

A Da Vinci Code for *Enoch Wood & the Liverpool*

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As a new member of the TCC, I have found a lot of information to assist me in my quest for the “**Holy Grail**” as it relates to railway transfers!

Following Margie Williams’ paper in the TCC Bulletin, Vol. VI, No. 4, Summer 2005 (pp 2-4), I would like to provide additional information regarding the plates named “Railway,” produced by Enoch Wood & Sons. I was lucky enough to find two other versions showing the same view (an early steam train on a track leading to an arch in a romantic landscape), but with the same border as seen on the “Suspension Bridge” plate shown on p. 4 of the Williams’ article. This find makes three versions of the border known with the image. A fourth version that I have found is blue, with a floral border, and is found on both a flat plate and a soup plate (Photo 2).

Being an early steam locomotive fan, I tried to identify the source of inspiration (print) for the central image. After checking several early 19th century railway prints and publications, I could not find an exact reference to this view, and I came to the conclusion that this image is a composite of several images illustrating the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, opened on September 15, 1830 (1). More specifically, I believe the source print is Bury’s illustration published in 1831 (2). As the original prints are rare and costly, I used a reprint book (3) as the source for illustrations in this paper.

The basic arch shown in the middle of the image is inspired by Plate 10 of Bury, entitled *Moorish Arch, looking from the tunnel* (Photo 3). This arch seems to be unique in the railway architecture of the UK, so there is little doubt about the



Photo 1. Bi-Color Enoch Wood & Sons Railway Plate (9 Inch Diameter) and Mark.

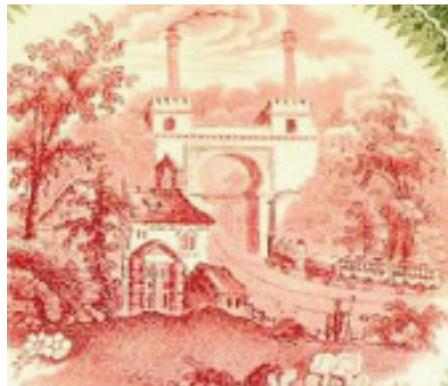


Photo 2. Detail of Bi-Color Railway Plate.



Photo 3. Blue Railway Plate with Floral Border.

original source for the arch depicted on the plate. However, the two chimneys shown on the plate are not shown in this print, and we have to consult Bury’s Plate 2, entitled *Entrance of the Railway at Edge Hill, Liverpool* to find these chimneys, which were the stacks for the boiler used to produce steam to operate the cable system which was needed to pull the trains out of the Liverpool station. The exit tracks were on an incline, and since the strength and power of the early steam locomotives was barely enough to pull trains on the level, cables were needed to get them out of the Liverpool station. In this print, the second chimney is under construction.

If we look carefully at this plate (Photo 5), we can even realize that the steam locomotive model does not look like the one shown at the right of the Arch on Bury’s Plate 10 (Photo 3). The steam locomotive on the plate resembles the “*Liverpool*” locomotive shown on plate I, entitled *A Train of Waggons with Goods, etc. etc.* (Photo 6). The carriages are typically shown on Plate II, entitled *A Train of First Class of Carriages with the Mail* (Photo 7).

As these images have been copied and recopied many times in other publications, it is hard to say for certain that the Bury illustrations are the original inspirations for the transfers on the Enoch Wood & Sons plates, but it is close enough for me to speculate positively.

The rest of the image on the Enoch Wood plate is treated as a romantic and pleasant landscape, in the style used at the time. Reality was not a primary concern, and perhaps the idealized images were meant to provide acceptance for the new technology of the railways.

Railroad Transfers: ool & Manchester Railway

My research opens a list of questions which may interest early railway transfer enthusiasts:

- When was the plate produced? Between 1831-1845?

- How many different versions were produced?

- Was it part of a series of different images?

- What other series of railway plates have been produced by Enoch Wood & Sons for the UK Market? For the US Market? (It should be noted that according to Elizabeth Collard (4), no early Canadian locomotives have been represented on pottery produced in the UK.)

I posed these same questions in relationship to the French manufacturers of *Choisy* and *Gien* and found one complete series of railway plates made by *Choisy* in at least five different versions, and at least three different series produced by *Gien*, in perhaps five different versions. I found all the original prints used to inspire the *Choisy* series (5), but none for the *Gien* series. Most of these series were produced between 1844-1849.

Anyone interested in the subject is welcome to contact me through the TCC Bulletin Board (found on the TCC website: www.transcollectorsclub.org) or directly by eMail at gge210@yahoo.ca. And to see many of the early plates and mugs with railway transfers, visit the York Railway Museum in the UK (Photo 8).

Footnotes:
¹ Samuel Smiles, The life of Georges Stephenson, railway engineer, London, John Murray, 1857
² Thomas Talbot Bury, Coloured views of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway with a plate of the coaches, machines etc., Londres,

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Photo 4. Moorish Arch , Looking from the Tunnel by Bury : The author believes this view to be one of 2 source prints used to develop the Railway transfer.



Photo 5. Entrance of the Railway at Edge Hill, Liverpool by Bury : The second that makes up the composite image of the transfer.

R. Ackernann , 1831

³ Coloured views of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, BURY T.T. A facsimile of the original edition published in 1831 by R. Ackerman, Hugh Broadbent, Oldham, 1976

⁴ Elizabeth Collard, *The Potters View of Canada, Canadian Scenes on Nineteenth-Century Earthenware*, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montréal, 1983.

⁵ Joseph-Jean Paques, *Iconographie et datation des premières assiettes ferroviaires produites à Choisy*, *Passion Faïence*, no. 33, pp. 12-23, Mai 2007.

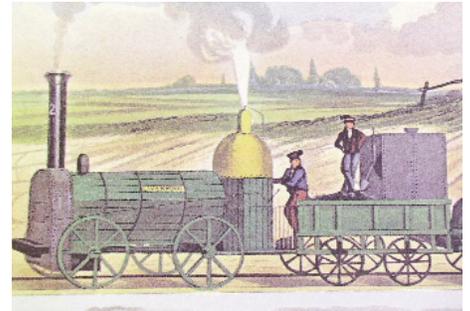


Photo 6. The Liverpool Locomotive, by Bury.



Photo 7. A Passenger Carriage (First Class Coach) by Bury, of the type that would have been pulled by the Liverpool Locomotive.



Photo 8. Treasures from the York Railway Museum.