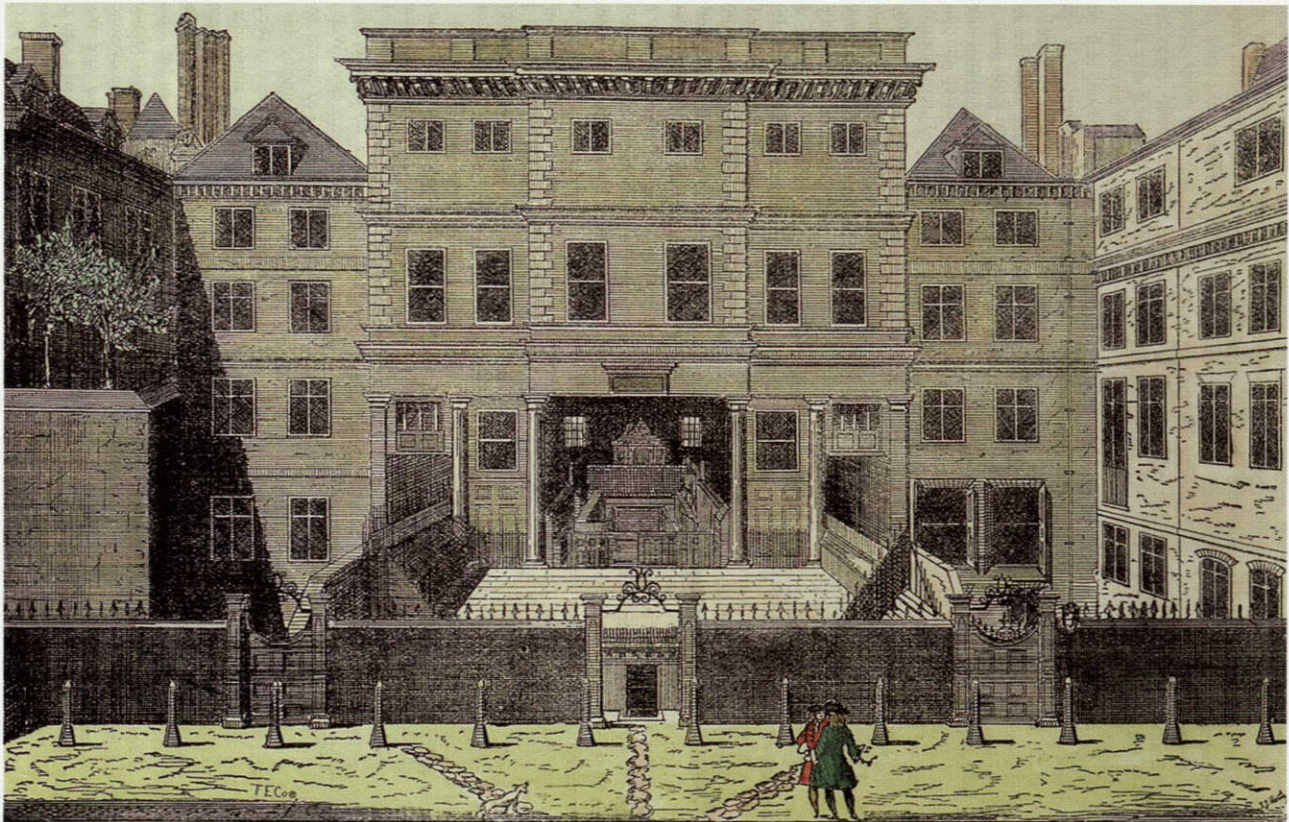
The Theft of China – Ceramic crime in the 18th century

A paper read by Nicholas Panes at the Courtauld Institute on 15th January 2005

“Elizabeth Rhoades was indicted for robbing Samuel Watkinson of divers Earthen Goods, and China Ware, of very good value, out of his Shop in the Strand; the Prisoner was admitted into Mr. Watkinson’s House to be a Lodger, and the Goods being lost, and she removing to another Lodging upon it, the same was search’d, and some of the Goods found upon her on the 7th of November last: She called some Evidence, who declared she had been a very careful honest Woman in times past; and the Prosecutor might be mistaken in the Ware, for that one China Dish might be like another. So the Gentlemen of the Jury were pleased to acquit her.” (1)

The above case transcript from a trial at the Old Bailey,¹ whilst not especially detailed, provides sufficient information for us to learn the name and approximate address of a London chinaman. Furthermore, he was an early practitioner of his trade, as the date of the trial was 7th December 1692. Such a case forms an appropriate introduction to the topic of this paper, The Theft of China – Ceramic Crime in the 18th Century.

The appearance on the internet of the transcripts of Proceedings of the Old Bailey (here illustrated in 1750) provides a fascinating insight into crime and



1. The Old Bailey in 1750.

punishment in the 18th century. Available at www.oldbaileyonline.org, the archive was created by the Universities of Hertfordshire and Sheffield. The records cover no less than 100,000 transcripts from a date of 1674 to 1834.

In this paper are set out some of the more interesting cases involving the theft of ceramics, and the china-men and women who were the victims. Reference will also be made to a case from another Court that throws further light on the last days of the China Club.

Historians often refer to the period from the 1690's (and the aftermath of civil war) up to the 1830's (when England's power in the world was incomparable), as being "the long 18th century". As this so closely matches the availability of the Old Bailey records this paper will follow the same convention.

The Proceedings of the Old Bailey were not official court records but those reported in a commercially produced journal, so some cases are reported in greater detail than others. This was to an extent dependant on their news value. However, keyword searches on the words "china" and "porcelain" etc. do elicit references to many trial reports. Even after eliminating the references to "china" which were references to chinese silks, several hundred cases involving ceramics remained. Searches are also possible by name, and this too produces cases involving both manufacturers and dealers in earthenware and porcelain.

Nobody should expect the Proceedings to be a detailed source of research material into the pots themselves, as the object of a theft is not always central to the reporting of the trial. However, they do provide a glimpse at the items in common usage during the 18th century, contemporary words about how the wares were sold and distributed, and estimates of their market values. They also provide a sense of what it was like to do business in London in the 18th century.

The jurisdiction of the Old Bailey throughout most of the 18th Century was to hear cases arising in the City of London and the county of Middlesex. The first case involving theft of porcelain was in 1685, so only a few years after the first popularisation of tea in England it

appears that many private individuals (in London and Middlesex at least) could afford to own at least some items of Chinese porcelain. However, its value was sufficiently high for porcelain to be the target of theft.

Before dealing with the objects of theft themselves, it is interesting to look at the transcripts in the context of social history. One is drawn towards the idea that a Courtroom is often very like a stage, and witnesses have walk-on, walk-off parts in which, through the few lines they utter, something about their lives and their character can be learned. One such example is that of William Brummitt, a witness in a counterfeiting trial in 1831.² He gave the following evidence about his life as a journeyman potter:

"Cross-examined by MR. CLARKSON.

Q. You are a potter, where do you live?

A. At No. 1, Lambeth-butts- the pottery is in High-street, Lambeth; Mr. Walter is the master – I am a journeyman; I did not work for him at the time I took the prisoners; he keeps a pottery, and makes pots; I do not know that I have worked for him above once before, and that was about two years ago – I am working for him now when I am at work, and I have worked for other masters; I did a day's work for Mr. Walter the day before yesterday – I have been taken into his regular employ since this affair; I have worked for Mr. Denew, in Ferry-street – it is four months ago since I was regularly employed there; I cannot say what month it was- I swear I worked for him in April as a regular servant; I think it is about four months ago that I left him, because he was slack of business – I had a guinea a week; I have a wife.

Q. What did you do for the two months before the 22nd of July, up to that day?

A. I used to get jobs where I could – I worked for Dalton³ and Watts, in High-street, Lambeth; I did several days work for them between the time of my leaving Denew and going to the prisoner's – I had a whole week's work there, and I have worked at getting clay out of barges by the water side; I have supported myself by my own work as a potter – I was not in want of money,

not to be distressed; I had money at home which I had earned by working as a potter”

To us it may seem a hard and uncertain life, but William Brummitt appeared to be content.

