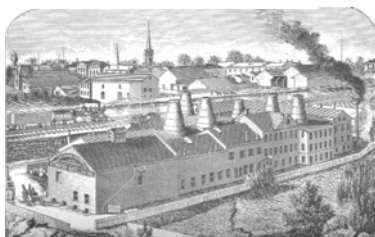


# TRENTON POTTERIES

Newsletter of the  
Potteries of Trenton Society



## *Stoke-on-Trent, UK to Trenton, NJ via Belleek, Ireland: The Story of William Wood Gallimore as Found in Public Records* Paul Tubb

*(A version of this article previously appeared in Volume 27/1 of the Newsletter of the UK Group of the Belleek Collectors Society in March 2006.)*

William Wood Gallimore was born in Burslem on February 7, 1841 and was baptized at St. Paul's Church in Burslem on March 3. Burslem is one of the towns that make up the modern city of Stoke-on-Trent which is the center of the pottery industry in England. William's birth certificate states that his father was an engraver. William's parents were William Gallimore and Esther Wood who had been married in the parish church at Wolstanton on July 2, 1832. Whether Esther was connected to the pottery family of Wood, famous for Woods Ware items of everyday crockery, I have not been able to establish with certainty.

At the time of the 1851 census the household consisted simply of William W. Gallimore, the 10-year-old son of William and Esther ("Hester" according to the census taker) living with his parents at Buck's Lane, Burslem. The father, William, was aged 39 and noted as an engraver on copper while all three gave their place of birth as Burslem. The elder William was a designer and engraver for a number of English potteries, and a selection of his engravings is curated at the Winterthur Library in Delaware.

Incidentally, in the light of William's subsequent career, the next door neighbour is an "operative chemist" named Thomas Robotham who was born in Ireland and lived with his

south-Staffordshire-born wife, Elizabeth. They had no children. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility to imagine a friendship between the neighbors and young William hearing tales of the emerald isle which helped him to decide some few years later that working in Ireland was something which appealed to him.

By the time of the 1861 census the family had moved to Rose Street in Hanley. The father William was still an engraver and his son was noted as a potter's modeller, a job designation that he would keep for the rest of his life. The census return does not say where he was employed, but the book *William Henry Goss* by Lynda and Nicholas Pine states that he was at that time a member of Goss & Peake's team in their John Street factory at Stoke. The same authority suggests that William was one of just two or three craftsmen engaged at that time on making the parian portrait busts on which the factory, later just W. H. Goss, built its reputation.

The Pines clearly give 1863 as the date when William Wood Gallimore, along with William Bromley, the foreman, and some ten others, were induced to leave Goss & Peake and set off for Belleek. The authors give no indication as to the reasons behind this move. In 1862 William H. Goss had won the highly coveted medal at the Great International Exhibition for his display of parian and figurines and it seems clear that Galli-

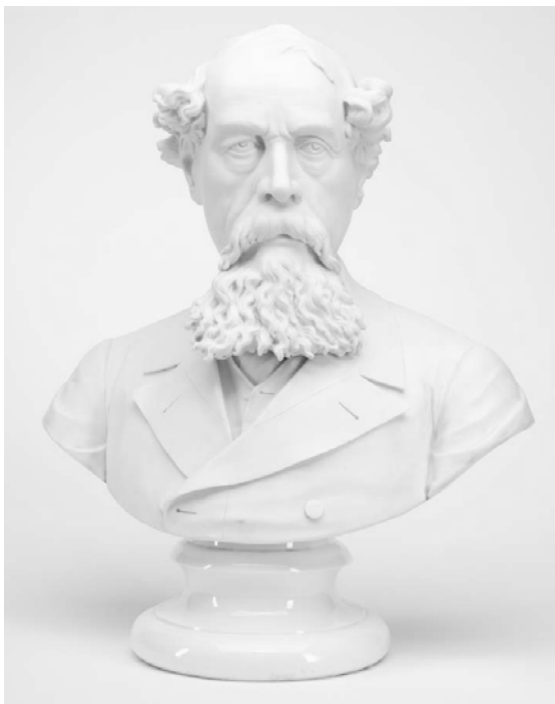
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*The Potteries of Trenton Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the study and preservation of Trenton's ceramic past. Officers: President – Patricia Madrigal; Treasurer – Amy Earls; Secretary – Brenda Springsted. Board: Ellen Denker, Richard Hunter, Meta Janowitz, Jay Lewis, Emma Lewis, William Liebeknecht, George Miller, Brenda Springsted, Rebecca White. Newsletter Editor: Patricia Madrigal*

Right: Bust of Charles Dickens modeled by Gallimore for the Belleek pottery. Reproduced with kind permission of the Trustees of the National Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland. Copyright NMGNI.



