EAST LIVERPOOL, OHIO: THE Staffordshire OF America

A Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts

by

Alison Peta Bennion, B.A.

The Ohio State University

1984
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank Patience Wilson for her invaluable support in preparing this thesis.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th></th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOTES</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>THE NEED FOR SKILLED IMMIGRANTS</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOTES</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>THE FORCES BEHIND IMMIGRATION</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOTES</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>THE GROWTH OF THE EAST LIVERPOOL POTTERY INDUSTRY</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOTES</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>OLD WAYS IN THE NEW ENVIRONMENT</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOTES</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOTES</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

In North Staffordshire, England, there is a chain of six towns which stretches for some six miles from Longton at the south to Tunstall at the north, known collectively as "The Potteries." Indeed, in no other county is there a district so utterly associated with one trade as is the North Staffordshire Potteries. The possession of natural advantages arising from the clay beds and coal fields found in the locality conditioned the rise and concentration of the pottery industry, and from the early eighteenth century period of technological experiment and development, through to the present day operations of Wedgwood and Doulton, potting has remained the primary orientation of that community.

John Goodwin, one of the pioneer potters of East Liverpool, Ohio, was born in 1816 in Burslem, one of the six pottery towns. He began working at his potter's trade when eight years old, and after an apprenticeship of seven years labored in the industry in North Staffordshire until 1842 when he came to the United States and found work at Saint Louis, Missouri. From there, he moved on to Cincinnati to secure employment, but having no success he planned to go on to Pittsburgh.
While en route, learning of a small pottery at East Liverpool, he decided to make this place his objective, and there found work with a man he had known in England. After a short time, he moved on to a new position in the East Liverpool area with a master potter from Staffordshire, Benjamin Harker, who was just establishing a small pottery. Like many of his contemporaries who sought to improve their economic position in America, however, Goodwin decided to leave the status of journeyman behind. He leased a small building, erected a kiln, and conducted a very successful trade in yellow and Rockingham ware until 1853, when he retired from manufacturing and began to deal in real estate. Nevertheless, his attachment to potting remained strong, and in 1870 he moved to Trenton, New Jersey, purchasing a half share in a pottery there. After two years, he disposed of his interests and returned to East Liverpool, where along with his sons he established a new pottery. Influenced by his contact with the white ware industry at Trenton, he proposed to begin its manufacture at the scene of his original activities. Goodwin's plans were cut short by his death in 1875, but his sons afterward carried his plans to fruition.

John Goodwin was a man of considerable enterprise who occupied a prominent position within his adopted county and city, twice serving as mayor of East Liverpool. His oldest son, James, continued in the tradition of his father as both successful manufacturer and influential figure within the community. Born in East Liverpool in 1846, he was educated in the city schools, and at the age of seventeen joined his father in the pottery business. When his father died, James joined with his brothers in organizing the firm of Goodwin Brothers. Originally
manufacturing yellow ware, in 1877 they turned their attention to white
and china ware which became their specialty.

James Goodwin was held in high esteem as one of the representa-
tive businessmen of East Liverpool, well known in business and manufac-
turing circles throughout Ohio. He was a director of the Potters'
National Bank of East Liverpool and a Treasurer of the United States
Potters' Association. For his business activities, and participation
in municipal affairs, he was highly regarded as one of the most in-
fluential men of the county.\(^3\)

The story of the Goodwin family is indicative of the process by
which East Liverpool became, between 1840 and the end of the nineteenth
century, largely a transplanted English potting town. As the East
Liverpool Tribune proclaimed on the front page of its first issue on
22 January 1876, and on all subsequent issues, East Liverpool was,
"The Ceramic City -- The Staffordshire of America." East Liverpool's
rise to prosperous manufacturing center was based upon technology,
skill and manpower transplanted from North Staffordshire.

The activities of the potters from North Staffordshire in East
Liverpool had contributed by the mid-nineteenth century to the establish-
ment and consolidation of the American pottery industry at its first im-
portant center. From the 1840s onwards, hundreds of men with
generations of potting in their blood--men who had undergone a demanding
apprenticeship in the potteries of England, knowledgeable about the
chemistry of clays, and skilled in throwing, turning, making moulds and
decorating--left Staffordshire for the United States and provided the
critical ingredient for a native pottery industry. In 1915, the United
States Department of Commerce noted that "the inception, and to a great extent the growth, of the pottery industry in the United States is due to the immigration of English practical potters and skilled workmen."

By 1895, Ohio was the foremost clay working state in the nation. While its eminence was in large measure due to bricks, the annual product of ceramics reached a value of $11,000,000. The activities of the Staffordshire potters in Ohio demonstrate that the transit of technical skills and methods as a result of immigration was a major factor in the rise of American industry. While some of the immigrants, like Goodwin, achieved the status of influential businessman and manufacturer, the majority remained practical operative potters who manned the new industry and enjoyed a higher standard of living than in the old country.

In inaugurating and developing the industry, the English potters made East Liverpool an industrial center whose conditions paralleled in many ways those of North Staffordshire. East Liverpool, just like its English counterpart, grew up to depend upon one industry, and the occupations of the industrial population were the same. Until the end of the nineteenth century, the industry was operated primarily by men from Staffordshire who with their families formed a large majority of the population.

More at home in American society than were non-English speaking immigrants, their adjustment was relatively easy, and the Goodwins illustrate well how social assimilation did not present a major problem for the immigrant potters and their offspring. Despite the potential for relatively easy absorption into American life, the English did not
completely discard the old for the new, and sought to preserve much of what was familiar in the old country.
NOTES

1. Yellow ware is made from a mixture of yellow clay and water and has a transparent glaze. For Rockingham ware, yellow clay is used but glazed to a rich brown.

2. The term white ware applies to articles in which kaolin or china clay is the principal ingredient. When burned, the body is light-colored and has a white, glazed surface. Both white earthenware and china come under this general description.


6. Ibid., p. 31.
CHAPTER II
THE NEED FOR SKILLED IMMIGRANTS

In 1850, almost one million pound's worth of North Staffordshire pottery was exported to America, the sturdy blue and white Staffordshire ware being the staple pottery in the majority of American homes. In the colonial period, America had become an important market for North Staffordshire, and the export of cheap table and toilet ware was vital to the prosperity of the pottery towns. In 1767, Josiah Wedgwood wrote,

The bulk of our particular manufactures are, you know, exported to foreign markets, for our home consumption is very trifling in comparison to what is sent abroad; and the principal of these markets are the Continent and Island of North America.

As Wedgwood continued, the colonies possessed every material required for pottery manufacture, equal if not superior to the resources of Great Britain. We have evidence of English potters experimenting with the clays of South Carolina and Florida as early as 1744. In 1767, Wedgwood himself sent an agent to South Carolina to negotiate for rights to clay in Cherokee country. Despite the potential that lay in America's resources, reliance on Britain for domestic and artistic wares was
to remain for another century. The trademarks of the Staffordshire master potters became well known in America by the 1820s, and the volume of trade was such that important Staffordshire firms like Ridgways and Adams became dependent upon it.⁵

Although suitable raw materials abounded in America, it was only when the Staffordshire potters brought their experience and technology that these resources were successfully exploited to any significant degree. Of course, basic utensils for cooking, eating and drinking were produced. The first settlers in Virginia had established small potteries in which simple domestic utensils were made. The Dutch in New York engaged in the manufacture of pottery. As early as 1684, the colonial governors of New Jersey had established a pottery at Burlington.⁶ Indeed, most parts of the country in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries made an inferior type of pottery for domestic use. Those desiring, and being able to afford, a better class of ware secured supplies from Britain.

