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# The Pendock Barry Porcelain Service

A Forensic Evaluation

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# Preface

This book provides a case study based on the *Pendock Barry* armorial double dessert service. The service was unknown and undocumented until its appearance at auction in 1894, when it attracted considerable interest. The book considers the service from different perspectives, exploring its commission by Pendock Neale Barry, its attribution as a Derby service and the attribution of William Billingsley as its decorator. The holistic approach adopted in this book brings together the historical documentation regarding the commissioning patron, Pendock Neale Barry, the preliminary scientific analyses that have been carried out on Derby porcelain, and an assessment of the floral decorators associated with the Derby factory at the time of the service's commission and manufacture.

The authors have a shared, deep interest in the history of the production of early ceramics in England and Wales. They have applied their scientific and historical expertise to consider the questions of commission, attribution and decoration of this service. Whilst there have been many scholarly works written on the Old China Works at Derby, none have focused on the attribution of a single armorial dessert service to the factory and the identification of its decorator. A novel aspect of this book is the research and identification of the patron who commissioned the service, and the exploration of the service commission within its historical context. Research into the composition of the paste used to manufacture the service provides insight into the technical processes and composition of Derby porcelain in the Michael Kean period and supports the attribution of a date around 1805 for its manufacture. The book also sheds light on how the porcelain manufactories were run in the early 1800s, with artist enamellers moving between factories, setting up their own businesses, collaborating and cooperating with each other at this time of significant innovation within ceramic manufacture.

Technological advances enabled the start-up of numerous small porcelain manufactories from the 1740s onwards. These factories produced a soft paste porcelain, and a hard paste porcelain was made at Plymouth and Bristol from the late 1760s onwards. The decoration of these early pieces followed the patterns familiar from Chinese export porcelain. Depiction of armorials on porcelain was undertaken for specific commissions from individuals who had the right to bear arms: royalty, the

aristocracy and the landed gentry. Commissions were often made at a significant time in the patron's life, such as a marriage or the receipt of new honours. Identifying the commissioning patron and researching into their life can play a significant role in the date attribution of a service, particularly when factory pattern books and other records are lost or incomplete.

In the case of a service such as the *Pendock Barry* armorial service, the armorials are significant in dating the service, as the patron received the right to bear the Barry surname and armorials by Royal Licence in 1811. This led to a tentative estimate of around 1811 for its commission by earlier ceramic historians as it was in line with this award. New historical research has cast fresh light on when Pendock Neale Barry acquired his family pedigree, which brings the date forward to around 1805. Scientific analysis concurs with an earlier date for the production of this service than 1811, not least because 1811 would place the service into the Bloor period of ownership of the Derby works, and the characteristics of the paste and glaze of the service plus the shape and style of the pieces do not match the Bloor period. This in turn allows a fresh appraisal of the Derby factory flower painters between 1800 and 1810 who were available to paint the *Pendock Barry* service at its estimated time of manufacture, which indicates William Billingsley as the most likely decorating artist.

The service commissioned by Pendock Neale Barry is often called the *Barry Barry* service; however, it should more properly be called the *Pendock Barry* service, after the commissioning patron. The *Barry Barry* nomenclature stems partly from the lack of documentation at the Derby factory regarding the commissioning of the service, but predominantly from the way the service first came to attention. The service was unknown until it appeared at auction in 1894 as part of the estate of Miss Elizabeth Jones, and it was described as having belonged to the late Mr. Pendock Barry Barry of Roclaveston Manor, Tollerton.

The rarity of an unknown, complete, Derby armorial dessert service appearing at auction, plus the price it achieved, resulted in prominent coverage in both the local and national press. Reports repeated the *Barry Barry* name attributed by the auction house, and this nomenclature has remained.

William Bemrose purchased a pair of dessert plates at the service's dispersal auction, and he loaned them to the Derby Corporation Art Gallery where they were put on exhibition in May 1894 (*Derby Mercury*, 30 May 1894 p. 2). His plates were subsequently sold in his estate sale in 1909 which repeated the *Barry Barry* reference. The next significant appearance of pieces from the service was the 1947 sale in New York, which again repeated the *Barry Barry* name as its title and provenance.

