

Why More Adams Ceramics Isn't.

By Dick & Judy Wagner

Once upon a time, after our book *Adams Ceramics* (Schiffer Publishing Company) was issued in 1999 (co-authored with the late David Furniss), we planned a sequel. *More Adams Ceramics*. It was to illustrate patterns found subsequent to the publication of our first book, offer images of scenes in series that had not been available earlier, increase coverage of 19th century white ironstone, add bits of history to the story and correct the inevitable errors in the initial volume. The idea was not yet offered to Schiffer, but as they had published the first, trying them seemed logical. *More Adams* was out there waiting.

Eagerly, we joined the internet generation in 1999, discovering the plethora of Adams and other Staffordshire pots for sale on eBay. It was a revelation. Here, with images available for the asking, was an apparent shortcut to book creation. No longer would we have to travel to shows, dealers and collectors seeking Adams pieces. No longer would we send lengthy faxes to David in England - email would suffice. No longer would we need to own a piece merely to photograph it. Many traditional author's costs, including film and development, would be saved. What a wonderful new world!

Except that it wasn't. Technological ignorance on our part meant that several years and hundreds of collected images were wasted. We learned a sad truth. The then current low resolution of internet images with "short strings" rendered them useless for publication. Old fashioned images, taken with a



Fig. 1 St. Mary's Abbey, York, Bluebell Border series, outside view. This 11" diameter covered dish stands about 6 ½" high to finial. It is unnamed and impressed Adams Warranted Staffordshire (henceforth AWS) eagle.

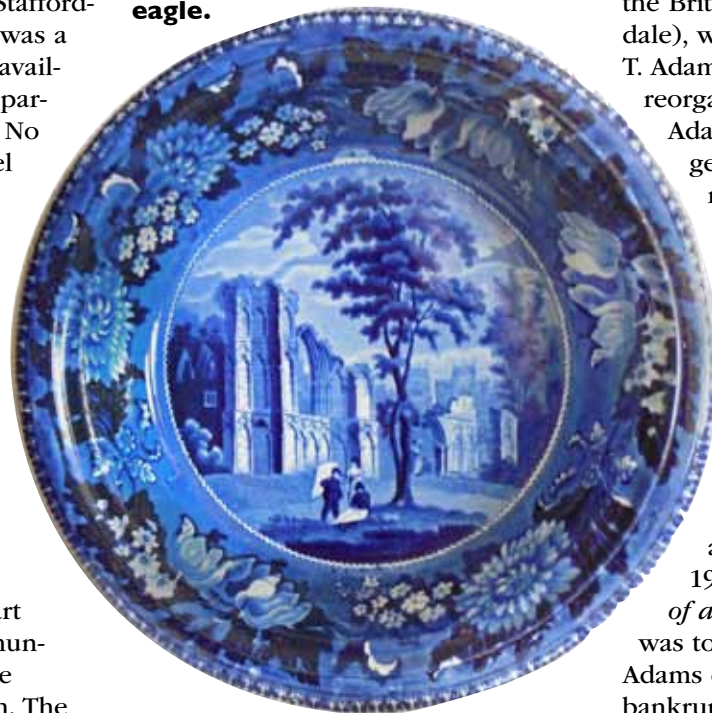


Fig. 2 St. Mary's Abbey, York, interior view. This view is sometimes mismarked "Melrose Abbey."

camera, were still the way to go.

In frustration and dismay with our near worthless images, we abandoned *More Adams Ceramics*. Eventually we gave our hard copy research to Winterthur. This opened our files for all but eliminated the possibility that we could add to the published history. What we can do is to share retained Adams knowledge to assist particularly the *TCC Pattern and Source Print Database*.

Since 1999, new pots have been added to our collection. The examples shown here are intriguing bits that suggest the range of Adams still out there for some hearty, younger, ceramic researcher to explore.

In that spirit, we offer a brief historical note: using the archives at the British Newspaper Library (Colindale), we discovered that the W. & T. Adams Pottery had not just been reorganized in the 1890s, as Percy Adams the family historian suggested. It had suffered bankruptcy. Percy Adams, whose father William Adams (VI), would have been directly involved, and Percy, nearly 20 at the time, would have known the details.