The next case involves the theft of Chinese porcelain. It was the prosecution of Frances Skinner and John Barden alias Barton,⁴ who stole china and tea from a ship, the Harrison. The Harrison is listed⁵ as a 460 ton vessel that operated for the East India Company, completing four round trips between 1727 and 1736.

Francis Skinner, and John Barden, alias Barton, of St. Dunstan's Stepney, were indicted for feloniously stealing 36 China Milk-Pots, 20 Dozen of China Saucers, and 300 lb. of Tea, value 150 l. the Goods of the Company of Merchants Trading to the East Indies, the 28th of August.

John Sims depos'd, That while the Ship Harrison lay at Black-Wall, they were plundering of it continually every Day; that John Barton plunder'd within the Ship, and Francis Skinner without in the Lighter; that Barton handed the Goods out to Skinner; and that they employ'd two Boys with Boats, who were continually carrying the Goods ashore, and returning; that he saw Tea taken out of the Ship, &c. every Day; that he saw Skinner break open Chests, and take out a great many Milk-Pots, Tea-Pots, and Saucers.

Nicholas Hugginson depos'd, he was employ'd on Board the Ship, and that he saw the Prisoners take 12 Milk-Pots, and 40 Saucers, and that they threw out Tea in Handkerchiefs, Rags and little Bags; that they swore at him, and said, They did not come on Board the Ship to work, but to Thieve; and that every Finger was a Fish-Hook.

If that dialogue between the ship's crew and the thieves seems rather colourful and unlikely to you, then so it did to the jury. They believed that the evidence was a fabrication so the defendants were acquitted. At times, however, the justice in the 18th century appeared random and unpredictable in its application.

Blackwall was the principal dock used by the East India Company from as early as 1614. Late in the 18th century⁶ the facilities there were described as follows:

“Blackwall is remarkable for the ship-yard and wet-dock made here by John Perry, esq. The dock, which is the most considerable private one in Europe, contains, with the water and embankments, near nineteen acres. It can receive twenty-eight large East Indiamen, and from fifty to sixty ships of smaller burden, with room to transport them from one part of the dock to any other.”

The similar case of theft from the dock by Joseph Lightfoot in 1790⁷ indicated, perhaps unsurprisingly, that theft of porcelain from East India Company was still happening towards the end of the century: (2)



2. Blackwall Docks.

“JOSEPH LIGHTFOOT was indicted for feloniously stealing, on the 27th of January, fifteen Porcelain ware saucers, value 3 s. and three Porcelain ware cups, value 1 s. the goods and chattels of the United Company of Merchants trading to the East Indies . . .

There was evidence during the examination of an employee of the East India Company concerning the organisation of goods at the dockyard and the sorting and cleaning of items prior to being sold:

“Did you ever examine whether any were missing of that kind, and are you sure they belong to the East India Company?”

Miss we cannot; but so far I am certain, that he (the Defendant, Joseph Lightfoot) was employed on the business where these goods were put, that day; I only know for this reason, that they are the Company’s goods, we have a muster box for each ship; and the ships goods are opened and examined by the muster box; this man was on the goods that belong to this ship, in the warehouse which these goods came in, and it is impossible we can tell what is missed, till the ships goods are examined altogether; these goods were gone to be sorted, and he was one of the parties employed in sorting the china, according to the different patterns; and these we were in a hurry to get forward for the sales; and these, which he had in his pocket, were unwashed, consequently could never have been sold, as they were as they came out of the chest.”

(Lightfoot received a sentence of public whipping.)

In 1792, shackled by legislation and annoyed by the price fixing and profiteering of the London china dealers, the East India Company discontinued the bulk importation of Chinese wares. But more of that later!

From the initial references in the Proceedings to the types of wares stolen, bowls seemed to be a particular favourite for the robbers. The case of Mary Reynolds in July 1727 (Case Reference: t17270705-9) is an example:

“Mary Reynolds, of St. Martin’s in the Fields, was indicted for privately stealing 5 China Bowls, value 4 l. on the 23d of June last, the Property of Joseph Durdain.

Elizabeth Harris thus depos’d, As I was sitting in my Shop on the 23d of June, I saw the Prisoner standing idly for some considerable Time near the Prosecutor’s Shop, and at length went in and took the Goods mentioned in the Indictment; and coming out, she threw her Apron over them to conceal them.

Thomas Parker depos’d, That Mr. Harris coming and telling him of the Prisoner’s taking the Goods, he pursued her, and took her with the Goods upon her; which Bowls being produced in Court, the Prosecutor depos’d that they were his Goods, and Thomas Parker depos’d that they were the same which he took from the Prisoner; the Fact being undisputably plain, the Jury found her guilty of the Indictment. Death”.

The reference above to the “prosecutor” is a reference to the victim in this case, Joseph Durdain. Before the introduction of police forces in England individuals were legally responsible for the apprehension and prosecution of criminals, so the victim was often the prosecutor. For those found guilty wide variations in sentencing are reported throughout the Proceedings. This depended on the offence committed, and sometimes the value of goods stolen. Sentencing ranged from death, transportation, public whipping, and in one case “Burnt in the Hand”. A useful explanation of the various offences and punishments is provided on the Old Bailey website.

The death penalty in the above case was because the offence of “privately stealing”, introduced in 1699 for shoplifting, was a capital offence where the value of the goods exceeded 5 shillings; in this case they were stated as being £4 (shown as 4 l.). Women were only occasionally the perpetrators of the thefts reported, but the use of aprons or cloaks to conceal the goods was a popular *modus operandi*!

Plenty of pricing data for ceramic items appears in the transcripts, although descriptions are often brief and the accuracy of valuations may be suspect if the victims saw advantage in overstating the values. This may have been done if there was an opportunity to recover the loss, or if out of vengeance they wished to see the perpetrators receive a more severe sentence. On the other hand cases are seen in which thefts of

even several pounds worth of goods are reduced upon conviction to 4s. 10d, this presumably being a way for juries to exercise mercy and relieve the criminal from the death sentence.

This case from 1819⁸ includes a number of valuations:

JAMES WILSON was indicted for stealing, on the 7th of September, 31 plates, value 7 s.; one soup-ladle, value 18 d. four sauce-ladles, value 1 s.; one tea-cup, value 3 d.; six saucers, value 1 s.; one water-craft, value 3 s.; four cruets, value 16 s., and one tumbler, value 18 d., the goods of Josiah Spode, and William Copeland.

JOSIAH BINION. I am in the employ of Messrs. Josiah Spode and William Copeland. In August last, I observed a woman in Oxford-road exposing china and earthenware for sale. Something about it attracted my notice, and from the conversation I had with her, I was induced to examine the plates, and found my master's name on them – I informed my father.

And Walter Binion, the father, gave evidence that he had been in Josiah Spode's service for 35 years. This particular case was written up at length, and I do commend this to anyone who has time to read those details which are too long to include here.⁹

An earlier case in 1803¹⁰ also concerns theft from Josiah Spode in which William Spode, Josiah's son, gives evidence that confirms he must have had a senior role in his father's London warehouse.

Little pieces of information like that are regularly seen in the evidence, and the facts revealed are sometimes of use to the ceramic researcher. In another case not reproduced here,¹¹ we hear a witness saying that Arthur Minton in 1800 is selling only his brother's manufactured wares. Whilst it was known that he ran the London distribution for Thomas Minton it may not have previously been clear that, at this early stage at least, he did not supplement his shop wares with other manufacturers goods. Finally, in a case published previously,¹² we are able to obtain evidence that Richard Crowther, son of the Bow



3. View of Cheapside.

proprietor John Crowther, was employed by the Bow concern.