The Revolution served as an important stimulus for the manufacture of pottery when the outbreak of hostilities put an end to the importation of goods from Britain. The increase in the number of potteries was extraordinary and unprecedented, but the new establishments tended to be small, poorly equipped and operated by men of little skill and experience, often making pots as a subsidiary occupation.⁷ It would be inaccurate and unjust to argue that all potting in America conformed to this picture before the arrival of the men from Staffordshire. Kilns were scattered along the seaboard producing crockery that did satisfy certain basic needs of the local market. For instance, between 1790 and 1796 we
have evidence of five definite potteries in Connecticut (as opposed to pottery production alongside another occupation) turning out such wares. In 1793, Vermont's first pottery was established at Bennington making coarse stoneware. Attempts to make china, or even the finer and more costly forms of white earthenware were few and far between. There was the odd pioneer establishment, for example, the instance of a pottery operating in Philadelphia in the 1790s producing cream-colored ware. Similar ware was being produced in one New Jersey pottery at about the same time, but at the beginning of the nineteenth century potting in America was in its infancy. Those coarse wares produced were made from clays found near the surface in which there was a sufficient quantity of iron to give the wares a reddish appearance when burned. Such wares were usually porous, very absorbent where not glazed, and easily broken. Fine, durable wares could not be made from such materials.

Before advances could be made, Americans had to learn to select the appropriate native clays, how to form them, fire them and decorate them. To develop an industry based upon craft skill, America needed those practical operatives supplied by North Staffordshire who had served an exacting apprenticeship in a trade in which generations of their ancestors had engaged. Evidence that those seeking to establish the industry in America sought British skill is present as early as 1767, when Wedgwood wrote of a pottery in South Carolina which had sent an agent to North Staffordshire for recruitment purposes. Underlining how important it was to have skilled immigrants carrying the technology for the establishment of an American industry, an 1886 consular report
written in Tunstall noted that

the industry is one of the more difficult ones to jump into, and an easy one to grow up to. Here, everyone seems to have a natural adaptation for it, and the masters also seem to know their trade thoroughly.

Many of the present generation of manufacturers have started life as working potters. Most of them have their own secrets to guard as to the mixture of materials, the clay used for pottery, the glazing, etc. 13

In the mid-seventeenth century, pottery production was already tending to be localized in North Staffordshire. Writing in 1686 of a visit to North Staffordshire he had made in 1677, Doctor Robert Plot spoke at great length of the potteries at Burslem. 14 At the time of his visit, Burslem had become a busy center for the making of pottery, though neither the range of its products nor extent of its markets was particularly wide. Pottery was made on the wheel and decorated with liquid clays of various colors. The glazing process was primitive, consisting only of powdering the ware, before baking, with lead ore which had been beaten into dust. Moulds for the making of pottery, the lathe for the smoothing of ware made on the wheel, and paints and enamels for decorative purposes were as yet unknown.

North Staffordshire had certain economic advantages for the manufacture of pottery. It possessed in easily obtainable form all the raw materials for the manufacture of earthenware at that period. Large beds of good common clays lay near the surface and coal was abundant. Lead mines in the immediate vicinity supplied the only material for glaze, and no raw material of any kind had to be carried from a distance. 15
The rapid growth of the English pottery industry in the eighteenth century was most marked in North Staffordshire. Certainly great strides were made in technical and artistic advance in London, Derby, and Worcester, but the story in these places is one of the strivings of individual firms. In North Staffordshire the picture is of the growth of a metropolis of the trade.

The rise of the North Staffordshire industry began with the introduction of the manufacture of white ware and the use of moulds. White pottery, being more attractive to the purchaser, penetrated a market which was closed to the brown, red and yellow wares, while the introduction of moulds made it possible for the potter to make ware of any shape. In 1745, Ralph Daniel, a Staffordshire potter introduced the system of making moulds of plaster of Paris and helped convert potting into a specialized industry. Casting in a mould gave infinite scope for variation, for the clay shell produced, when dry, could be as fine and as varied in shape as the skill of the potter and heat of the furnace would permit. A few years before this, William Astbury, another North Staffordshire potter had commenced making white stone ware. This ware, made of the local colored clays, was covered with a thin coating of white Devon clay. Astbury's next step was to make his ware white throughout. The second half of the century saw much experimenting, and many improvements were made in the clay bodies. The clay body finally used by Astbury and his contemporaries was a mixture of light-colored local clays, calcined flint and Dorsetshire ball clay.

In 1750, Enoch Booth, a Tunstall manufacturer, adopted an improved lead glaze, together with an improved method of glazing. Under the old
method, lead dust was applied to the unbaked ware, but under the new method, a fluid glaze of clay, lead and flint was used. This was used only for baked ware. Thus the new method involved a double baking, the first to burn the clay and the second to fuse the glaze into the ware. After the adoption of this method, lead glaze no longer militated against the production of white ware. Improvements in earthenware quickly followed, the outstanding improvement being the production of cream-colored earthenware which, when perfected by Wedgwood in the early 1760s, became the standard earthenware of the Staffordshire pottery industry.¹⁸ This basic form of fine-quality earthenware was the first of an extensive range of ceramic bodies produced for useful and ornamental purposes. Pearl white was made as an alternative to cream-colored. A durable earthenware was produced under various names: stone china, ironstone china, and white granite.¹⁹

These improvements in clay bodies, glazes and methods of production were accompanied by changes and innovations in the decoration of ware. Printing over glaze in enamels came to prominence in the middle of the eighteenth century, but it was too expensive a process to be used for anything but the better quality wares. The future of decoration lay with underglaze blue printing, introduced into Staffordshire by Josiah Spode in 1784, which permitted the decoration of the common run of goods. The blue prints satisfied a popular demand for some time, but from about 1825 underglaze prints in red, brown, and green began to appear.²⁰

The beginning of the nineteenth century saw the pottery industry practically centralized in North Staffordshire and catering for a world
market. The period of the master potter operating a relatively small business which required little capital was virtually over by 1750, and the later eighteenth century was marked by a great expansion of the industry in terms of factories, employees, production and exports. Burslem no longer held the exclusive position it had enjoyed earlier, for factories were springing up in Hanley, Shelton, Stoke, Tunstall and Longton. In extent of operations, North Staffordshire's potteries exceeded all others in Europe, and about 50,000 people in the district earned their livelihood from pottery manufacture.

The changes in the methods of pottery production in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries resulted in a great division of labor. Under the primitive conditions it was possible for the potter to be a skillful workman in every process of the trade, but by the end of the eighteenth century, such a possibility no longer existed. The making of pottery, from being an occupation not beyond the capacity of any one man, now included in its scope many skilled trades as a new generation of artisans arose. Some were engaged in preparing the clay for instance. The introduction of moulds produced a distinct class of workmen, the "pressers," who were again divided into the two classes of flatware and hollow ware. There were also those who glazed, baked or decorated the ware, and even the packing of ware into crates for dispatch to the customers was a separate occupation. Of all those occupations, very few were unskilled and qualifying as a craftsman demanded a long and exacting apprenticeship of seven years. Thus when during the nineteenth century these craftsmen decided to wrench themselves from old and familiar surroundings and attach themselves to a new environment, they
carried with them to the United States a technology which was to provide the basis for the native pottery industry.
NOTES


