

Creamware



In 1762, after deciding to go into business by himself, Wedgwood began to work at the Brick House where he manufactured a cream-coloured 'useful' ware that he had been experimenting with since the Ivy House. He described it as, "a species of earthenware made for the table, covered with a rich and and brilliant glaze." This ware, which originated from cream body stoneglaze, came to be known as Creamware. This ware appealed to the widely popular eighteenth century Rococo motif of fruits and vegetables. Creamware's popularity and demand was due its versatility: from highly decorative, ornamental household items, to more utilitarian table pieces. It reigned successfully from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, as its production was easy and cheap.

Creamware began as an earthenware made of white clay glazed with lead, which resulted in its cream-colour, hence the name. Early Creamware was of a deeper tone and of a lighter weight from that of modern productions. The color became lighter after 1775 with the introduction of Cornish china-clay and china-stone.

Soon after its introduction by Wedgwood, Creamware became an admiration of Queen Charlotte of England. The same year he moved to Brick House, he presented Queen Charlotte he manufactured a cream-colored 'useful' ware that he had been experimenting with since the Ivy House. He described it as, "a species of earthenware made for the table, covered with a rich with a caudle and breakfast set. She was so taken with by his work that she styled him, "Potter to Her Majesty," in 1765. Thus came the era of Queen's ware.

Queen's Ware

By 1765 Wedgwood had perfected the manufacture of what was newly termed Queen's Ware, allowing his production to meet the increasing demands of the market. Recognized as a ware made specifically for the Queen, Wedgwood created a product that would uphold the value of the Queen, with no overly decorative, irrelevant motifs, or harsh colours.

The embellishments that decorate Queen's Ware underline the shape of the body and the colours compliment the glazed, cream surface. The English floral patterns that border the edges of Queen's Ware plates developed from the same classic Greek borders of leaves and berries that inspired many of the Wedgwood shapes. The decoration for Queen's Ware was such a delicate and intricate process it required an extension of manufactory. In 1770 Wedgwood arranged for Thomas Bentley to open a shop in Chelsea that would specialize in the decoration and painting of Queen's Ware.

The Wedgwood name was widely upheld and Queen's Ware received popularity worldwide. The value of Queen's Ware is illustrated in Empress Catherine of Russia's commission for a 952-piece dinner and dessert set in 1773. The set was to be used for "the Frog Service" in the palace of La Grenouillère. Each piece depicting an English landscape was carefully hand-painted, taking a year to complete. Queen's Ware is a landmark in Wedgwood's career and exemplifies what he called the "elegance of form." Each piece, even the simplest, embody grace.