Percy Adams betrayed those who trusted him. He encouraged William Turner in 1904 to produce *William Adams An Old English Potter* and Robert Nicholls to write its 1931 revision *Ten Generations of a Potting Family*, but neither was totally reliable. Undoubtedly, Adams concealed the truth of the bankruptcy for commercial reasons – but such subterfuge meant those depending on him for accuracy wrote in error and readers were denied the full pottery history.

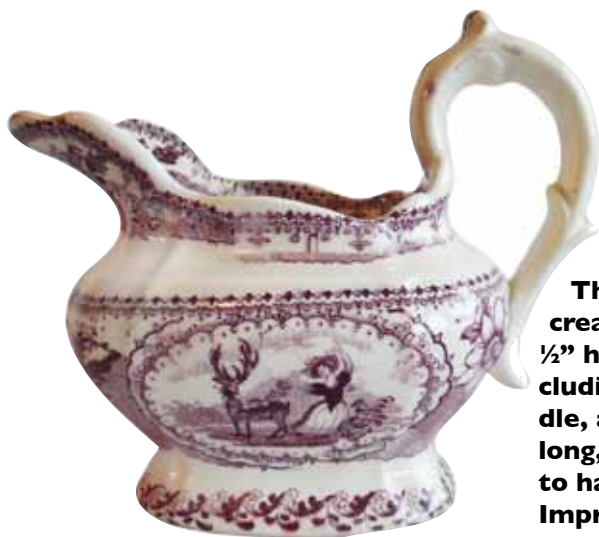


Fig. 3
"Stag"
 (as-
 signed
 name).

This
 creamer is 4
 ½" high, in-
 cluding han-
 dle, and 5 ½"
 long, spout
 to handle.
 Impressed
 ADAMS.



**Fig. 6 Un-
 identified
 Pattern, 6"**
diameter
saucer,
with an
unlisted
floral,
bird and
**butter-
 fly border,**
impressed
ADAMS.



Fig. 4 Armidale,
Invernesshire,
Flowers and
**Leaves Bor-
 der series,**
**8 ½" diam-
 eter plate,**
impressed
AWS eagle.



Fig. 7
Unidentified
Rural Scene,
**5 ¾" diam-
 eter plate,**
impressed
AWS
eagle.



Fig. 5 Armidale, Invernesshire backstamp.



Fig. 8
Picturesque
**View Nr Fish-
 kill Hudson**
River, Floral
and Birds
border, 10
½" soup
plate,
impressed
ADAMS.



Fig. 9 Picturesque View Nr Fishkill Hudson River backstamp.



Fig. 12 Un-identified pink 3 7/8" diameter cup plate, with unlisted floral and bird border, impressed ADAMS.



Fig. 10 "Bird" (assigned name) for 5 3/4" child's plate, impressed ADAMS, in same series as "Dalmation" and "Sheep" seen in Adams Ceramics pp 52-53.



Fig. 13 "Riverside Cottage" (assigned name) for a 7 3/4" diameter plate impressed AWS eagle.



Fig. 11 "Broseley" - unnamed willow pattern variation - 4" diameter cup plate, impressed AWS eagle. (Thanks to Connie Rodgers for identification.)



Fig. 14 Scaleby Castle Cumberland, Bluebell Border series, 8 1/2" diameter plate impressed AWS eagle.



Fig 15. Scaleby Castle backstamp.



Fig. 16 “Bird with Flower” (assigned name) for 4” diameter cup plate impressed ADAMS.



Fig. 19 Fairlawn. This sauce boat is 7 ¼” long (spout to handle) about 3” wide and stands a bit over 4” at the handle and around 2 ½” high in the low middle. Impressed AWS eagle mark.



Fig. 17 “Three Story House” (assigned name) for 7” diameter plate with impressed AWS eagle mark.



Fig. 20 Wine Decanter. This early three-piece hand-painted earthenware set stands about 10 ½” high, including stopper. The 7” diameter undertray is impressed ADAMS.



Fig. 18 Unidentified purple 4” diameter cup plate, impressed ADAMS.



Fig. 21 Sculpted White Stoneware. This gnarled tree trunk motif pitcher is 7 1/8” high and has a 4 ½” diameter base impressed ADAMS.