



New American Scenery



Enoch Wood & Sons transferware platter, *Cape Coast Castle on the Gold Coast Africa* c.1820.

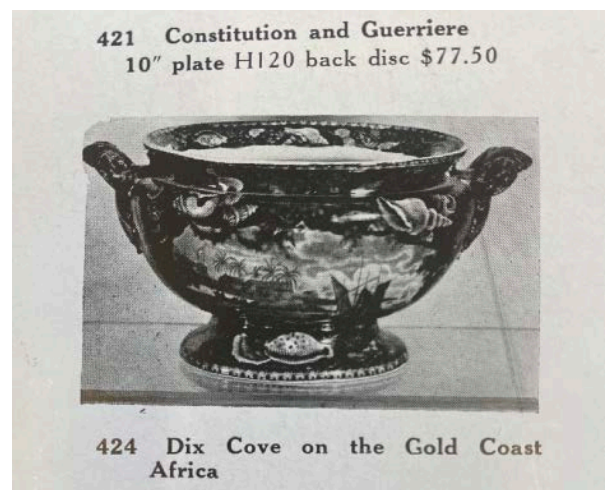
This has a direct link to toppled Bristol statue of slave trader Edward Colston of the Royal African Company (1680 - 1692)... Its administration centre was Cape Coast Castle in current day Ghana. Commenting on the UK's Black Lives Matter protests in the wake of George Floyd's death on BBC Newsnight, Aliyah Hasinah explained how the UK has 'had a longer time to marinate racism, to deeply entrench it through the use of scientific racism, eugenics, art, culture, business, politics, policies... In the same TV programme American actor Clark Peters talked about UK racism being 'cloaked in beautiful language'.

Characterised by a dark blue palette of extraordinary depth & subtlety blue and white transferware was part of the 'new media' of its day... huge quantities of pictorial Staffordshire wares were exported to the US in early 19th century... This platter is a perfect exemplar of the cloaking of racist history in 'beautiful' form... The original source

of Enoch Wood's transferware design was an engraving by John Hill (1806) after a painting by George Webster (1799), commissioned by HRH the Duke of Clarence as part of a campaign against abolitionists.. This platter was from a series of marine views made exclusively for US market.... In the original images both ships and castle flags were British, but Woods' 'slaver' sails under Stars & Stripes.



A re-branded slaving ship, is pictured within a scenic shell border in a desirable consumer product for the US market by Enoch Wood (purported to have been an abolitionist). British & American slave traders pictured together on a piece of tableware.



Two related Woods pieces include *Christiansburg* & *Dix Cove* (Images from *The Standard Catalogue of Anglo-American China*, S. Laidlacker 1938). Historical transferware collector literature, normally so thorough in every detail, reveals scant mention of the nature of trade depicted on these wares....

All pictorial historical transferwares are 'confected' compositions, almost exclusively, they represent a 'white settler' view of the world, whitewashing + selectively commemorating.

Another small part of a complex recipe making up the subtle marinade of contemporary racism.... (Thanks to Dr Jo Dahn for source image details).



Cumbrian Blue(s), New American Scenery, After Wood & Warhol. Hand made porcelain platter by Mara Superior, with painted underglaze. Paul Scott, Mara Superior 2019....

As part of his *Death and Disaster* series in 1964, Warhol made a series of screen prints and paintings entitled *Race Riot* ... The works were based on Charles Moore's iconic photographs of unarmed black civil rights protesters set upon by police and attack dogs on May 3rd 1963. They were featured two weeks later in Life magazine, and the article on the Birmingham civil rights protests 'caused a national outcry that reverberated all the way to the Senate'....



Unlike the image on Wood's Cape Coast Castle platter, Warhol's intent was clearly not to prettify the unacceptable....

The title though? 'Race Riots' did occur in Birmingham Alabama in May 1963, but only after black leaders of civil rights group advocating nonviolent direct action were bombed on May 11...

So this peaceful demonstration on May 3 preceded the riots... it was set upon by the police ...

In framing the language used to title works, to describe events, artists and the media influence how they are seen, perceived and recorded.

In this case, shouldn't Warhol's artwork really have been called 'Police (Race) Riot'? ... It's also deeply depressing to see how little has changed since 1963....

Based on two @cumbrianblue_s Instagram posts, Paul Scott 2019.