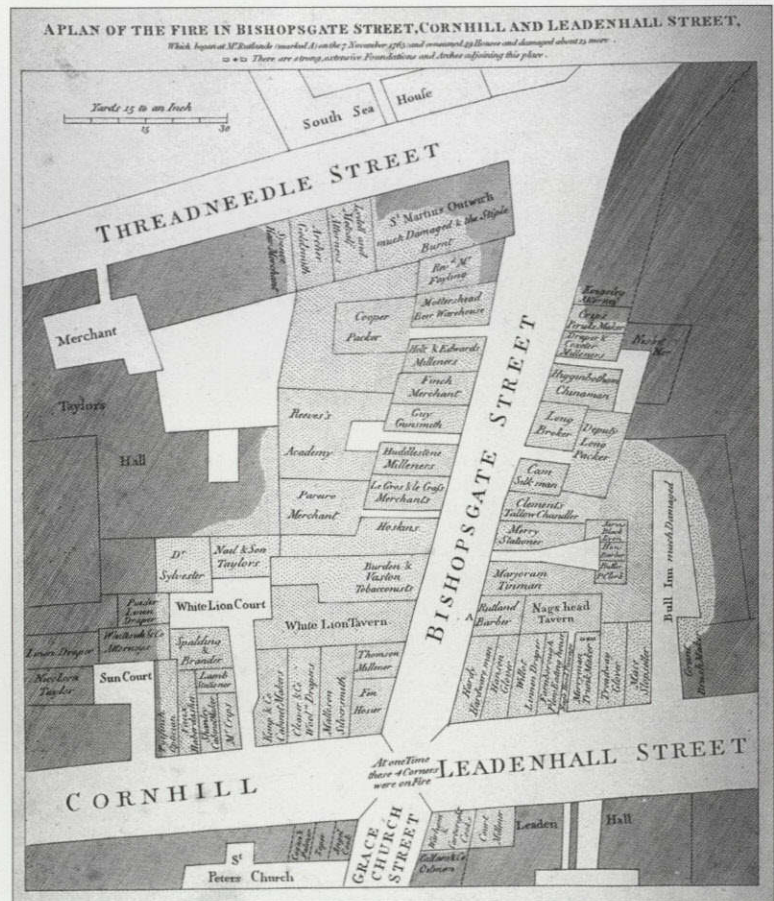
The rest of this paper will focus more closely on specific references to the wares and to the chinamen and women who operated in London. They worked in a City that was quite different from the London of today. Its population even by the 1750s was probably no more than 700,000. In the late 1740s only one bridge spanned the Thames. London Bridge teemed with shops and habitations. Its narrow arches were partly blocked by water wheels that provided the supply of water to the City, and those arches that were open created swirling and hazardous currents for the watermen. A new bridge at Westminster was finally completed in late 1750. During the 1750s reconstruction of London Bridge when the Tudor houses were pulled down the central span was twice burnt down (possibly deliberately), so for a while Westminster in its turn became the only bridge across the Thames. Blackfriars Bridge was not completed until 1769. (3)

Despite some of the idealised contemporary engravings these were not the wide clean streets that we know today. There was no mains drainage, and refuse collection was very hit and miss. Night Scavengers were paid by some parishes to collect rubbish, and night soil men to empty the cesspits in the minority of houses that had them, but all this was quite unreliable, and much rubbish and human waste found its way into the streets. The Museum of London has made quite extensive finds of English and Chinese porcelain in cesspits around Spitalfields so perhaps we should be pleased that the emptying services were inefficient.

Animals were regularly driven through London, even after the 1756 construction of a road specially designed for the drovers. This followed the route of the Marylebone, Euston, and

Pentonville Roads, and Liza Pickard, in her excellent book "Dr. Johnson's London" called it a sort of M25 for animals. Aubrey Toppin noted that a Miss Powell, china woman of Holborn, was the victim of a bull rampaging in her china shop, this language-defining incident being reported in the London Packet of 17th March 1773.

Finally, even after the rebuilding of London following the Great Fire, it was not immune from the regular risks from fire damage. Figure 4 shows an insurance plan of a fire that damaged substantial parts of Bishopsgate, Cornhill, Leadenhall Street, and Threadneedle Street, and destroyed the shop of a chinaman, Mr Higginbotham, whose loss was reported in the Bristol Journal of 16th November 1765.



4. Fireplan of the damaged Bishopsgate, Cornhill, Leadenhall and Threadneedle Streets in 1765. (Courtesy of the Guildhall Library, London).

In the next 1751 case,¹³ comes the first definite reference to English porcelains in the Proceedings, albeit a brief one:

“William Hatton, otherwise Forrister, was indicted for that he in company with David Jones on the 23d of April, between the hours of one and two the dwelling house of David Paul did break and enter, sixty china cups, value twenty shillings, four china saucers, one bow china tea pot, one earthen tea pot, two pickle dishes earthen ware, five fish plates earthen ware, one earthen fish strainer, one show glass and other things, did steal, take, and carry away”

The reference to Bow, although in lower case, is, I think, clear. This case was reported at length, and the theft was from the home of a Mrs Paul who kept a china shop in Whitechapel.¹⁴

The trial of James Bignal in 1755¹⁵ (for early return from transportation) involved a theft from the owner of a china shop in St James Street, a Mr Turner. This is probably the Thomas Turner identified by Buckley from newspaper advertisements in 1741 and 1755.¹⁶ A case which I shall refer to later seems to extend these dates of operation at least until 1762.

“James Bignal, otherwise John Morgan, was indicted for returning from transportation, before the expiration of his time . . .

Turner. On the 9th of June last, the prisoner came to my shop, on the terras in St. James’s-street. I keep a china-shop.

Q. Are you sure this is the man ?

Turner. I have great reason to know him. He had another man with him. He was booted and spurr’d, and had a whip in his hand. He said, he wanted a pair of little pug-dogs to give his child to play with. I shew’d him all I had. I had one odd one; he fix’d particularly upon that, and would have an exact pair of such; and said, none would do but them, and desired I would get them for him, and he would come on Thursday following for them; but before he went away, he robb’d me of 18 guineas.

James Tifford. I was at Mr. Turner’s shop when the prisoner came there to cheapen some pug-dogs. The

prisoner then desired he’d give him a guinea for some silver. Mr. Turner did; then he wanted him to let him have a King Charles’s guinea in change for another. In the mean time his hands were busy in Mr. Turner’s money, so as to take the quantity Mr. Turner has mentioned.

Court. He is not trying for that now. The question now is, was the prisoner at large?

Turner. Yes, my lord, he was. I took him to be a customer. When I found what he had done, I secured him. He offered me three guineas to let him go.

Guilty, Death.

It must have been somewhat galling for Mr Turner to have the theft from him ignored in this case, the only point at hand being whether the man was the same one as had been previously deported. Sadly for porcelain scholars the manufacturer of the Pug Dogs was not identified, there are, of course, several possibilities, both English and European.

Some cases are a little more specific about the wares stolen. A 1765 case¹⁷ refers to the theft of “two china swans, value 1s.”, and could be a reference to the elusive swan models which it is known were made by Bow.

Thomas Turner was the victim of theft again in a 1762 case¹⁸ where products of the Chelsea factory can be definitely identified

John Davis was indicted for stealing eighteen pieces of fine porcelain ware, called Chelsea china, made for nossels of candlesticks to represent a tulip, value 18 s. two other pieces, called Dresden china, made for nossels of candlesticks, value 14 s. four other pieces, called Chelsea china, to represent a white lilly, value 2 s. two other pieces, called Chelsea china, to represent a rose-bud, value 12 d. two other pieces, to represent narcissusses, value 12 d. eight doz. of other pieces to represent orange-flowers, value 16 s. and sundry other pieces, the goods of Thomas Turner, Aug. 23. ~ Acquitted.

Note the price differential – the Chelsea nossels were 1s. each, the Dresden 7s. This case, together with the apparent construction of the delightful Chelsea



5. Chelsea 'Musicians' Candlestick. (Courtesy of Stockspring Antiques, London).

candlestick shown at (5) lends strength to the argument that the "nossels" were sold separately and designed to be replaced. They were no doubt also served to decorate Ormolu candlesticks as well.