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more, and probably some of the other defectors, had had a major input in this success. Could it be that their part in the success was not appreciated sufficiently? Or were the strains between Goss and Peake, which led to the dissolving of their partnership in 1868, already becoming apparent and casting a shadow over the working conditions? Or was Armstrong, one of the founders of the Belleek factory in Ireland, so persuasive and offering such a good deal that even senior and trusted employees of Goss & Peake went off to the west of Ireland and a lifestyle totally unknown to them? What makes people turn their back on current success in search of possible success elsewhere?

There is no generally agreed answer that I have seen to any of these questions. Possibly something of all these influences was at play. Somebody or something must have persuaded these talented, but nonetheless ordinary, working men that Parian ware was the

coming “thing” in pottery and that a factory towards the western edge of Ireland was best placed to reap the economic advantage in producing it. Then again, given the links between the Worcester porcelain factory and Belleek through Kerr, Dargan and Kirk why did Armstrong come to Goss & Peake at Stoke to recruit expert potters? There is room here for a thoroughgoing piece of historical scholarship to endeavor to find an answer to this mystery.

There is, however, common agreement that William Wood Gallimore came to Belleek in 1863 and was very influential in helping the factory there to produce high quality parian ware in quite a short time span, probably through a fruitful artistic partnership with Robert Armstrong’s wife Annie Langley Nairne, who is described by Degenhardt as “an accomplished landscapist and watercolorist of marine and botanic life.”

The Pine biography of W. H. Goss suggests that Gallimore was back in Stoke and with Goss & Peake again in 1866. During that summer he married Mary Elizabeth Stevenson at Trinity Church, Northwood, Hanley. Mary Elizabeth was born in Stoke in 1846, the second daughter of James and Caroline Stevenson who, at the time of the 1851 census, were living at Greville Street, Northwood, Hanley. William was 25 and Mary Elizabeth was 21. Their first child, Flora Ethel, was born in Hanley the following year and then Marian was born in 1868.

It seems highly probable that William and his family were back in Belleek at the time of the 1871 census as there is no sign of them on the census returns for England and Wales.

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The 1871 census of Ireland is lost and therefore their presence in Belleek has not been verified. However, by the time of the 1881 census of England the family is back in England and living at 9 Prospect Place, Hanley. All the children are recorded as being born in Hanley, apart from 11-year-old Mary who was born in Ireland. This clearly supports the contention that the whole family was in Ireland and therefore probably in Belleek at the time of the 1871 census. They would have remained there for some little while longer for the 1881 census also records a William Gallimore, age 8, born in Ireland and living with his grandparents at 25 Vincent Street, Hanley. In 1881, then, William was back in Stoke and had been since at least 1876 when his son Jesse Albert was born, followed by Bertram in 1878 and Lawrence in 1880.

At some point during his time in Ireland William Wood Gallimore lost his right arm due to an accident with a gun. I have not yet found the precise date of the accident but I feel

sure that it would have been in this second period in Ireland. The story of William Goss's daughter, Adelaide, watching spell-bound as Gallimore produced flowers and other decorations with his remaining hand at his home dates to the period 1875 to 1881, after Gallimore returned to England (it was in 1875/76 that William is credited with producing the large busts of Llewellynn Jewitt and the Prince of Wales for the Goss pottery).

