

# Shelley & Shaw

1822-1824



A few years ago I purchased this London shaped Bone China Cup which had a mark I had not seen before. This interested me primarily because Shelly (sic) & Shaw was a manufactory I had never encountered either.

Equally, I soon discovered that this was a factory where little information was readily available. On 1<sup>st</sup> November 1823, The Staffordshire Advertiser revealed just one nugget of information which related to the offer of a reward for the return of a pony stolen or strayed from a field next to the Works! [1](#).

At least the article provided the factory location as Lane End and its existence in 1823, but nothing else. In frustration, I wrote to the NCS Newsletter in 2017 seeking help relating to the partnership and was fortunate to receive a response from Rodney Hampson who was quick to point out that, obviously, I

had not seen his publication “Longton Potters 1700 – 1865”. 2. He was kind enough to provide a copy of the entry relating to Shelley & Shaw, which showed a partnership between William Shelley and John Shaw at Green Dock Works, Lane End. The partnership was stated by him to be in Earthenware manufacture, but my cup was evidence of Bone China also being produced.



Rodney Hampson’s research revealed the partnership to be in existence for two years between 1822 and 1824 - when William Shelley departed and John Shaw then continued on his own at Green Dock Works as an Earthenware manufacturer until 1830 when he was joined in partnership by Jesse Shaw. My further research reveals that the dissolution of the partnership with William Shelley was published in the London Gazette on 12<sup>th</sup> February 1825, but the exact date of the partnership’s dissolution was not provided. Interestingly, the Notice described their business as Earthenware Manufacturers.

It appears to me that the short lived partnership of Shelley & Shaw was probably formed to produce Bone China rather than Earthenware, but where are other examples of their China production?

In further response to my NCS Newsletter question, Jonathan Dutton provided me with some photographs of wares he believes to relate to the successor business conducted by John Shaw.



These images confirm the continuing use of Chinoiserie patterns at the Works by John Shaw and may assist in identifying earlier Bone China examples, probably of London shape, which could well be unmarked. At least we have the cup handle shape!



I have looked at the few Bone China Chinoiserie decorated wares I have collected from the same period, which also use transfer printed outlines, but they have proved to be of no help at all. The examples I have relate to Bailey, Drewry, Hilditch and the “Indian Jar” factory.

Please let me know if you may have any light to shine on the partnerships’ Bone China wares.

The illustrated Shelley & Shaw cup is now in the safe hands of Gregory Freear.

Notes: William Shelley, son of Thomas & Elizabeth Shelley, was born probably during 1786 and baptised at St John’s, Longton on 25<sup>th</sup> December of that year. His father, Thomas Shelley, was a Master Potter. On 12<sup>th</sup> February 1815 William married Marianne Astbury with whom he had three sons, William, Thomas & Henry. Prior to his partnership with John Shaw, he traded as William Shelley & Co at Lane End and at Paddington, Middlesex. His former partners were Richard Booth and John Unett.<sup>3</sup> William, then trading as a Grocer, died on 21<sup>st</sup> January 1841 and was buried in St John’s Churchyard, Longton on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

John Shaw has proved impossible to identify positively as there were at least three men of that name born at Longton in the mid-1780s period. However, Trade Directories do confirm that John Shaw continued at the Green Dock <sup>4</sup>, and thereafter at the same location in partnership with Jesse Shaw <sup>5</sup>. I have been unable to find any information to confirm the family connection between John and Jesse Shaw. There are no subsequent Trade Directory entries. I shall publish a supplement to this Paper should fresh information become available which enables the identity of John Shaw to be established and/or if any further Bone China products of the partnership do come to light.

References: <sup>1</sup> [Staffordshire Advertiser 1<sup>st</sup> November 1823](#)

<sup>2</sup> [City Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke on Trent Journal of Ceramic History Volume 14](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Staffordshire Advertiser 1<sup>st</sup> August 1818](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Pigot 1828 & 1830](#)

<sup>5</sup> [White 1834 and Pigot 1835](#)