By 1760 the most successful of the china dealers had quite significant businesses. One such man was Charles Vere. As Hilary Young identified in his book,¹⁹ Vere was a very prominent dealer for Worcester, Bow, and other manufacturers, selling a wide variety of goods. Charles Vere was apprenticed in 1732 to Charles Savage of the Glass Seller's Company. The date when his own business was started has not been traced, but there is an Old Bailey case concerning his shop in 1743. By 1756 he was clearly an influential customer of Bow. John Bowcock



6. 81 Fleet Street. (Courtesy of the Guildhall Library, London).

mentions an order for "One pair of sauce-boats, Mr. Vere's pattern, 4s". It would be fascinating to know what pattern that was.

The figure shows a later watercolour, dated from the mid 19th century, of a map and globe shop at 81 Fleet St (6). This was the Georgian building previously occupied by Charles Vere.

Vere was the victim of theft featuring three times in cases reported in the Proceedings. In one of these²⁰ he gave the following evidence:

Charles Vere. "I keep a china shop at the corner of Salisbury Court, Fleet Street. The prisoner came to my house, about five in the evening, on the 12th of December last, and asked to see some china punch bowls, and said

that he had taken a coffee-house in the neighbourhood (he appeared dressed like a gentleman) and that he chose to lay out his money with his neighbours. After he had made choice of some china and wine glasses, he wanted to have a bill made out, and said, *I beg you will make me a bill of parcels of the whole, for my name is ready money, which he said over and over. I asked him where he lived, and he said he had taken the Apollo coffee-house, in Apollo Court, near Temple Bar. I asked him his name. He said, my name is John Ambery. Then I wrote the bill. He look'd over it, and said it is very right, please to put a receipt to it, I hope you have charged me at the lowest, send them to the coffee-house, for I shall be at home, and I will pay the servant that brings them, and then went away. I called my servant, James Amson, and bid him carry those things to the Apollo coffee house, and told him that the person who had bought these goods had a very good appearance, but I don't like the situation of the house, so bring the money or the goods again. He put the things into a basket, and in about half an hour's time carried them there: He is in court, and can best tell what was done afterwards.*"

James Amson. I am servant to Mr. Vere, and carried some goods by my master's order to the prisoner's house in Apollo-Court.

Q. What goods?

Amson. There were eight china bowls and several other things, I can't say exactly what quantity; my master order'd me not to leave them without the money, and I said I would not.

Q. Who put them into the basket?

Amson. I did.

Prisoner. I admit the receiving the goods.

Amson. When I came to the prisoner's house I saw him there, I had the bill of parcels and a receipt upon it. The prisoner said, Well, my lad, what have you got? I told him I had brought the china. He said, Well, my lad, set it out, and I will call my wife down. I set it out, and then he asked me to drink a glass of rum or something. I drank a glass and he another, and then he forced another upon me. Said he, See how my vessels are tumbled about, but I have seen better days; it has cost me 400 l. coming

in here. Then his wife came down, and said she liked the china very well. I gave him the bill and he read it over, and she took some of the things away. Then he called for a bottle of wine, and asked me if I would drink again. I refused it, but he swore I should. He then called for a pair of scissors, the boy brought them, and he was going to cut the receipt from the bill, when I asked him what he meant by doing so. Said he, you must go home, and fetch half a dozen china plates, and then I will pay you for the whole.

Q. to prosecutor. Did the prisoner bespeak any china plates of you?

Prosecutor. No; but he said he should want some other china soon.

Amson. I told him I was ordered not to leave the goods without the money, but he said, several times over, "Go your way, and bring the plates." I told him I must either have the money or the goods, and then we got to high words. After I had been there almost an hour he said,

"The goods are deliver'd,

"you can't touch the goods, the goods are mine,

"you may go and tell your master that they are mine."

Q. Did he cut off the receipt?

Amson. No, I would not let him do that, I prevented him; I said I must either have the goods or the money, I will stay with you till I have one of them. When he found I would not go out of the house, he laughed at me, and said, I should have neither; he asked me if I would drink again, and called for more wine, but I would not drink any. He swore I should have neither money nor goods. His wife came down stairs, and said, you must not mind my husband, he is in liquor, come to me in the morning, and bring half a dozen plates about ten o'clock, and you shall have the money for all. Then I went home, and told my master what had happened. My master sent me in the morning, but ordered me to be careful that I was not tricked out of the plates, and not to leave them as I had done the rest. I went, and when I was at the door, there came a strange woman, who said, my mistress is upstairs, I will take them up to her, and she will come down and pay you. I delivered them to her, and she

carried them up. Then the mistress came down, and said, my husband is gone out with two countrymen, to buy some goods, and I expect him to be in every minute. I staid there a good while, till after eleven o'clock, and he not coming, I asked her to let me have the goods again. She said, there was nothing but what her husband had ordered, and I should not touch any thing. Then I asked her to let me have the plates again. She said, it was all by her husband's order, and I should not touch any thing. I came away, and went again two or three times that day, but never could see him.

Q. from prisoner. Was not you offered some money?

Amson. No, I was not.

Q. from prisoner. Did I not order you to bring half a dozen plates the next morning, and say you should have the money?

Amson. Yes, he did tell me so; but I carried the plates the next morning by his wife's order.

Q. from prisoner. Did you deliver my wife a bill?

Amson. I was ready to deliver one, if she would have paid me.

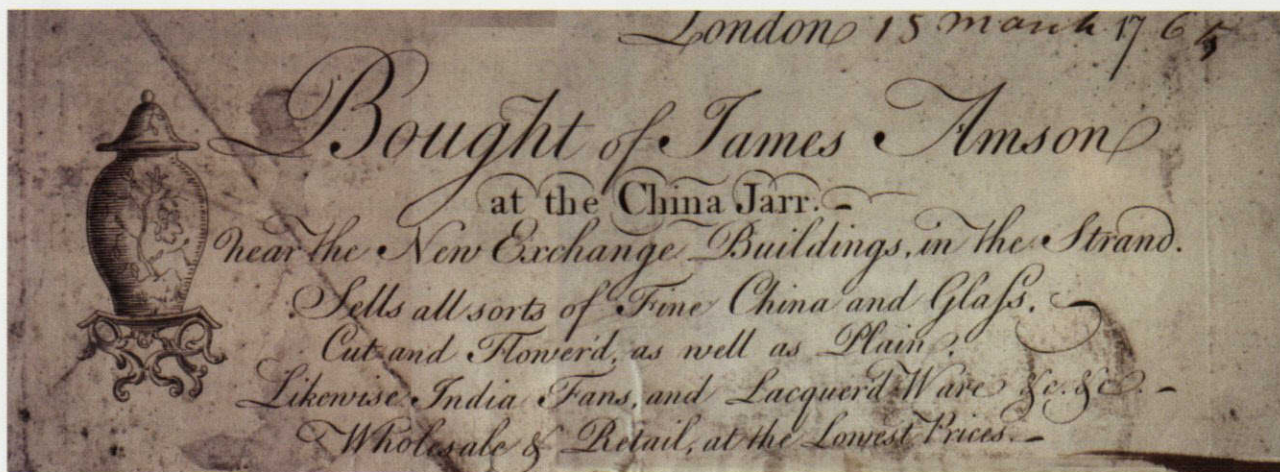
Prisoner's Defence.

This evidence said his master had transported one man for such a fact, and I should be transported, right or wrong. He would not deliver the bill to my wife, and she could not pay him till he did.

A graphic account of the difficulties of collecting money in 18th century London, although James Amson did not cover himself with glory. The accused was found guilty and transported.