The Pine biography of William H. Goss also suggests that in 1881 William Wood Gallimore retired from the Goss pottery works and went to America. There is no indication of the nature of this "retirement" and we are more than 20 years before the advent of old age pensions; Gallimore had only just turned 40 anyway. That he might not be able to continue with his work, given the nature of his disability, is likely but I have no evidence of the arrangements that pottery firms made for such employees, particularly when the injury occurred outside of work and was in no sense due to the work-

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*Left: View of the back of the Dickens bust. William Gallimore's signature is on the left and the marks of the pottery are in the center and at right. Reproduced with kind permission of the Trustees of the National Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland. Copyright NMGNI.*

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ing conditions. Added to which, Gallimore had at least twice walked out on Goss and gone off to Belleek. I think it is more likely that some sort of offer of work had come from America and induced him to up sticks again and take the whole family over to New Jersey. Miranda Goodby's article on Staffordshire pottery workers going over to the potteries in New Jersey and the Ohio and Mississippi valleys in the mid 1840s shows that there was a long standing connection and movement of men and ideas between Staffordshire and the eastern half of America. That Gallimore's reputation as a modeller would attract offers of employment from the American pottery industry, which was eagerly seeking to emulate Belleek quality wares, is only to be expected and was sufficient to encourage the whole family to book passage for America in the early 1880s.

It might have been that at this juncture my pursuit of William Wood Gallimore would have come to an end but, fortuitously, ancestry.co.uk provides access to American census records, and this helped to continue the story. At the same time an email buddy, Nan Brennan of Chicago, came up with a mine of information from various U. S. websites.

Therefore, thanks to Nan and to Ancestry.com we can continue the story starting with the 1900 census return which shows William and his family, now augmented with a further son, Archie (b. 1889) living in New Jersey at 471 Bellevue Avenue, Trenton. The father William W. was noted as a designer & molder [pottery] as is the eldest son, William, whilst Bertram is noted just as a designer. Two

of the girls are dress makers but neither Flora nor her mother state any occupation. Incidentally, the 1890 U. S. census remnants contain no reference that I could find to the family nor does the English census of 1891.

But there are also some interesting variances with other evidence we have been looking at so far. Initially there is the absence of sons Jesse and Lawrence who were born in 1876 and 1880 respectively, but the presence of a son Victor born in England in 1883. Victor's birth is duly recorded in the civil indices of births and deaths in England and Wales but the records do not have any information on the deaths of Jesse or Lawrence. It must be, then, that they died after the family came to America. The 1900 census noted that the marriage between William and Mary lasted 34 years and produced 9 living children, only 7 of whom were still alive. In fact, Lawrence died in January 1899 as I discovered through another email contact, Faith Ann Dressler in Florida, who responded to a request on the message boards for information on the family:

*Obit for Lawrence Gallimore - Trenton Evening Times Jan 9, 1899*

LAWRENCE GALLIMORE  
At 471 Bellevue Avenue, Lawrence Gallimore, son of William and Mary E. Gallimore, age 18 years. Funeral was held this morning.

The 1900 census states clearly that the family did not go to America in 1881 as reported by the Pines in their biography of W. H. Goss, although William may well have left Goss's employ at that time. In the census return the whole family (apart from Archie)

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state that they immigrated to the U.S. in 1884. Not that this was William W. Gallimore's last contact with England: he and his son, William, are recorded on a passenger list from the Cunarder R. M. S. Etruria (was this a happy coincidence or done by design?) which arrived at New York from Liverpool in April 1886. Travelling with them was an artist from Hanley named J. Chetwynd aged, like William, 48. There is no sign of William W.'s wife nor daughters nor the younger boys on this section of the passenger list. For what purpose had they crossed the Atlantic again? Were they on a recruiting mission and Mr. Chetwynd was their solitary capture?

What, I wonder, was William Wood doing between leaving Goss in 1881 and setting off for America in 1884? He might, of course, have gone back to Belleek or gone to work in another Staffordshire pottery or gone to America to see what the prospects were before committing his family to the rigours of emigration. Did he in fact leave Goss in 1881? Was he actually employed by them or did he work in a free lance capacity from home during these years? As usual, more questions to be answered by further research.