6. Barber, pp. 53-54.


15. Wedgwood, p. 9.
16. Ibid., p. 60.
17. Ibid., p. 46.
18. Ibid., p. 67.
CHAPTER III
THE FORCES BEHIND IMMIGRATION

The exodus from Staffordshire and the establishment of the American pottery industry at its first important center both began in the early 1840s. In 1840, the Englishman James Bennett, East Liverpool's pioneer potter, fired his first kiln of ware and provided the catalyst for the growth of the American pottery industry, for the success of the centure attracted a significant flow of Staffordshire potters to East Liverpool in the 1840s. While some like Goodwin had already worked their trade elsewhere in the United States, most came direct from the six pottery towns to make the serviceable yellow and Rockingham ware. A second major influx came between the Civil War and 1870 when potters also settled in the competing center of Trenton, New Jersey, but from the 1840s until the end of the nineteenth century, each decade saw the arrival of new clusters of recruits.¹

In the early nineteenth century, the common man's ignorance of America, its geography, institutions and economic life began to be dispelled, and this increase in popular knowledge ranks as one of the major influences in the rise of mass immigration to the United States. In the early nineteenth century, Morris Birbeck, through his Letters from
Illinois (1818), had made southern Illinois known to England, and his
descriptions of pioneer life in the West enjoyed tremendous popularity.
Likewise, numerous emigrant guidebooks were published which detailed
wages, prices, crops, climate and geography in different parts of the
United States. Newspapers commonly ran regular emigration features,
and indeed, the Staffordshire potters' own union newspaper, The Potter's
Examiner and Workman's Advocate (PEWA), ran such a feature beginning
early 1844: "As the spirit of Emigration seems to increase daily in
this district of the country," the Advocate explained, "we are induced
to give insertion to a series of letters, sent by different individuals
who have emigrated from this neighbourhood for the more liberal institu-
tions and broad lands of the far West." In addition to these letters,
extracts from Birbeck were included, along with a series of reports de-
tailing the mineral wealth of different states. It seems likely that
more influential than the formal printed matter were the masses of let-
ters sent by immigrants to friends and relatives back home. Such com-
munications, more personal than the printed word, spoke in optimistic
terms of the opportunity that America offered and issued appropriate
advice and warnings. Since the Advocate published in its columns be-
tween 1844 and 1847 so many of these letters, it is a particularly
valuable source in this respect.

Immigrant letters contrasted the situation in America with the
contemporary situation in Staffordshire and urged their recipients to
join the writers in the New World. A writer in East Liverpool in 1843,
for instance, was:
at a loss to know what you do to make a living, or what prospect you have to raise a family in England; nothing before you but slavery and starvation. I say at once leave such a country, for what, I ask can be the prospect of yourself and children under circumstances such as these? 3

Others have fairly detailed descriptions of East Liverpool itself, the quality of the clays there, how a man could rise above his old journeyman status and receive extremely favorable prices for his ware which would be in great demand. Still more letters spoke of the rise in standard of living their writers had experienced given the cheapness and abundance of food, while others wrote back in praise of the liberty and equality that were theirs in America.

The Staffordshire potter then gained a new awareness of the opportunity that lay ahead of him should he choose to wrench himself from familiar surroundings, make the long and hard Atlantic crossing and attach himself to a new society. At the same time, he experienced an increasing discontentment with his own economic position and what looked like a bleak future should he choose to continue his working life in Staffordshire. Migration in the pottery industry was closely linked to the rigors of the trade cycle. In 1886, the American Consul Schoenhoff, who was based in Tunstall, one of the six pottery towns, reported that "the flow of immigrants to the mother country is heaviest in years of depression when trade and manufacture is stagnant in Great Britain." 4

That first important influx of potters in the 1840s coincided with a severe trade depression. Between 1837 and 1842, trade in the North Staffordshire potteries was almost consistently bad, multitudes became unemployed and nearly all were thrown on short time. 5 Again, a severe
trade depression occurred between 1846 and the end of 1848, and at its lowest point in the summer of 1847, slowed the industry more than at any time during the previous twenty years. Throughout the district, unemployment rose, wages declined, and journeymen were forced to work at less than the journeyman rate through the imposition of an "allowance system" where a worker was forced to allow his employer as much as four pence in every shilling of his wages.

In a series of letters written during this period by the Goodwin family, a family of Staffordshire flint millers, to their relatives who had arrived in America in 1844, we see the link between the persistence of poor trade and emigration fervor. In a letter of February, 1848, James Goodwin wrote to his brother, Thomas, in Illinois that

trade is very bad in this country and wages are very low.... I think the time will not be long before I shall have the pleasure of seeing you again, for without trade alters soon you may expect me. There is a great many coming this spring; there is a great many failures in the Potteries.

Not only did the potter have the trade cycle to contend with, but his financial position was made still more precarious through certain unfavorable conditions which were peculiar to his own industry, namely the two trade customs of "Annual Hiring" and "Good from Oven", both of which were subject to considerable abuse on the part of the master. In practice, annual hiring meant that a potter hired himself to a master for one year at Martinmas, at a rate of wages mutually agreed upon. This agreement could not be broken or altered without the consent of both parties, but there was no pretence on the part of the master that
the system was reciprocal. An employer could discharge his workmen
when he pleased, but no workman could leave his employment except at
the general termination of all contracts in November. Thus the journey-
man could find himself tied to a situation which yielded him no more
than a day's employment a week. If he was to leave his situation he
risked prosecution, but even if his employer chose not to pursue this
course, the potter would be asked to present a written discharge to
the next employer to whom he offered his services. As a writer to
the union newspaper said,

If an operative potter be starving on two days
work per week, and such a situation be offered
to him at which he might earn a comfortable
living, he dare not accept in defiance of his
employer. His name is signed on some counting
house ledger for one year's servitude and he
must starve his time out.

The system of "good from oven" concerned two important branches of
the trade, the flat ware pressers and the hollow ware pressers. Men in
these branches were paid only for work that left the biscuit oven in a
perfect state, not their own hands. The master simply assumed that
whatever ware came out in an imperfect state had come imperfectly from
the hands of the man who had fashioned it, and made no allowances for
possible damage to the ware while going through the process of firing, a
process where most damage arose. If the kilnman either cooled the
ovens too quickly or overfired the ware then it tended to crack.

It was probably inevitable that such a system, where power was in-
equitably distributed between master and journeyman would admit the
practice of so many abuses. Some masters would make no attempt to
distinguish between good and bad ware, but assume an average of bad ware and deduct it from the total amount. It was an admitted practice by masters to sell as "seconds" the damaged articles at a reduced price, while refusing to pay anything to the workman who had made them. Other damaged articles for which the presser received nothing would be printed, glazed and sold for best.

On top of all this, in the 1840s the potters were anxious over the possible introduction of machinery to the trade and end of the days of skilled labor. Even before Charles James Mason introduced a machine for making flat ware in November, 1844, the union newspaper had helped formulate the attitude of operative potters toward the mechanization of their industry. Articles emphasized unemployment and the meager wages suffered by hand loom weavers, and ever present was the implication that it could be the potters' turn next. With the introduction of Mason's machine, however, there was no longer any need to confine stories of poverty and unemployment to textile workers, for machinery now threatened the potters too:

Machinery is your foe, your mortal enemy. It tells you of rags and wretchedness, poverty, desperation and crime, and tells you they are to be yours.

By mid-December, 1844, the first attempt to introduce the machine had been abandoned for the ware it produced exhibited hair cracks after firing. Nonetheless, by late 1846, workers in North Staffordshire were acutely aware that the application of machinery to the making of earthenware had been accomplished successfully in the north of England. Early in 1847, the machine came south when the firm of
Copeland and Garrett introduced it at their works in Stoke. The potters' union petitioned against its introduction, and within the space of two weeks it was withdrawn. The General Election was drawing near and the Advocate thought that Copeland had merely withdrawn the machine until he was safely re-elected as member for Stoke. Such cynicism was not warranted though for the machine was not heard of again until 1863. It seems that many of the manufacturers themselves must have entertained fears about the introduction of machinery. In the words of one commentator, "they fled from it as from a ghost." However timid this invasion by machinery might have been, the potters were thrown into absolute panic, and even though handwork was not displaced by other methods of pottery manufacture, the machinery scare remained and exerted great influence. Ever present was the fear that these machines might be reintroduced.