Vere continued in business at his shop, the Indian King, at least until 1775. Aubrey Toppin records that by then he was also a Banker. In that year there is a fourth Old Bailey Case involving the theft of a Bill of Exchange directed to Charles Raymond, Bart. John William, Charles Vere, Richard Lowe, and Henry Fletcher, of London, Bankers. I found that there is a Joseph Vere recorded as a banker of Lombard Street in 1740. Also there was a Charles Savage (the name of the person in the Glass Seller's Company to whom Vere was apprenticed) listed in a 1754 directory as a Banker and Merchant. Perhaps the joys of dealing in money rather than china (or both at the same time) were drawn to Charles's attention by those who may have been his mentors.

By the time he died in 1789 Vere was not super rich, but a wealthy man, and apparently childless. In his will he made provision that his wife Martha could include bequests in her own will of a value of up to £4000 and that capital would be raised from the residue of his own estate to fund these. These arrangements were quite enlightened for the 18th century when wives rarely had property of their own and thus did not often make wills, and it is likely that Vere's total estate exceeded £10,000 excluding the value of two houses.



7. James Amson billhead. (Courtesy of Simon Spens).

James Amson, Charles Vere's servant who gave evidence in the case above, is listed as a chinaman in *The Strand* in his own right by 1765 but went bankrupt in 1768. (7) Perhaps his habit of delivering goods without collecting payment continued!

One matter regularly referred to in the cases I have reviewed was the marking of goods. None is especially conclusive, but I set out here some of the references. The first of these occurs in the 1776 trial of Sarah Lazarus²¹ in which evidence is given by the chinaman Henry Woods. Henry Woods was a Freeman and member of the Glass Sellers Company and was a member of the firm Lambden and Woods from 1748 to 1768. He continued to operate in Poultry (a street in the city of London) until his death in 1785 and was described as an eminent chinaman:

"SARAH LAZARUS was indicted for feloniously receiving, well knowing them to have been stolen, four china images, value ten shillings, two china bowls, value ten shillings, two china basons, value two shillings, nineteen china cups, value seven shillings, and nineteen china saucers, value seven shillings; the said goods being parcel of the goods which Saunders Alexander and Lyon Abrahams were convicted at the last sessions of stealing, the property of Henry Woods.

HENRY WOODS sworn.

I live in the Poultry, and am a glass-seller and chinaman; upon the 5th of November my warehouse was broke open by pick-lock keys; my shop is on the opposite side of the way; I lost a great number of bowls, basons, cups, and saucers; I lost some figures of the English manufactory: I have some of them here that were found by Mr. Phillips and Mr. Jackson; I have looked at them, and believe them all to be my property; one in particular has my own mark upon it: these are part of the goods that were stolen by Alexander Abrahams."

The word "images" appears to have been interchangeable with the word "figures". It is tantalising not to know which "English manufactory" is referred to, although it is probably Derby. Bow had recently ceased trading although stock might still have

been held so it could still be a candidate. Bow figures display a wide variety of over-glaze painted marks, some having several different marks on otherwise similar pieces. Although these have usually been attributed to painters the possibility that they were applied as identifying marks by or on behalf of the dealers (or perhaps more likely to identify a specific Bow sales warehouse) should not be discounted.

There is another case involving Charles Vere²² that refers to the practice of dealers marking their goods. He says *"This is my Bason; here is my own Hand-writing upon it; I am sure I had it in my Shop that Day"*.

Another chinaman, John Moore, gave evidence in 1777²³ having been the victim of quite a large theft:

"... I missed the things mentioned in the indictment out of my shop (repeating them) they have my shop mark upon them; they were found at Mrs. Ransford's, Green-street, Leicester-fields."

That evidence sounds a little more purposeful upon the subject of shop marks, implying their regular use and application to all goods, although as so few mystery marks have been found that it is safer to assume that they were not indelible. Of course such a mark may have been in chalk or charcoal, and may simply have shown a stock number or price. Whether unfired painted marks may have been used, and since rubbed off, remains an open question, as does the extent of retailers marks used in the 18th century.



8. Chinese teapot and lid. The underside of the lid inscribed Hewson Aldgate in gilt script. (Courtesy of Geoffrey Godden).

However we do know that some dealers did mark their wares. The next figure shows a Chinese teapot from the Godden Reference Collection and its gilded mark for William Hewson, a respected dealer who for a time was Chairman of the China Club, and operated from Aldgate at least between 1781 and 1815. The illustration also shows a plate in my collection attributed to James and Nathaniel Huson of 120 Great Portland Street, where they operated at least between 1791 and the 1830's. The source of the plate, with its impressed mark, is unknown. There is no known Staffordshire pottery called Huson although Huson is a popular Staffordshire name. (8 & 9)



9. Creamware Plate impressed Huson.



10. China Club Memorandum Book. (Courtesy of the Guildhall Library, London).

As an introduction to cases that follow it is appropriate to provide a little insight into the activities of the China Club. The reader may recall that the China Club was an association of dealers who exerted considerable influence over the trade during a short period from 1785 to 1788. This included persuading the Derby concern to discontinue its "Spring sales to the nobility". The Club, whose rules suggest that their activities were partly those of an auction ring, was first reported on by Kay Staniland in the NCS Journal, Volume 9, 1992. It seems likely at the time that the China Club was established their members believed these activities to be perfectly legitimate. Kay Staniland's article followed her discovery in the Guildhall library of a memorandum book belonging to the Club, which contained the accounts and the minutes. The book seems to have been acquired by the Guildhall library from a late 19th century book dealer simply because in the second half, after the China Club entries, the book contained some fine quality heraldic drawings. (10)

One London china dealer, William Hussey, is known partly because he fell foul of the China Club. As a result Hussey was forced in January 1786 to offer almost suicidal restraints on his trade, namely to discontinue night sales, give up the retail trade, and to stop selling to country dealers. What sort of pressure must have been brought to bear to extract such an offer is unknown, and at one stage Hussey wanted to call a meeting of the whole trade. However, within two months he withdrew his offer saying that he was "an advocate of liberty". His principal sin was probably to hold "night sales". The China Club's members were very much against night sales, probably because they were regarded as an outlet for smuggled foreign goods. In March 1786 the Club passed the following resolution:

"Resolved that for many years past a considerable part of the china trade has been carried out by contraband dealers not only to the great prejudice of His Majesty's Revenue but also to the detriment of the Fair Trader. The Society shall therefore exert their utmost endeavours to

protect the Trade against such Persons and bring the same to such former, proper, and legal course."

The nature of that resolution suggests that there may even have been a threat to Hussey that the Excise men would be informed of his activities, but it is also the kind of resolution that would not have been made by a Club who understood that its own activities were illegal, and this point will be of relevance as this paper progresses.

This next Old Bailey case, which provides some information about gilders, pre-dates Hussey's brush with the China Club and took place on 4th April 1779.²⁴ William Prior gave the following evidence in response to questions:

"Who is Mr, Hussey, is he your partner? – Yes.

Did you ever see the things again? – I went in the morning, after I had missed them, to Sir John Fielding's, and had them advertised with a guinea reward. I saw them afterwards at Litchfield-street.

What did you see at Litchfield-street? – A pattern of the cups and saucers which the pawnbroker, Crawford, brought with him; he only brought a pattern; they are the large size, and a remarkable pattern; the gilder says that is the only set he ever gilt in that manner.

There are more gilders than one? – Only one principal one; there are none that gilt equal to him."

Another tantalising comment without giving us the gilder's name!²⁵ Hennys, a Staffordshire man resident in London is the only other gilder I knew of before my own research into the London Trade.²⁶ I located one other name, Joseph Shaw, china gilder, was at 11 Rolls Buildings in Fetter Lane in 1791. I have found the name of a number of other gilders in directories but as so much furniture was gilded in the 18th century it is difficult to be certain which ones, if any, were gilding porcelain. The evidence certainly supports the view that gilding was often commissioned by the merchants rather than the factory itself. William Fleming of 87 Newgate St, who in 1784 described himself²⁷ as a "china burner" was presumably providing a service to the London gilders and decorators. Finally Joseph

Brock, giving evidence in 1807,²⁸ described himself as a china enameller and gilder.