The earliest research article dedicated to this service was written in 1983 by Swain. She entitled her work *Pendock Barry and his Derby Dessert Service*, and she made the point that the service should more properly be called the *Pendock Barry* service as it was the father of Barry Barry who had originally commissioned it (Swain, "Pendock Barry and his Derby Dessert Service" *Antique Collectors Guide* Sept 1984 pp. 68–72). Derby authors such as W. D. John followed the original convention and referred to it as the *Barry Barry* service in their works; however, this is the first full-length study on the service; therefore, the convention of naming the service after the person

who commissioned it is followed, and the service will be referred to throughout the text as the *Pendock Barry* service.

The authors would like to record their grateful thanks and appreciation to several friends and colleagues who have supported them in their research: to Prof. Peter Vandenablee (University of Ghent), Dr. Alex Surtees (University of Bradford), Spencer Bailey, Collections Manager at Derby City Museum, and Bryan Bowden Antiques, Harrogate, North Yorkshire.

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# Chapter 1

## The Origins of Heraldic Porcelain



**Abstract** For the correct decipherment and attribution of a coat-of-arms to be undertaken, it is necessary to appreciate the individual components comprising the escutcheon, lambrequins, motto, coronet or chapeau, helm and supporters: of these, the most important for familial descendancy is the escutcheon. The origins of heraldry and the design of the escutcheon are reviewed and related to the components of other armorial bearings including the importance of the crest and presence or otherwise of a motto. Full armorial bearings are rarely encountered. The first English armorial service was commissioned in Chinese porcelain in 1705, and the earliest examples of English porcelain armorial service artefacts in the 1760s are discussed.

**Keywords** Origins of heraldry · Escutcheon · Motto · Crest · Coronet · Supporters · Armorial bearings · English armorial porcelain

### 1.1 The Origins of Heraldry and Coats-Of-Arms

The decipherment of a coat-of-arms demands an understanding of the basis of the heraldic devices used to facilitate the correct assignment or attribution to an individual of an armorial bearing or crest that is depicted on a ceramic artefact. It is generally believed that the origins of British heraldry can be traced to the Norman Conquest and the differentiation of knights and their supporters on the field of battle from the coats-of-arms borne upon their shields (escutcheons) and crests worn on their helms (Edwards, *Welsh Armorial Porcelain: Nantgarw and Swansea Crested China*, 2022). The early armorial literature contains some very fanciful and often conflicting ideas about the bearing of arms, but the texts of William Wyrley (*The True Use of Arms*, 1853) and Sir William Dugdale (*The Ancient (Antient) Usage in Bearing of Such Ensings of Honours as are Commonly Call'd Arms with a Catalogue of the Present Nobility of England to Which is Added a Catalogue of the Present Nobility of Scotland and Ireland and C.*, 1682), both of whom were Rouge Croix Pursuivant Heralds at the College of Arms in London, form a good basis for the understanding of the origin, purpose and growth of heraldry and its social standing in the context of the bearing and the granting of coats-of-arms. Hence, it is important for the researcher to check everything at source as frequently misleading and incorrect statements are made in

the earlier literature: for example, Susana Dawson Dobson (*Historical Anecdotes of Heraldry and Chivalry: Tending to Shew the Origin of Many English and Foreign Coats of Arms, Circumstances and Customs*, 1795) alleged controversially that King Richard II (1377–1399) was the first English King to use supporters for his coat-of-arms, namely two white harts collared and chained, whereas King Edward III (1327–1377) already had been using variously a lion and a falcon, two lions and two angels as the supporters for his coat-of-arms!

The *escutcheon* is the major heraldic feature of a coat-of-arms which bears definitive information about the family of the arms-bearer. There are different ways of presenting an escutcheon to display heraldic features and the major ones are as follows: *per fess*, the shield is divided in two horizontally; *per pale*, the shield is divided in two vertically; *per bend*, the shield is divided in two diagonally; *per chevron*, the shield is divided by a chevron or inverted “vee”; *per pile*, the shield is divided in two with an inverted triangle, its base merging with the top of the shield; *per saltire*, displaying a cross quartering the shield diagonally; *per quarterly*, displaying a cross quartering the shield horizontally and vertically; *per gyronny*, the shield is divided into eighths radiating from the centre; *barry*, horizontal bars of two colours (heraldically known as *tinctures*); *paly*, vertical bars of two colours (*tinctures*); *bend dexter*, a bar extending from the top left to the bottom right on the shield; *bend sinister*, a bar extending from the top right to the bottom left on the shield; *bordure*, a coloured edge around the shield; *quarter*, the top left quarter (to an observer, otherwise known as the *dexter quarter*) of the shield