The economic situation of the 1840s, along with the unsatisfactory terms of work and the threat of technology during normal conditions, had combined with the lure of a freer, more rewarding life in America to forge strong links between the pottery towns of North Staffordshire, and East Liverpool, Ohio. As the century went on, these links grew stronger and deeper as each decade saw new departures by practical operative potters. In 1895, East Liverpool had a population of fifteen thousand, the great majority being first or second generation English. Many joined family or friends, while others were recruited to inaugurate new techniques.

Annual consular reports from Tunstall, beginning in 1869, testify to the contribution of potters to the tide of emigration flowing toward
the United States, and highlight the reasons for this movement. In his reply to a series of questions sent to him on the subject, Consul Lane reported in 1885 that most workers left to make more money or obtain a better social position, and that many of these people had friends or relatives there who encouraged them.24 The reports show that just as in the 1840s, the movement was consequent upon the economic situation in the pottery district as compared with the prospects of success in the American industry. These men were excited by the knowledge that higher wages, the chance to save, and a higher standard of living would be theirs should they choose to uproot themselves. The consuls reported upon wage rates in the same branches of the industry in England and America and indicate the remunerative advantage that lay with seeking employment in America. For instance, in 1886, it was calculated that whereas a dish maker in East Liverpool was left with $43.02 after annual expenses, his counterpart in Staffordshire only managed the equivalent of $12.96. Wages were greater for the American workman, and yet his food was cheaper.25 Not only did the Staffordshire potter know that in the United States he could enjoy a better standard of living and amass more wealth, but he was also led to believe that he could look forward to a greater degree of respect from his employer than that to which he was used. Reports circulated in the district that employers in the American industry did not expect humility from their employees. In America, the potters heard, everyone was treated with equal respect whether a manufacturer or an operative.26

The belief that America was the country for the workingman came to be deeply-embedded into the psyche of the Staffordshire potters. That
they had not escaped the emigration fervor so prevalent throughout Europe was of the utmost significance for those engaged in developing the pottery industry in the United States.
NOTES


2. PEWA, 13 January 1844, p. 56.

3. PEWA, 2 March 1844, p. 152.


6. The Staffordshire Advertiser, 21 September 1850, p. 3.

7. Ibid.


10. Ibid., p. 33.

11. PEWA, 30 August 1845, p. 105.


13. Ibid., p. 31.

14. PEWA, 9 December 1848, p. 11.

15. PEWA, 9 November 1844, p. 186.

17. PEWA, 24 October 1846, p. 132.
18. PEWA, 13 March 1847, p. 74.
19. PEWA, 3 April 1847, p. 103.
21. Owen, p. 94.
22. Ibid., p. 95.
23. OBLS (1895), p. 31.
25. Ibid., H. Doc. 157, 49th Congress, 2d session, 1887, p. 537.
26. Ibid., H. Doc. 54, 48th Congress, 2d session, 1885, p. 825.
CHAPTER IV

THE GROWTH OF THE EAST LIVERPOOL POTTERY INDUSTRY

During the early years of the pottery industry in East Liverpool, the pioneers from England displayed considerable enterprise and persistence. In England, the clays had been worked for generations, and the industry was well acquainted with their location, composition and uses, but the East Liverpool pioneers had to locate, and experiment with, the native clays before beginning those operations which inaugurated the East Liverpool yellow ware industry. Immigrant artisans, with little or no personal capital, and little business experience served as pioneers of the Ohio trade, for potting was, in the early days of growth, an activity that demanded considerable craft skill, but did not require a large amount of investment in machinery and buildings.

James Bennett's East Liverpool efforts had been preceded by other manufacturing ventures by English potters in the United States. In 1827, for instance, Jabez Vodrey established a small pottery at Pittsburgh and made yellow and stoneware. Little is known of his venture on this side of the Atlantic, but information gleaned from the Staffordshire potters' union newspaper suggests that although a reasonable quality of ware was produced, Vodrey was unable to secure sufficient
labor to make the pottery a going concern. In 1828, John Hancock, a Wedgwood apprentice, constructed a small pottery at South Amboy, New Jersey, to produce yellow ware. This pottery apparently failed, for in 1840 Hancock went with his son to Louisville, Kentucky, and started a stoneware pottery. He remained there until 1843, when he was attracted to East Liverpool's potential. James Clews, notable among the Staffordshire master potters of the early nineteenth century, established a pottery at Troy, Indiana, in 1836. While he possessed considerable personal capital and financial backing, and had brought to the United States operatives from Staffordshire to assist in the venture, his pottery failed. He had asserted that he could produce white ware, equal to the best produced in England, but the result was so unsatisfactory that he abandoned its manufacture and instead concentrated on common yellow ware. The quality of this ware was low too, for the clay was not good enough by itself, and the cost of transporting other clays to improve the quality of the ware would have proved excessive. Moreover, in England, Clews had worked with materials tested by many years of experience, but in Indiana the English methods and formulas proved impracticable, and it seems he was not capable of making the necessary changes. In the spring of 1839, Vodrey took charge of the pottery, and continued to run it until 1846 when from lack of skilled labor and capital he abandoned it. In 1847, he too moved to East Liverpool.

Bennett's activities in East Liverpool, then, proved crucial for the American pottery industry. Where his predecessors had experienced isolation and failure, Bennett's success have rise to the most active
competition in that area, and coincident with the dissatisfaction of the English potters in the 1840s, the new East Liverpool potteries obtained the necessary skilled labor. Unlike Clews in Indiana, Bennett found in East Liverpool large quantities of clay suitable for yellow ware and experimented with it until he had found the appropriate clay body. In addition, Bennett found in the locality several other features sufficient to warrant the venture. The area possessed coal that could easily be mined to fire the kilns, and had a river location to get the ware to market.  

Bennett's operations in East Liverpool, between 1839 and 1844, illustrate the two phases vital to the inauguration and growth of the American pottery industry during the nineteenth century. First came the creators and innovators, men like Bennett and Goodwin, who "knew about clays, and knew how ware was made 'over there'". These skilled hands found and extracted the materials for industrial use, and adapted the technology of the old country to these materials and the new environment. By late 1839, Bennett had secured financial backing from a local saw mill owner, Anthony Kearns, and had constructed a small plant of twenty feet by forty feet. In early 1840, his experiments completed, Bennett fired his first kiln of yellow ware mugs and plates. During the first year, the little plant grew on the strength of each batch of ware fired. Bennett peddled the products throughout eastern Ohio and with the money realized started his pottery anew. By 1841, the little business had so prospered that Bennett sent back to England for his three brothers, all potters, and another operative to join him. This marked the second phase in the nineteenth century growth of the
American pottery industry, since skilled and experienced operatives were drawn largely from the parent country.

For the next three years, Bennett's business increased steadily and the manufacture of Rockingham ware was soon coupled with the yellow ware with which Bennett had begun. In 1844, the Bennetts moved to Birmingham, Pennsylvania, and the East Liverpool plant was taken over by another family of English potters, the Croxalls. The Bennetts had faced considerable competition in East Liverpool, and the new location offered better shipping facilities. By this time, however, the industry had taken permanent root in East Liverpool, for other English potters had been attracted by Bennett's success and the knowledge that suitable clays were present there.