The next case involves two eminent china-men both of whom had early connections with the China Club. Miles Mason and William Hewson. were both former Chairmen of the Club. In 1791, a few years after the Club seems to have been discontinued, Hewson alerted Miles Mason to the fact that some of his goods had been stolen:

DAVID FRIGHT was indicted

ed for stealing, on the 15th of October, thirty-six china cups, value 27 s. and thirty-six china saucers, value 27 s. the property of Miles Mason.

And MARGARET, the wife of THOMAS ALLEN, was indicted for feloniously receiving, on the 16th of October, the same goods, knowing them to have been stolen.

MILES MASON sworn.

I am a china merchant, on the 19th of this instant Mr. William Hewson gave me some information.

Mr. HEWSON sworn.

I am in the china trade, I received some cups and saucers of T. Dobsons, sen.

THOMAS DOBSON, junior, sworn.

I received some cups and saucers from the prisoner Allen, she brought some to my master's, Mr. Cotrell, in Shoe-lane, to sell; I asked her if she had any to sell me? she said if I would come to her on Sunday morning she would sell me some. I went and bought some breakfasting tea cups and saucers, gave 4 s. 6 d. for the tea and 5 s. for the breakfast; I delivered them to my father.

PROSECUTOR: About twelve o'clock I went to Guildhall, from thence to Allen's house, I asked if she had any china to sell? she hesitated a little at first, she said she had some patterns; she shewed me some; she went with me to the Poultry Compter, and she pointed out Fright, and said this is the man who sold me the china, that was Fright. The goods were in the possession of Lawrance and Clark. I have been a very great sufferer, I have lost from 300 l. to 500 l. The prisoner did not lodge in my house. He packs.

JOHN CLARK sworn.

I am a marshalman.

(Prosecutor deposes to some broken china produced by Clark.)

THOMAS LAWRENCE sworn.

I am a marshalman, I received this basket from Mr. Hewson.

Prosecutor. This is my property.

ELLIOT sworn.

I am clerk to Mr. Mason.

Mr. Hewson. I bought a single lot of the same pattern. It is all gone into the country.

No less than 11 character witnesses gave evidence, but both defendants were found guilty and transported. The most striking evidence is the size of loss that Mason believed he had suffered, presumably through systematic theft by the same individual. To many china dealers, £300 to £500 was a very good year's profit.

In dealing with the next case a little license has been taken with the title of this paper, because the case is not a case of theft at all. I hope you will agree, however, that it was a case of great interest to the ceramic historian, and it is also the reason that I have woven in details of the China Club throughout this paper.

The case was heard in the King's Bench, the Court reserved for the most prominent criminal cases of the era. However, it is fair to say that by 1788 when the case is first reported, the function of the Court had slipped a little, and it occasionally heard civil cases when prevailed upon to do so.

This legal dispute was first identified in 1979/80 by Geoffrey Godden, who was researching the Minutes of the East India Company.²⁸ This was before Kay Staniland had discovered the memorandum book of the China Club. It has been referred to in subsequent books and brief extracts from reports in the Times newspaper were included in Andrew Ledger's book on the Derby Archives.²⁹ However, Andrew reproduced only one paragraph of the Times law reports. This is

the first time that all three sources of information have been put together, and the results are informative. It seems likely from the press interest, that the first formal Court hearing of the case was in February 1788, although as we shall see the dispute had been bubbling under for some time.

The background is a disagreement between the china dealers and the East India Company, concerning a change to their conditions of sale. From the information available in the East India Company Minutes it may have arisen in December 1787, although, for reasons I will show, it is possible that it arose much earlier, perhaps only months after the formation of the China Club.

In December 1787, however, the argument was certainly stepped up a little when the East India Company withheld lots and refused to take deposits on items from a Private Trade auction on the 11th of that month. Geoffrey Godden found that Miles Mason and the partnership of Akerman and Shaw were amongst those affected by this.

The first Times report is on 8th February 1788 when the article read:

"The public are asked to suspend their judgement respecting a rule granted by the Court of King's Bench against several dealers in china ware in London and also some respectable merchants who are buyers of china ware for Holland, Ireland &c until the merits of the several dealers and buyers are made known."

Little is revealed by that first report, although the granting of a Rule must have involved a hearing, presumably in early February 1788. A later report confirms that the number of defendants was no less than 47! From the next report of the case a little detail starts to emerge.

The Times Newspaper, 26th May 1788:-

"A rule has been obtained by Mr Rous to shew cause why a information should not be preferred against Mr Akerman,³⁰ and a great many others, for a conspiracy to depreciate the sale of India China, which belonged to the East India Company . . . at one of their sales"

I mentioned earlier that the King's Bench did take a few civil cases, and later we shall see reference to this case being settled for a monetary payment. However, it is clear from the above that the threat was of criminal prosecution and was very real.

It was Mr Erskine as Counsel for the defendants who suggested that such a settlement might be possible, and he applied to defer the action for a further period, the difficulty being that such a deferral would include the time of another East India sale:

The Times newspaper on 8th February 1788 reported his words:

"This is a rule which has been obtained by the East India Company, against almost all the Traders in China in this large metropolis . . . the East India Company has

a monopoly of trade to the East Indies and consequently has a monopoly not only in Tea, but also in China, properly so called. When the public gave this monopoly to the East India Company, they did that which they always do on these occasions, they amply provided for the security of the subject, that they might not suffer, and therefore in the case of tea they are bound down as to the mode in which tea may be sold. And China being a mere insignificant article, the Charter is quite silent with respect to that. Yet the East India Company have shewn by their own conduct what was right in this case to do, they have two general sales in the course of a year, one the March Sale and one the September sale." (11)

Erskine, in justifying a deferral of the hearing (but also his clients' need to attend the next sale) went on



11. East India Company Saleroom.

to point out that as the sales were at predictable dates the traders made contracts that relied on such timing. He also commented that:

“... nothing can be so evident as it is for the mutual benefit of the East India Company, and for my clients, to agree with each other. My clients do not wish to insult them or to defraud them. It is not contended that there is any conspiracy on foot, to beat down anything that is now in agitation. If this is the case then I can only solemnly declare that my clients, when they were acting, thought they were acting legally. I think they were not, and they do not desire me to say they were. They wish to submit themselves to whatever the Court thinks is right.”

These comments merely provoked satire in the following day's Times:

“The brittle work the India Company and the China Shops is likely to be accommodated without any fracture, and as Mr Erskine found that neither party were inclined to litigate the matter, he advised them to make it up amicably. Don't he deserve a set of China for this peaceable recommendation? – Aye and a couple of shaking mandarins, to remind him that he lives by a profession which, in proportion as his pockets fill, those of the unfortunate must be emptied”

However, the reality is that Erskine's words were humble, and an indication that the china-men had been advised that they faced possible criminal proceedings and were very worried indeed.

At the same hearing we hear that before the December 1787 sale a change to the Conditions of Sale caused the china-men to be discontent. It was a change of procedure connected with broken china:

“the China ware was to be taken by whole lots, except what was broken below the rims. Each lot was to be taken more or less, and for such as appeared to be cracked, the East India Company allowed the buyer two for one, and they were rung out, a particular mode of proceeding which is called ringing out the China...”

I take that to mean that there had been a physical process of ringing the china to identify damaged

items. This condition of sale was being revoked by the East India Company, and Geoffrey Godden reproduced³¹ the conditions of sale for the December 1787 auction in which no allowance was to be made for damage of any kind.

There followed long arguments about the deferral of the case, with Erskine suggesting that if his clients act legally at the next sale, this will bode well for eventual settlement. This was countered by Mr Rous for the East India Company who gave the china-men even more reason to be concerned:

“The Directors think this conspiracy goes much further than the present subject to the amount of affecting sales to some millions perhaps”

“Millions” in an 18th century context, however vague, is obviously a gargantuan sum of money. But it is not wholly inaccurate. A Mr Andersen, who attempted a controversial audit of the books of the East India Company during that period reported that the annual sales of China Goods in the late 1780's were between £2.5 and £2.8m. Silk sales would have been included in those figures as well as porcelain, but over a number of years the “millions” claim becomes credible.

