

INFORMATION SHEET

Plymouth Porcelain Collection: Overview and Statistics



Overview

William Cookworthy's porcelain factory (which operated from 1768 to 1770) is renowned for being the first factory in England to produce hard-paste porcelain.

Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery holds the largest public collection of Plymouth porcelain. A comprehensive catalogue of this collection has, to date, not been undertaken. However, the following statistics give a general overview of the collection and an idea of the scope and range of pieces currently held at the Museum.

As a rule, this overview focuses purely on Plymouth Porcelain and not Bristol. However, some wares fall into a 'grey area' due to the overlap between the two factories. Pieces attributed to Plymouth are included here although please note that this information may be subject to change in the course of future research.

In total, Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery holds **483** pieces of Plymouth Porcelain.

Museum displays regularly change to allow access to the whole collection.

Current Displays

- **148** items are currently on public display – equating to roughly 33% of the collection
- **84** items can be viewed in the Atrium Gallery (first floor)
- **41** items can be viewed in The China Connection (first floor)
- **4** can be seen in displays on the ground floor: Plymouth: Port and Place, Explore Nature and the Foyer
- **19** items are currently on loan to the Cookworthy Museum, Kingsbridge, Devon

Decoration

- **83** are monochrome
- **116** are Blue and White
- **286** are polychrome (this includes yellow, blue white and red, white and purple)

Marks

- **71** pieces are marked – equating to 14% of the collection
- **46** are marked with the Alchemist's sign for tin in underglaze blue
- **19** are marked with the Alchemist's sign for tin in red enamel
- **2** are marked with the Alchemist's sign for tin in gold
- **2** are marked with 'Mr W^m Cookworthy's Factory Plym^o 1770' in red enamel

Major Donors

- The main donors to the collection are:
- Stephen Simpson Bequest (1982) 79 items
- Arthur Hurdle Bequest (1936) 43 items
- J.L.Carpenter Bequest (1926) 35 items
- Sir George and Lady Radford Bequest (1976) 40 items

Domestic Wares

The collection includes **352** pieces of domestic ware. This equates to **73%**. The wares are:

Coffee can	6	Bowl	7
Coffee cup	37	Mortar	1
Teacup	17	Dish	22
Teabowl	4	Basket	4
Mug	55	Butter Tub	1
Coffee Pot	4	Sweetmeat Dish	24
Chocolate Pot	1	Saucer	12
Teapot	29	Sauceboat	83
Mustard Pot	1	Inkwell	5
Tea caddy	1	Vase	16
Jug	7	Milk Jug	9

Decorative Wares

The collection includes **131** pieces of domestic ware. This equates to **27%**. The wares are:

Continents: 2 Full Sets

Africa	4	America	7
Europe	7	Asia	6

Seasons: Large **2** (Spring, Autumn)
Small **9**

Elements: **3** (Water, Fire, Earth)

Figures:

Boy with toper	3	Matrimony	2
Female toper	2	Group of Putti	6
Gardener	5	Group of putti with goat	9
Gardener's Companion	5	Group of putti with lamb	1
Girl with dog	2	Putto	8
Lute player	2	Putto and dolphin	1
Piper	5	Small Putto	1
Small figure	2	Putto with candlestick	1

Animals:

Ram and lamb	2	Pheasant	7
Ewe and lamb	2	Small pheasant	3
Finch	2	Cow	2
Fish	2	Small cow	2
Hare	1	Sphinx	2
Lion	3	Swan	3
Large lion	2	Pug	1
Large lioness	1	Sheep	2