In late 1840, Benjamin Harker, John Goodwin's employer, was the first to follow Bennett when he commenced a small operation, building a kiln into the corner of an old log house at the foot of some hills in which he had found more of the clay suitable for the manufacture of yellow ware. Within a couple of years he too sent back to England for his brother, George, and calling their plant "The Etruria Pottery" after the Wedgwood factory in Staffordshire, they too made the serviceable yellow and Rockingham ware upon which Bennett's plant had grown. The Harker's small plant prospered, and in late 1843 they sent back to England for more hands. As their letter to the union newspaper said: "As the trade spreads, good potters will be wanted."

In 1842, the third pottery of the town was established when James Salt, Joseph Ogden, Frederick Mear and John Hancock began, like their predecessors, to produce yellow and Rockingham ware. Salt, Ogden, and
Mear, like Hancock, had also served their apprenticeship in Staffordshire and worked there for several years. It was this plant, "The Mansion Pottery", that received the larger portion of that first influx of practical potters from Staffordshire in the 1840s. During the latter years of the decade the pottery was the town's most prosperous manufacturing establishment.\(^9\)

The years 1844 and 1847 were also significant in East Liverpool's early manufacturing history. In 1844, John Goodwin engaged in his potting activities, and in 1847, Jabez Vodrey and William Brunt both appeared as manufacturers. Like that of Harker, all are important names in the history of earthenware in America, names that continued to be associated with the business in East Liverpool beyond the first generation, as the sons of these skilled men continued in the tradition of their fathers. Vodrey entered into partnership with two local property owners, Woodward and Blakely, and his experience and skill were instrumental in the successful manufacture by this firm of the cheap and sturdy table ware upon which the industry in East Liverpool grew in the 1840s.\(^{10}\) Brunt, like Vodrey and Goodwin, was no stranger to the United States when he arrived in East Liverpool. In 1840, he left Staffordshire for Illinois where he settled as a farmer. His attachment to potting remained strong, however, and he sold his assets in Illinois, sent for his son-in-law, William Bloor, another English potter, and with the capital realized commenced manufacturing in East Liverpool.\(^{11}\)

By the mid-nineteenth century, through this concentration of hereditary skill, the village in which Bennett had established his pottery had been transformed into a rising manufacturing center.
Statistics for the early period of the industry are meager, but by 1853, the annual output of ware was estimated at $35,000. The serviceable table ware was in demand in the growing markets of the West, and the cost of transporting fragile imported goods from the seacoast to these markets served as an important impetus for the East Liverpool pottery industry. During the months of the year when river navigation was possible, goods were shipped by water to merchants in Saint Louis, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Louisville, where they found easy sale. When bad weather did not permit this, the disposal of ware was obviously difficult. The ware was peddled throughout the country on wagons, and exchanged for farm produce which the manufacturers handed out to the men in lieu of cash. The winter of 1854 to 1855 proved especially difficult for this reason, but the pioneers who had invested their livelihoods in the little potteries persisted and their employees did not fail them.

By the Civil War, both the eastern and western concentrations of the nineteenth century American pottery industry had been settled, for in 1852, the potteries of Trenton, New Jersey, had their beginning when the Englishman James Taylor, who had worked in the business in East Liverpool, commenced the manufacture of yellow and Rockingham ware. The growth of the Trenton industry also illustrates the importance of immigrant skill and labor for American pottery, since progress there was based largely upon the work of craftsmen from Staffordshire, a number of whom had previously worked in East Liverpool.

Although in the early years of growth American potteries had been operated profitably, the business had not attained significant status.
Commercial prominence came through the stimulus given to manufacturing by the conditions incident to the Civil War. The real potential that lay within the Staffordshire potter was unleashed and permanent progress was made. Extracts from a speech given in East Liverpool by Senator John Sherman of Ohio in June, 1887, highlight the subsequent pattern of growth in the industry. Speaking of the years 1861 and 1862, he said that: "At that time the business was scarcely known in the United States" for "with the English competition and cheap labor in that country you could not succeed", but "owing to the encouragement given to the tariff after the war, the industry grew and you prospered."18

The government's fiscal needs during the war resulted in sweeping advances in the tariff. In 1862, duties stood at 37 percent and by the end of the war a level of 47 percent had been reached, more than twice the pre-war rate. Moreover, protection continued after the war, and in the first general revision of the tariff in 1883, the pottery manufacturers had rallied so strongly to the support of the existing rates, that the duties on china and earthenware were maintained. The industry received its highest protection ever in the McKinley Tariff of 1890, when rates of 55 percent were imposed on earthenware and 60 percent on china.

America possessed all the required materials for pottery manufacture, but these had not been exploited to any great extent, for since their inception, the potteries had been confronted with a prejudice on the part of both dealer and consumer for the imported article backed up by famous English potting names like Ridgway and Adams. Thus the rise of protection served as a tremendous stimulus for the growth of the
American pottery industry. Since the 1840s, the necessary skill and expertise had been drawn to the United States for the American potteries to make the most of these favorable circumstances. The business steadily increased in magnitude, and a great improvement took place in the quality of the wares, as those already engaged in the business expanded their operations and others were induced by the promise of the returns to begin manufacturing.

By the autumn of 1862, labor was scarce in East Liverpool and many of the factories crippled, but word was sent back to Staffordshire for new recruits who helped offset the drain of men into the Union Army. After the war, the business so increased as to ensure employment for all and new hands too, for by 1870 no less than ten enterprising progressive firms had been added to East Liverpool's ten existing factories. All but one of the existing firms were owned by English potters turned manufacturers, and of the new partnerships formed, nine can be identified as either wholly or partly English. In this new spirit of commercialism, the names of Vodrey, Brunt, Harker, and Goodwin—now both first and second generation East Liverpool potters—continued to play a prominent role. Indeed, as the industry grew, these families maintained a significant degree of control over it.

The new firms, along with additions to several of the older firms, marked a new epoch in pottery architecture. As an outgrowth of the artisan's workshop, many of the older factories had grown up in a haphazard fashion, but the old makeshift plan of building was over and factories were substantial and built with an eye to efficiency in the arrangement of shops and kilns. Technological strides were made as
steam power was introduced for certain operations. The clays instead of being mixed with paddles by hand, and strained in hand sieves as was still the custom in England's potteries, were mixed by steam rotating paddles in large slip vats, and shaken in sieves also worked by steam power.23

Until the rise in protection initiated by the Civil War, the American potteries had followed the line of least resistance given the preference for the foreign product, and concentrated on the cheap but sturdy yellow table and toilet ware market. In 1873, the value of these products manufactured in East Liverpool reached $300,000.24 By 1875, American manufacturers dominated this market and Staffordshire was forced to concentrate on supplying the finer and more artistic table wares.25 The abilities of the Staffordshire potter in America, however, could be applied to the manufacture of wares much finer than yellow, for as the 1895 Ohio State Report noted: "In the cases of a large percent of the operatives was an actual experience in the finest white ware potteries of England."26 The tariff brought this experience to the fore, and domestic white wares became a permanent feature of the American industry.

Trenton had taken the lead in this line of production in 1855, and the Civil War consolidated the venture there.27 The first attempt at making white ware in East Liverpool came in 1860, when William Bloor began the manufacture of a high quality ware, much like porcelain, but in a short time he had exhausted his means and was forced to abandon the endeavor.28 It was as a result of Trenton's example, however, and through the influence of John Goodwin that white wear was engrailed on
to the manufacturers of East Liverpool in 1872.  

At that time, East Liverpool had a population of 2,500, nearly all of whom were English operatives and their families. By 1879, East Liverpool had eight firms manufacturing white ware, and six of these were in the hands of the English founders or their sons. The advances that had been made since 1872 received recognition at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876, when William Brunt II and William Bloor received medals of merit for their white ware.