Eventually the Judge, Mr Justice Buller allowed the deferral of the hearing. It is not therefore until early 1789 that we get a report of a further hearing and to the nub of the alleged offence.

The Times Newspaper, 27th January 1789, Erskine stated that the cause arose under very peculiar circumstances his clients had

“acted under a mistake from beginning to end. They had no idea they had done wrong, and the moment they had they stopped, and acknowledged they were in the wrong. ... The East India Company having imposed new conditions of sale, the China Dealers agreed amongst themselves only to purchase certain lots. But the moment they knew that in so doing they had acted illegally they stopped, and now six sales had taken place without the least pretence that there were any fresh combinations between them. If his clients had not done enough, they were ready to do more.”

So at last we see the cause of action – the dealers agreeing between themselves to bid for only certain lots – as Geoffrey Godden correctly identified, it was indeed an auction ring. But whether the dispute arose first over the December 1787 sale is uncertain. Erskine said that six sales had now passed uneventfully. Clearly there were Private Trade sales both in December and perhaps at other times of the year, although the only evidence given in the case seems to relate to bi-annual sales in March and September. Whether the East India Company had evidence of anything untoward prior to December 1787 is uncertain, but that they had suspicion is clear, otherwise the claim that some millions were involved was insupportable.

At the January 1789 hearing much argument ensued, the china-men having offered a payment to charity of £100 and the East India Company dismissing the offer as insignificant with the quip that:

“£100, to forty seven dealers in China, was only a public whipping, and then to be discharged”.

One must remember that in 18th century terms a public whipping was a lenient sentence!

The East India Company's counter offer was that they should receive a payment of £500, and that the dealers should relinquish the items purchased in the 11th December 1787 sale. Also in the 25th January 1789 Minutes they resolved to advise the dealers that:

“it is expected that they will not either directly or indirectly act injuriously by, or shew any resentment to the parties through whose means the Company were made acquainted with the particulars of the proceedings against them.”

So the East India Company were tipped off! Protected by two centuries from the laws of libel it is tempting to wonder whether William Hussey or one of the other dealers hard done by by the China Club had something to do with this!

Eventually yet another deferral was granted to allow the parties to reach a settlement

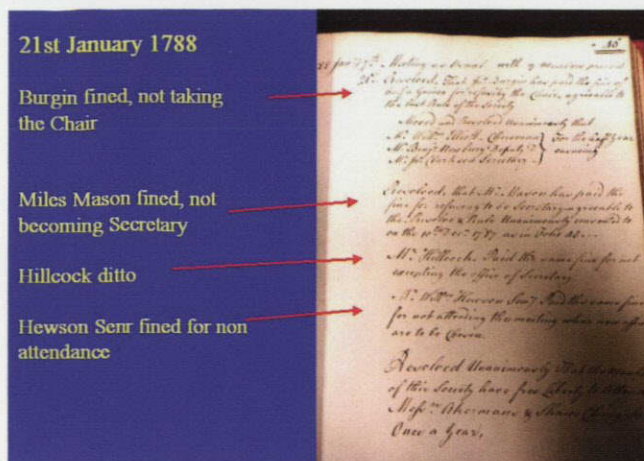
From the Times reports themselves we only know the name of one defendant. Akerman himself, whose

name was mentioned because he was the first defendant alphabetically, was not a member of the China Club, although he had been invited to join and seemingly only declined because he lived out of London. We do know from the information already provided that Miles Mason, a former Chairman of the China Club was a party. Those described by the Times as *“Buying China-ware for ... Ireland ...”* probably included the Irish dealers Donovan and Carter, both of whom were minuted in the China Club's records as having joined the China Club before being allowed to attend the auctions in London. It seems likely that no bidder from Ireland could have attended without joining the Club.

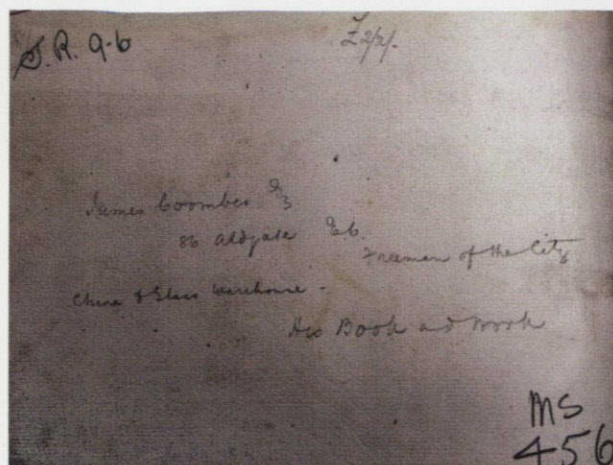
Although after strenuous efforts the names of all the china-men implicated in this case have not been traced, virtually any sample of 47 dealers in London at that time would necessarily have included many members of the China Club. From the author's own researches there would have been no more than 80 to 100 china dealers in the whole of London at that time, and many of the small retail outlets would not have attended East India Company sales, instead buying smaller part-lots from the wholesale dealers who were members of the Club.

The news that their activities were illegal, criminal even, must presumably been imparted to the china-men by Mr Erskine when he advised on the matter, and presumably the dealers would have first sought advice when their goods were withheld in December 1787. It must have come as a bombshell to the stalwarts of the China Club, the same law abiding people who had resolved in such a self-righteous way against the evils and illegality of smuggling.

At the December 1787 meeting of the Club new officers were appointed as usual for the following period. However only nine people attended. What was unusual was that there was a certain coyness from previously leading lights in the Club. At the meeting on 21st January 1788 the minutes show that John Burgin, a former Secretary of the Club was fined for not accepting the Chair, Miles Mason and John Hillcock were both fined for declining the position of Secretary of the Club, and William Hewson Senr was fined for not attending the



12. Detail from China Club Memorandum Book.



13. James Coombes – his book.

December meeting at all, which he was supposed to do when officers were appointed. It would be unsurprising if the enthusiasm for membership of the Club was dampened by the risk of being implicated in criminal activity. (12)

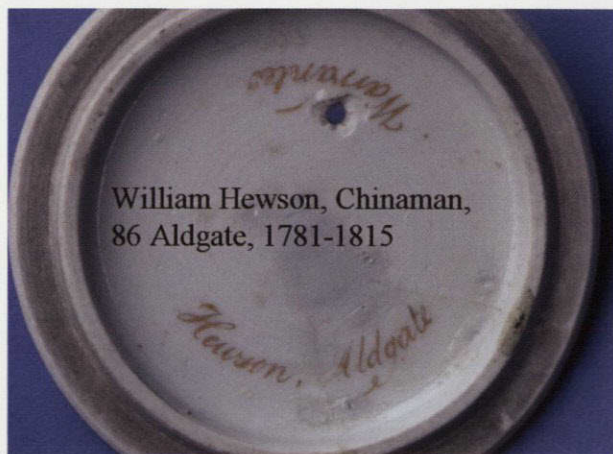
What happened next is interesting. The minute of the January 1788 meeting, which took place just a short time before the first known hearing in the King's Bench case, was the last ever entry recorded. I believe that at least some of the China Club members took fright. The evidence for this is circumstantial, and it hinges on what happened to the Minute Book itself. Inside the fly-leaf of the Minute Book, written in pencil, are the words

"James Coombes, Chinaman and Glass Seller, 86 Aldgate EC, Freeman of the City, His Book and Work". (13)

The heraldry in the back of the Minute Book although perhaps started no later than the 1790s, certainly carried on long after the China Club seems to have disappeared. As Kay Staniland pointed out, the use of a London postal district in the address puts the entry by James Coombes at 1820 or later. James Coombes takes credit for the heraldic work by his own words and there is no particular reason to disbelieve him. Surely it was more than a coincidence that he was a china seller?

