

Appendix 4 - Geoffrey Godden collection

The renowned writer and researcher on the history of ceramics, Geoffrey Godden, is arranging for his large and important collection of ceramic photographs, research notes, transcripts and slides to be deposited at Stoke on Trent City Archives.

He has obtained by purchase over the years three archive items which have also supported his research and the conclusions presented in over 60 publications, several of which are definitive. These items are:

1. A collection of invoices and itemised descriptions of ceramic services as supplied from the manufacturers to the retailer or end customer. They provide information that seldom survives within the factories' own records, if these survive at all about the usage of earthenware, the typical assemblages and prices that existed. These range in date from the 1790s to the 1920s. There are over 100 items in the collection and while most would retail from between £20-40, some more recently purchased examples have been acquired at auction for around £200, with one particularly detailed and informative item relating to the Spode factory being £700. Spode historian Pam Woolliscroft has described this last as a document from which there is a great deal more to learn. Sale price to the Archive Service is £2,500.
2. Samuel Alcock pattern book. The ceramic expert Robin Emmerson, chairman of the Northern Ceramic Society, states that the discovery and identification of this book was and continues to be crucial in identifying the early porcelains of Alcock from the 1820s and early 30s. At the time Geoffrey Godden published Staffordshire Porcelain in 1983, only Alcock's later wares had been identified. The business was already one of the most important producers of porcelain in the Potteries in the late 1820s. Mr Godden values this book at £1,500 but is prepared to sell to the Archive Service for £1,300.
3. A 'factory unidentified' pattern book from the early nineteenth century. Mr Emmerson notes that work continues on finding porcelain whose shapes and pattern numbers match the entries in this early 19th century book. As soon as one of these shapes or pattern numbers is found on a marked piece of porcelain, this unidentified Staffordshire factory pattern book will acquire a name and address and will be used to identify the factory's currently unidentified products. Experience with other pattern books suggests this will be only a matter of time. Mr Godden is prepared to sell this item for £1000

Permission of the Committee is sought to use the Archive Service purchase funds to secure these items. The City Archivist of Stoke on Trent has inspected all three. The total purchase price of £4,800 would almost certainly be exceeded if the items went to auction and the opportunity to maintain the integrity of Mr Godden's unparalleled research collection on Staffordshire ceramics would be lost.