Improvements in the quality of ware produced in East Liverpool were accompanied by advances in manufacturing technology. The industry soon followed the lead of England where machinery had been applied to pottery manufacture by 1870, for by 1877 in East Liverpool, hollow ware was made on a machine known as a "jigger", and flat ware on a "jolly", the machine that had caused such alarm in Staffordshire in the 1840s. The introduction of machinery did not bring unemployment to East Liverpool as the business was so extended as to demand plenty of operatives.

The twenty years between the birth of the East Liverpool white ware industry in 1872, and its most successful year 1892, when it reaped the handsome benefits of protection under the McKinley Tariff were years of great achievement. This was true not just in terms of volume of production, but of improvements in the quality of the ware, its decoration and its cheapening to the consumer. The production of white wear tended primarily to a high quality durable white earthenware known as white granite, although there was some specialization in china.

The Ohio Labor Report of 1895 pointed to the importance of immigrant craftsmen in all this, for "the foundation of the rapid and
wonderful development was of a far more staple character than could have been furnished by inexhaustible beds of kaolin. In consisted of a potting community in which the business had been carried on for generations. In an editorial of 30 March 1877, The East Liverpool Daily Crisis also reflected upon East Liverpool's progress and pointed to the Brunts, Goodwins, Harkers and Vodreys as influential figures in the process.

Although Trenton had taken the lead in the manufacture of white ware, by 1892 East Liverpool was the main center of white ware production in the United States. Trenton had lost its supremacy by going into the manufacture of sanitary goods, but in addition East Liverpool had the advantage of the great market of the northwest and being farther away from the seaboard where the competition of imported ware was strongest. East Liverpool's yellow ware industry did not disappear altogether, but its output declined as reductions were made in the price of white crockery.

The transplanting of the pottery industry from Staffordshire to the United States was clearly a successful process, but the end of the nineteenth century saw the termination of the movement. By then, the industry was becoming established along its own lines and no longer relied to the degree it had done on immigrant labor. The application of machine processes to pottery manufacture reduced the need for inherited craft skill. Although in 1895, a large majority of East Liverpool's population were English by birth or descent, in recent years unemployed farm laborers from eastern Ohio had also joined the ranks of operatives. A similar pattern emerged in Trenton, for by 1889 the
less skilled jobs there were being filled by native born Americans. By the beginning of the twentieth century, except for the arrival of a few experienced managers from Staffordshire to supervise the process of manufacture, the migration of the English potters to the United States was at an end.
NOTES

1. PEWA, 5 July 1845, p. 44.

2. For Hancock, see Barber, Pottery and Porcelain of the United States, p. 156; Spargo, Early American Pottery and China, p. 196.

3. For Clews and the record of the pottery at Troy, see Spargo, pp. 211-212.

4. This state of affairs continued until September, 1856, when a new line of the Cleveland and Pittsburgh Railroad was opened.


8. PEWA, 23 December 1843, p. 23.

9. Details of this pottery may be found in Zimmerman, p. 118.

10. The role of Vodrey is discussed in OBL (1895), p. 36.

11. For Brunt, see History of the Upper Ohio Valley with a Historical Account of Columbiana County, Ohio, II: 299; McCord, p. 152.


19. Ibid., p. 155.
21. The firms are enumerated in Zimmerman, pp. 116-118, 123-126, 196-200. The exceptions to the English owned firms were Knowles, Taylor, Knowles, formed by three East Liverpool men in 1854, and C.C. Thompson Pottery Company formed by a family of local merchants in 1868.
23. Clark, p. 496.
26. OBLS (1895), p. 11.
27. Ibid., p. 12.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid., p. 13.
30. Ibid., p. 31.
32. Ibid., p. 163.
a revolving mould, and a perpendicular tool known as a former was brought by the jiggeman down into the mould. This distributed the clay uniformly about the mould. The jolly: a flattened piece of clay was thrown on top of a plaster of Paris mould, which had the form of an inverted plate, or saucer. The mould was placed on a revolving disc, and the back of the ware was fashioned by pressure with a small tool in the hands of the workman. Previously, the skilled hand or the presser had cast liquid clay into moulds to make flat and hollow ware.

34. OBLS (1877), p. 236.
36. Ibid., p. 11.
38. OBLS (1895), p. 23.
39. Ibid., p. 42.
40. Ibid., p. 34.
CHAPTER V
OLD WAYS IN THE NEW ENVIRONMENT

East Liverpool did not deserve the title "The Staffordshire of America" solely because of transplanted technology, manpower and volume of ceramic production. The title was also appropriate because many of the characteristics, customs, and habits that had grown up with the English industry manifested themselves in the new environment.

Just as North Staffordshire was so totally associated with the trade, East Liverpool was distinctly a pottery town in which the livelihoods of a large majority of the families depended upon pottery manufacture alone.¹ Trenton, on the other hand, was a city of diversified industries. Moreover, the physical appearance of East Liverpool resembled that of the towns of North Staffordshire. Large brick workshops up to four stories high, and the tops of the great kilns within, dominated the skyline of both.²

As the East Liverpool potteries evolved, the family business became characteristic of the industry, as the sons of the town's leading manufacturers learned the trade and followed in the tradition of their fathers. John Goodwin's three sons became manufacturers, as did James, John and William Vodrey.³ William and Henry Brunt assumed their
father's interests, as did the two sons of George Harker. A similar pattern characterized the Staffordshire industry. When Josiah C. Wedgwood wrote his history of potting in Staffordshire in 1911, he noted the involvement of four generations of the Wedgwood family in the Etruria factory. The leading Staffordshire firms of Spode, Adams and Ridgway were also distinctly family affairs. This degree of family orientation to the one economic pursuit was also predominant among the operative class in both countries. Potting in England was typically a hereditary occupation, and this stability of labor was brought to East Liverpool. It seems that the great majority of the second generation chose to remain in the locality and followed their fathers into the industry.

The employment of women and children was also transplanted into the East Liverpool industry. In this 1885 report, Consul Lane observed that female labor formed "a very important element in the standard industry" of North Staffordshire. He noted that women worked as assistants to jiggers and turners (who shaped articles on the lathe), or were employed as decorators. In East Liverpool also, women did not participate in actual production and performed these same tasks. The 1895 Ohio report on the East Liverpool industry was particularly critical of "the evils of child labor", for the immigrants put children of both sexes to work in the potteries as early as twelve years old. In 1870, out of a total labor force of 33,269 in 315 North Staffordshire factories, there were 1,950 boys and 1,021 girls under thirteen. Just as in England, child labor seems to have served in East Liverpool to assist the operatives, for the children performed such tasks as carrying
ware to and from the stoves and kilns, removing the articles shaped by the turner and clearing away after him, and cleaning and brushing the ware before it underwent the glazing process. 13

The potters also brought to America the Staffordshire trade custom known as "contracting" which ran through all branches of pottery manufacture. 14 The custom, which had evolved alongside the growth of factory production in England, meant that the management of the labor force was taken to a large extent out of the hands of the factory owners. The pottery provided the material and the necessary articles for manufacture, and the skilled man working at piece rates hired his own crew to assist him. 15 For example, a jiggerman hired a crew of four: a clay carrier, a batter out, a mould runner, and a finisher. The clay carrier brought the clay to the bench where the batter out flattened it and provided the jiggerman with a piece of clay of the required size. Once the jiggerman had produced the ware, the mould runner carried the mould with the freshly made article to the stove room and returned with a mould containing a dried out article. He returned the mould to the batter out and took the article to the finisher who smoothed the edges with a piece of steel. Finally, the ware was taken to a place known as the "green room" where it was inspected by a company foreman. This system of contracting was favored by both manufacturer and workman. The manufacturer had no need to hire foremen to supervise the process of manufacture, while the workman endeavored to obtain the largest possible output through working his assistants to the limit. 16