Kay Staniland solved the puzzle by identifying that the address, occupied by Coombes from 1816 until 1840, was previously occupied by none other than William Hewson Junr. Recently published research by Simon Gray of the Glass Sellers Company has identified the will of William Hewson junr, in which he left the lease of his shop in Aldgate to his servant, James Coombes. (14)

When Mr Erskine said that nothing untoward had happened during the last six sales it probably does not matter for the purposes of this argument whether he was referring to biannual general sales or not. Any



14. Teapot lid inscribed in gilt script: Hewson Aldgate Warranted. (Courtesy of Geoffrey Godden).

evidence of inappropriate activity within the last three years would have given weight to the claim of the East India Company that sales affected might run to several millions.

Mr Erskine may not have known that the Memorandum book of the China Club even existed. Consequently he would not have been aware of Rule 3 set out so clearly in the book:

“That the Gentlemen of this Society will not suffer any Goods to be bought at the Private Trade sales unless purchased at a fair price and this Club will meet prior to every sale to mark in their Catalogues what the Proprietors shall give for their Lots but if any profit or loss arise to any Gentleman by having a Lot thrown on him, such profit or loss shall be equally divided amongst the members of the Society.”

That is a very clear description of the activities of an auction ring. Mr Erskine may not also have been aware of the entry in the minutes of August 25th 1786:

“Meeting to take into consideration the next Company Sale of China Ware”

Mr Erskine would also have been unaware of the resolution passed on April 2nd 1787:

Resolved that no member or members of the Society shall claim with or grant any claims or shares of lots In any

future sale made by the East India Company to any person or persons who have been members of this Society and have not conformed to the Rules thereof.

So the propensity for cover-up when otherwise law-abiding citizens are caught out in an impropriety is far from new! Accounting entries prove that it was members' subscriptions that paid for the “Memorandum Book” of the China Club, and it was only half full.(15)

Despite this, some time after the January 1788 meeting of the Club, William Hewson removed the Minute book, containing as it did potentially incriminating evidence, and took it back to his shop where it remained, perhaps for 50 years. Subsequently it provided a medium for artistic expression for his successor, and his former employee, James Coombes.

One year later the minutes of the East India Company of 29th January 1789, discovered by Geoffrey Godden, reported the end of the saga:

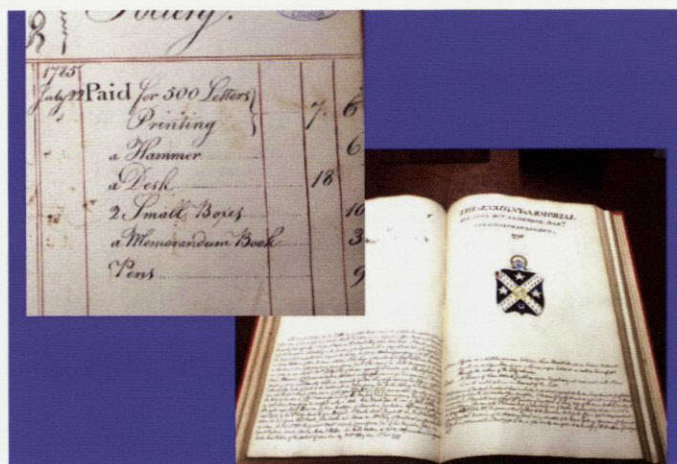
“The Company’s solicitors reported that the motion for making a rule absolute for an information against the China Dealers . . . came on in the Court of Kings Bench yesterday when the offence was admitted and the china dealers refused to comply with the terms offered by the Company, The Court was pleased to discharge the Rule, under the idea that as the combination complained of was at an end . . .”

In conclusion it seems clear that the start of the King’s Bench criminal case had either prompted the sudden cessation of all activities of the members of the China Club, or it drove them so far underground that, more than 200 years later, they will never be traced again.

There was a small post-script, again from the Minutes of the East India Company, which shows that in the end the cause of the china-men’s complaint was removed:

April 1789:

... although it would be very desirable to carry into effect the new regulations as to the sale of china ware yet under all the circumstances of the case, it may be proper to



15. Accounting entry from China Club Memorandum Book. (Courtesy of the Guildhall Library, London).

comply with the request of the Buyers and revert to the former mode of sale . . . And should the Court concur with this opinion the Committee mean to establish such regulations for conducting the business of Ringing out as may best tend to prevent any improper practices in future.”

My researches indicate that the term “ringer” is an early 19th century expression. I do wonder whether, even if auction rigging was an ancient art, the expression “auction ring” may have started here.

Doctor Johnson once said:

“It is not in the showy evolutions of buildings, but in the multiplicity of human habitations which are crowded together, that the wonderful immensity of London consists.”

Those were eloquent words but in my view that “wonderful immensity” was better expressed not by buildings but by the people of London themselves. Whilst we understandably cherish our ceramic items in their own right, we should not overlook the many custodians who must have cared for our objects over more than 200 years. Most especially we should not forget the chinamen and women of 18th century London.

From the 17th century the china dealers created the market and distribution channels for ceramic products throughout Britain, and during the 18th century some of them extended these channels abroad. They put the plates on the tables of Britain, and the vases on the mantelpiece. Without them some factories may have failed. They benefited from operating in a growth market, and, assisted by rising living standards, they spread the popularity of ceramic tableware from the wealthy to the new middle class. They would not have expected their wares to be collected more than two hundred years later.

And these Court cases bring the china dealers to life – we hear in many cases the only existing verbatim record of their words. They persevered despite suffering from thefts and threats of criminal prosecution, and in exchange for a few shillings they propelled many of our cherished items on their long journeys through time.

NOTES

- ¹ Ref t 16921207-10 note that the reference contains the date, 7th december 1692
- ² Ref: t18310908-11
- ³ The spelling of Doulton here is typical of 18th C variation – the transcripts are reproduced verbatim.
- ⁴ Ref: T17291015-73
- ⁵ <http://www.mariners-l.co.uk> Researching the mariners and ships of the merchant marine and the world's navies
- ⁶ The Universal Magazine, June 1795
- ⁷ REF: T17900224-69
- ⁸ Valuations are probably not to be relied on and it is never clear whether retail prices or cost prices are quoted
- ⁹ Ref: t18190915-212
- ¹⁰ Ref: t18030420-88
- ¹¹ t18000402-90
- ¹² Ref: t17671209-28
- ¹³ Ref: t17510523-20
- ¹⁴ Mrs. Paul is not listed by Francis Buckley.
- ¹⁵ Ref: t17550702-31
- ¹⁶ Daily Advertiser 24th May (or possibly March) 1755.
- ¹⁷ Ref: t17650417-24
- ¹⁸ Ref: t17621208-28
- ¹⁹ English Porcelain, 1745-95: Its Makers, Design, Marketing and Consumption, London 1999
- ²⁰ Ref: t17600227-19
- ²¹ Ref: t17760109-59
- ²² Ref: t17430413-6
- ²³ Ref: t17770409-13
- ²⁴ Ref: t17790404-6
- ²⁵ Roger Massey, in ECC Transactions Vol 19, Pt 1, speculates that it may have been James Giles. However the case took place only a year before he died and three years after the last record of any business premises.
- ²⁶ A Short History of Gold and Gilding – Michael Berthoud
- ²⁷ Bailey's British Directory, 1784
- ²⁸ Ref T18070701-25
- ²⁹ Godden's Guide to Mason's China and the Ironstone Wares 1980 (ISBN: 1851491473) and Oriental Export Market Porcelain 1979 (ISBN: 0246110570)
- ³⁰ Ledger, A. P. Derby Museum. – Derby Porcelain Archive Research volume 2. The Bedford Street Warehouse and the London China Trade 1773-1796.
- ³¹ Akerman had declined membership of the China Club because he lived out of town, but he must have been well respected and known to the members as he and his partner Shaw are the only dealers known to have been contacted by letter to ask them to join the Club. Interestingly, Shaw declined because he thought it an impropriety for a wholesaler to be a member.
- ³² Godden's Guide to Mason's China and the Ironstone Wares 1980 (ISBN: 1851491473)