The shape of the escutcheon (Norman French, *escuchon*, a shield) was directly relevant to the type of shield borne by knights in battle. The first type of escutcheon that bore heraldic arms had a rounded top and elongated inverted teardrop shape tapering to a point, which can still be seen on the effigies of tombs of Norman knights in English cathedrals—this is often referred to now as a *kite* shield. This became more triangular and then squared-off at the top, as was first carried by cavalry and mounted knights in battle, becoming the shorter version that is now more commonly depicted in coats-of-arms and known as a *heater* shield. Later, a wider variation in the escutcheon shape was developed, and modifications such as the *bouche*, which represented a small slot in the upper dexter part of the shield to accommodate the lance during jousting tournaments, and an *engrailment*, comprising two concave portions to the dexter and sinister top halves of the shield and coming to a point in the middle, were made. Between twenty and thirty different types of escutcheons are known internationally including oval shields and rococo versions, which reflect the original variation in shapes of the shield used by the knights of different countries in combat.

In summary, therefore, the concepts of heraldry and the granting of arms probably originated in the eleventh or twelfth century, with the Norman escutcheons first appearing in English heraldry and developing with the parallel growth in variation of the shield and crest designs appearing from later mediaeval times, probably in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, as a consequence of the staging of elaborate jousting tournaments involving knights and men-at-arms, when the heraldic additions such as supporters also then came into being. It will now be appropriate to consider

the heraldic components which together comprise the full coat-of-arms that are borne by an armigerous individual.

## 1.2 Components of Armorial Bearings

In British heraldry, the coat-of-arms is emblazoned onto an escutcheon (shield) which is associated with two supporters, named sinister (left) and dexter (right) as viewed by the shield bearer and, therefore, seen in mirror image when viewed from the front of the shield. An order or badge of honour can be placed in the lower compartment beneath the escutcheon, where the motto usually sits. Above the escutcheon may sit a crown or a coronet, with perhaps a chapeau (a soft cap), which marks the rank or standing of the bearer of the arms; the coronet indicates the rank in the peerage of the arms bearer through the presence, number and arrangement of small balls on spikes (known as “pearls”) and strawberry leaves around the coronet. In the upper compartment of the coat-of-arms is found the helmet (helm) or galero. The helm comprises several types with an open-faced or closed visor, indicating the rank of nobility of the shield bearer—usually a knight or a baronet will have a closed visor on the helm, whereas higher ranks in the peerage will have a barred or an open visor. The helm is always accompanied by strips of cloth mantling (lambrequins), which represented the linen surcoat worn on top of a knight’s suit of armour and is surmounted by a twisted silk torse or cloth wreath, usually of two colours, which functions as a supporter of the crest on the helm itself. The torse is usually curved in a convex profile to match the contour of the top of the helm. Above the crest a slogan may also appear which represents an ancient battle cry. In the Roman Catholic Church, clerics entitled to bear arms replace the helm with a galero; for example, a red wide-brimmed cardinal’s hat bearing tassels at each side and carrying a suspended gold cross centrally on a chain. Anglican Church clerics who are entitled to bear arms use a galero which is typically a black wide-brimmed hat with tassels in various colours and bishops can alternatively use a mitre in place of a helm (Scott-Giles, *Boutell’s Heraldry*, 1954; Woodcock, *The Oxford Guide to Heraldry*, 1988).

The number and arrangement of the strawberry leaves and “pearls” alternating on a noble’s coronet which may appear above escutcheon give the rank in the peerage of the bearer of the arms displayed. Hence, a Duke’s coronet (and that of a Duchess) does not have “pearls” but will have eight strawberry leaves in total, of which five will be seen when viewed from the front, comprising three fully facing the observer and another two which are viewed at each side. Similarly, the coronet of a Marquess (and Marchioness) will have four strawberry leaves and four “pearls”, of which three strawberry leaves and two “pearls” will be visible from the front. An Earl (and Countess) will have eight strawberry leaves and eight “pearls” of which four strawberry leaves and five balls will be visible from the front. A Viscount (and Viscountess) will have sixteen “pearls” of which seven will be visible from the front, and a Baron (and Baroness) will have six “pearls” of which four will be visible from the front. Hence, the monogram and crest of the Viscountess Philadelphia Cremorne,