These practical potters, however, did not implement that unfair system of "good from oven" in the American factories, preferring instead
to run the potteries on the system of "good from hand". After the potter had made an article and it has been inspected and accepted by the company, he was entitled to payment. Unlike his English counterpart, he was not held responsible for what might happen to the ware in the kiln.\textsuperscript{17}

The 1895 Ohio report also remarked upon the curious working habits of the English potter in East Liverpool: he was "the victim of certain traditions of his craft which seem peculiar."\textsuperscript{18} Many potters alternated between complete idleness and following this by a period of extreme hard labor to make up for their idleness, rather than perform a set amount of work each day. Paid at piece rates under the contract system they could work, and work their assistants, as they pleased. The fact of an un-disciplined but productive workforce was remarked upon by observers of the trade in North Staffordshire in the nineteenth century. In his reminiscences of his boyhood work in Tunstall in the 1840s, Charles Shaw spoke of the little work that was done on Mondays and Tuesdays, "and yet it was rare for any of the men to get on Saturdays less than a full week's wages. From Wednesday to Saturday they worked themselves and worked others, boys and women, like galley slaves. From four or five in the morning, until nine and ten at night, this fierce race for wages was run." As Shaw continued, the master raised no objections as long as he considered a full week's work to have been done.\textsuperscript{19} In the evidence before the Factories and Workshops Commission of 1876, a Government Inspector also remarked upon this behavior, stating that when he was in North Staffordshire in 1864, there was little work done on Mondays and Tuesdays.\textsuperscript{20}
The syncopated rhythm of work in the East Liverpool potteries was also accompanied by "excessive beer drinking" in the work place, a trait which was also in evidence in the Trenton factories. Again, Shaw's reminiscences illustrate how this was a legacy of work in England where, "sometimes the men would drink on the premises" and "feasting and drinking in the works would go on together."  

Although the transplanted potter worked in an environment characterized by many of the ways and customs of his old workplace, he nevertheless had to make some adjustments. Of course, the potter who left Staffordshire before machinery was in general use would have had to adjust to the transformation of his trade as jiggers and jollys meant that inherited craft skills were no longer so essential. In this way, however, his experience would have equated with that of his English counterpart. What constituted a significant departure for the immigrant potter was the adjustment he had to make in the speed of his work. Speaking before the United States Industrial Commission in 1901, an operative who had previously worked his trade in England said of the potters there, "that they do not go at the rapid pace that we do. We turn out a considerably greater number than they do." As the American industry reached increasing commercial prominence, pottery manufacture oriented to the demands of a rapidly growing undiscriminating mass market. Whereas in England the potter had been used to producing small quantities of quality goods, achieving an average 90 percent perfect ware, in America he produced up to 140 percent more, but his work was not as marked by quality for his output of perfect ware was 60 percent. The contract system with higher rates than the potter had been used to
in England furnished a great incentive for speed. Since the potters continued with their syncopated work habits, then these periods of hard labor must have been even more extreme than before. It seems that those conditions which modified manufacture in the new environment also led to a reduced term of apprenticeship. By the end of the nineteenth century an apprentice in England served from three to seven years, according to the branch of the trade he chose to enter. In America, the period of apprenticeship took between two and five years.26

Along with the old customs and habits, some potters also brought experience in labor organizations to the United States. Speaking of the role of British immigrants in American labor, Clifton Yearley argued that they "left the indelible stamp of their agitational activity", 27 for, "in mines and factories throughout the country they organized new unions and new cooperatives."28 This is to some degree applicable to the transplanted potter, for there emerged in East Liverpool an element keen to promote labor's interests. In seems, however, that just as in England these men were hampered in their activities by the attitude of the rank and file.

The potters certainly had a heritage of trade union activity. The trade in North Staffordshire had been unionized as early as 1824, when the Union of Clay Potters was established immediately after the repeal of the Combination Acts made organization legally possible.29 In 1831, the first national organization, the National Union of Operative Potters, was formed under the inspiration of Robert Owen. In 1836, the union organized a strike in North Staffordshire against the practice of "good from oven" and annual hiring, but failed since the majority of
members did not support the executive. As Charles Shaw said, "The trade unionism of the Potteries was haphazard, feebly and timidly followed."

Lack of commitment to union activities was also evident in the East Liverpool industry. As the Knights of Labor made rapid progress throughout the country, potters began a movement to organize, and in 1882, District Assembly 160 was established. Rumors circulated that, as part of a powerful body, the men were going to make large demands, and the employers responded by insisting that the men renounce their allegiance to the union or accept a discharge. Initially the work force resolved to stand together, and two of their leaders, William Beardmore and Joseph Barlow, who had arrived in East Liverpool in the 1870s, were appointed to meet with William McKinley on the matter. They were to request a speech from him in East Liverpool in his 1882 Congressional Campaign, in which he was to express his support of the right of men to form and belong to labor unions. However, as the majority of potters deserted their leaders, they were forced to acknowledge defeat.

The continuing activities of a minority of potters, once it seemed that the employers had got their wish, do highlight Yearley's thoughts on the role of British immigrants in American labor. Thirty-five of them were able to produce from their savings about $1,000 each with which to establish a cooperative concern. The cooperative flourished and when the General Secretary of the Knights of Labor testified before the Senate in 1885, he declared the East Liverpool works to be the biggest of the Knights' cooperative ventures.
this achievement was notable, a strong commitment to organized labor does not seem to have been too evident in East Liverpool. Commentators on trade union organization in North Staffordshire have sought to explain the absence of a vigorous movement among the potters. One suggestion is that the majority of potters were Methodists, and as Methodism frowned on trade union organization, this toned down the character and policy of their unions. The undiscipline that so characterized the potters is also thought to have worked against their having an effective organization.

Just as attitudes toward trade unions were similar in the two industrial centers, so East Liverpool's community and its social activities mirrored the towns of North Staffordshire as the potters clung to the distinctive and traditional in their culture. The stability of the pottery labor force meant that the old community was preserved as the very great majority of the second generation did as their fathers had and married women of the same background: that is to say, daughters of first generation East Liverpool immigrant potters rather than native born women. Early marriages were the rule as in North Staffordshire, and children were given names like Enoch, Elijah, Moses and Isiah, names that had become something of a tradition among the potters in the six towns. Moreover, it seems that in this transplanted English potting town the second generation carried over much of the broad Staffordshire dialect of their parents.

Former social pursuits and pasttimes characterized the community life of East Liverpool. A perusal of East Liverpool's newspapers shows that from the early 1870s, until the end of the century, the potters
held their traditional August wake on the first Monday of that month. Charles Shaw described the August wake as North Staffordshire's "greatest and brightest holiday of the year", for work was stopped and "the full sociality of the people, undivided, was given to its enjoyment." In East Liverpool there were circuses, and the potters held picnics, dances and feasts. As the newspapers and county histories show, cricket and soccer were brought to East Liverpool, and the cricket matches "made for a strong reminder of early days in England on the part of many players and spectators." The potters could continue to enjoy the social life to which they were accustomed in East Liverpool's public houses like "The Lamb's Head" and "The Nag's Head", which had been named by their British owners in the tradition of typical English public houses. The migration from North Staffordshire to East Liverpool was not restricted just to operative potters, for they were accompanied by publicans, butchers, bakers, grocers and tailors. Continuity with the past was also maintained in East Liverpool's newspapers. The East Liverpool Tribune and Daily Crisis often printed articles from The Staffordshire Sentinel, including obituaries. The potters' Methodism flourished in the new setting as it had in England, with immigrants serving as Stewards and Sunday school leaders in East Liverpool's two Methodist Episcopal Churches.

Loyalties to England remained a constant feature in the East Liverpool community. America was the place for prosperity, for operatives had become manufacturers, and potters enjoyed wages far higher than would have been the case had they remained in England. As evidence given in 1882 before the United States Tariff Commission indicates, the
general average wage of all branches of pottery manufacture in England was $8.69, while in America it was $18.50. Despite finding such affluence, the very great majority of potters seem to have retained a steadfast belief in the superiority of their old country. While a large number responded immediately to Lincoln's call for volunteers, and a handful took an interest in the Centennial celebrations of 1876, the potters celebrated Queen Victoria's Gold and Diamond Jubilees in 1887 and 1897 with far more vigor. They held special church services, picnics and parties, and obtained extensive coverage of the celebrations in England through their local papers. In 1887, the immigrants also established an East Liverpool lodge of the Sons and Daughters of Saint George. Patriotism and old provincial loyalties were linked as the potters took the title of "The Josiah Wedgwood Lodge." Throughout the year they held social activities, but April 23rd, Saint George's Day, was obviously the most important day of celebration for them.

Clinging to tradition, Ohio's immigrant potters resembled those immigrants from continental Europe, described in Oscar Handlin's The Uprooted, who needed such psychological means of support in an alien environment. Few obvious obstacles blocked British assimilation into American life. They faced no language problems and found themselves in a country with familiar customs and patterns of worship. Americans accepted the British as equals, and no artificial barriers kept wealth and recognition from them. Yet it appears that they too needed to continue with the culture of their native country in order to adjust to separation from their home towns and the new environment.
Such apparent clannishness did not, however, cause friction between immigrant potters and native born. Nor did the potters' sense of separateness preclude participation in American life. A number of first and second generation immigrants like the Goodwins were influential figures in their adopted town and county, although previous experience had done little to prepare them for civic leadership and prominence in local affairs. Immigrants dominated the East Liverpool city council between 1850 and the end of the century, and served as mayors of East Liverpool for fifteen years just as did native born lawyers, merchants and doctors. They were active in Republican party politics and participated in fraternal organizations like the Red Men and Knights of Pythias.

Clearly, the transplanting of part of the North Staffordshire pottery industry was an almost complete process. Certain ways were modified by the new environment and the potters were presented with new opportunities. The immigrants left their mark on much more than America's table ware, as they made East Liverpool's industry and community a thriving replica of that of their old district.
NOTES

1. OBLS (1895), p. 32.
3. For the Vodrey family, see McCord, History of Columbiana County, Ohio, and Representative Citizens, p. 533.
4. For the Brunt family, see History of the Upper Ohio Valley with a Historical Account of Columbiana County, Ohio, II: 297.
5. For the Harker family, see Ibid., pp. 327-328.
8. This is evident in the census enumerations of English families in East Liverpool, 1850-1880 and 1900.
11. Ibid.


18. OBL (1895), p. 33.


23. Shaw, p. 52.


26. Ibid., p. 333.


28. Ibid., p. 511.

29. Warburton, p. 46.

30. Ibid., p. 65.

31. Shaw, p. 191.

32. OBL (1895), p. 16.

33. McCord, p. 166.
34. OBLS (1895), p. 32.
35. Yearley, p. 284.
38. Based on a comparison of census enumerations: 1861-1881, for Han-ley, Burslem and Tunstall, (three of the six towns which make up the English potting district), with census enumerations for East Liverpool 1850-1880 and 1900.
39. New Jersey Statistics (1883), p. 202, indicates that this was the case in Trenton.
40. Shaw, p. 197.
43. Information taken from East Liverpool census enumerations 1850-1880 and 1900.
44. The biographical sections of the Columbiana County histories yield much information on immigrant participation in East Liverpool's Methodist Episcopal Churches.
46. East Liverpool Tribune, 22 July 1876, p. 3, lists nine men who can be identified as immigrant potters, among contributors to a fund for the celebrations in Columbiana County.
47. Information taken from East Liverpool Tribune, 20 June 1887, p. 3;
Ibid., 19 June 1897, p. 6.


49. Their social activities and celebrations are listed in various numbers of the East Liverpool newspapers.

50. OBLS (1895), p. 34.

51. Information taken from the biographical sections of the county histories.
CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSION

In 1939, Carl Wittke wrote that "the grand central motif of the United States History has been the impact of successive immigrant tides on a New World environment. The evidence of the great significance of immigration in the development of American civilization is everywhere apparent."\(^1\) The case of Samuel Slater, superintendent of a Lancashire mill in the 1790s, who established factories in Rhode Island and Massachusetts, having memorized plans of new machinery in England, alerts us to the technological skill that might have been part of the immigrants' "baggage". It is equally evident that the migration of British technology was instrumental in the development of the American iron, steel and mining industries in the nineteenth century.\(^2\) Just as technological "baggage" is an important element in immigration history, so is the adjustment of immigrant groups to the new environment. Historians of Jewish garment workers and Slavic coalminers, for instance, have documented well efforts to recreate old country institutions.

The story of the potters' migration from North Staffordshire to East Liverpool is of specific value, since a highly localized industry in England became equally so in America and owed its rise to immigrants
from one particular district. Such an isolatable phenomenon lends itself to intensive investigation, and from an examination of materials on both sides of the Atlantic, we are able to trace clearly how technical skills, trade practices, habits of the work place and community life were introduced into the new environment almost intact.

Moreover, the migration brings to light neglected fields of inquiry. There has been very little scholarly investigation into the inception and rise of the American pottery industry. Works like E.A. Barber's *Pottery and Porcelain of the United States*, and John Spargo's *Early American Pottery and China*, have been written with the collector in mind, and so although making some reference to the importance of the men from North Staffordshire, they do little more than skin the surface. Secondly, historians have tended to overlook the adjustment of the nineteenth century British in America to their new home. Their linguistic and cultural background leads one to assume that assimilation would have been easy, and that the immigrants merged imperceptibly into American society. The experience of the potters, however, suggests that British assimilation presents a field for further examination.

This thesis has explored the migration of a community of potters and their families from North Staffordshire to East Liverpool. It traces their personal movements, skills and technology, work practices and efforts to recreate the old community almost in total in the American context. The durability of old ways is striking and best explained by the fact that potting was a total way of life. Potters belonged to a highly skilled self-contained community where people came together both in work and leisure for mutual security. Thus, what was manifested
in East Liverpool was not a transmission of national culture so much as a transmission of work culture.
NOTES


BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Government Publications, Great Britain


Government Publications, United States

Federal


U.S. Congress, House. Reports of the Consular Officers on the Commerce Manufactures, etc., of Their Consular Districts. H. Doc. 9, 49th Congress, 1st session, 1886.


State


Manuscript Collections


Newspapers, Great Britain

The Potter's Examiner and Workman's Advocate, 2 December 1843 - 3 July 1847.
The Staffordshire Advertiser, 21 September 1850.

Newspapers, United States

The East Liverpool Daily Crisis, 28 March 1877 - 27 September 1897.
East Liverpool Gazette, 2 December 1871 - 20 November 1875.
East Liverpool Tribune, 22 January 1876 - 2 April 1898.

Published Primary Sources


Secondary Sources

Articles in Journals


Books


History of the Upper Ohio Valley with Historical Account of Columbiana County, Ohio, 2 vols. Madison, Wisconsin: Brant & Fuller, 1891.


Wright, Chester. Economic History of the United States. New York:
McGraw-Hill, 1941.