The same sort of uncertainty surrounds his working life in the potteries of Trenton. Both Ott & Brewer and the Ceramic Art Company (later Lenox), were moving quickly at this time into the world of parian manufacture and it is generally thought that William Wood Gallimore, along with the two William Bromleys, father and son, were a significant influence on this development given their experience at both Goss and Belleek. In the

Eng's book it is said that William Wood Gallimore was actually employed by the Ceramic Arts Company and the Bromley's by Ott & Brewer. The similarity between some of the early parian products of both factories and those of Belleek is striking and would appear to support the contention of their influence. But then there is the evidence arising from the Trent Tile Company history which states quite clearly that "a man called William Wood Gallimore an artist and modeller succeeded Isaac Broome as their leading modeller in 1886." Isaac Broome himself, originally from Quebec, had spent 8 years with Ott & Brewer before joining the tile company.

I think it is likely that from the time of his accident William Wood's career necessarily took a new direction into what we would nowadays call "consultancy," offering his expertise and experience to the pottery industry in Staffordshire, Ireland and Trenton and training the next generation of modellers, which probably included his own son, William, in the craft.

What is certain is that, not long after the census was taken in 1900, William Wood Gallimore died at his home in Trenton on Saturday, July 28. The following notice is taken from the Trenton Times of Tuesday, July 31, 1900 and is clearly not that of an insignificant man within that community.

*Gallimore Funeral Services*

*Vast Concourse of Sorrowing Friends  
Paid Their Last Respects-  
The Sermon and the Bearers.*

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*The funeral of the late William Wood Gallimore whose death occurred on Saturday morning took place this morning from the residence, No 471 Bellevue Avenue. Rev. Walter A. Brooks, pastor of the Prospect Street Presbyterian Church, conducted the funeral services, which were simple but impressive, and the sermon that followed moved to tears the large concourse of people that filled the house to overflowing.*

*The remains rested in a handsome casket, white silk lined and covered with astrichan. The trimmings were of silver and the plate bore the inscription "William W. Gallimore, 1842-1900." The casket is the first astrichan covered one to be used in Trenton. The interment took place in the family plot in Riverview Cemetery.*

*The bearers were C.H. Hansen, Jas. Barlow, Henry Darling, G. Holcombe, E. Swan and E.B. Sterling. L.C. Cogle was in charge of the arrangements.*

It is interesting to note that, provided the reporter got his facts right, the date of Gallimore's birth is incorrect on his casket. One other question is: Who were the bearers? Were they work colleagues or employees of the funeral house? If colleagues, is E. Swan the artist E. W. Swann who painted the Belleek bird cabaret set which has recently been purchased by the National Museum in Dublin?

This report makes reference to the "family plot" in the cemetery, so perhaps Jesse and/or Lawrence had been buried there. There is also an internet reference to the death of William Wood Gallimore's father in 1891, so he too may have been interred in the family plot. *(Ed. Note: a visit to Riverview Cemetery by Richard Sauers*

*confirmed that Gallimore's father died and was buried there in 1891. Jessie and Lawrence are also buried in Riverview, Jessie passing in December 1898 and Lawrence a month later in January 1899.)* William Wood's mother, Esther, had died at 25 Vincent Street, Hanley on February 21<sup>st</sup> 1883 about a year before the family set sail for America. His father was the informant of his mother's death.

Following William Wood's death the family continued to make their way in their adopted country. William, the eldest son, did not long survive his father as this death notice from the Trenton Evening Times of February 5<sup>th</sup> 1909 shows.

#### *Death of William Gallimore*

*William Gallimore, one of the best known of Trenton potters, died this morning after a short illness at his home 578 Rutherford Avenue. He was the son of Mary E. and the late William Wood Gallimore.*

*The funeral will be held Monday afternoon at 2 o'clock. Interment will be made in Riverview Cemetery.*

In 1905 Bertram married a New Jersey girl named Clara and, at the time of the 1910 census, they, together with their son, Donald, were living next door to his mother who still had Marian, Madeleine and Archie with her. (Another example of the sort of error which creeps into the filling up of forms is that Archie is now said to have been born in England!) Interestingly, through the efforts of Nan in Chicago, I have seen Bertram's registration document issued to him in September 1918 which describes him still as an alien and with loyalty to England. It also says he works as a painter at J. L. Mott Co., one of the best known

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of Trenton's pottery companies at that time.

Through the good offices of Faith Ann in Florida I have also discovered that Flora E. Gallimore died at Trenton on December 22, 1901 and Victor died there on May 31, 1921. Details are from the Trenton Newspapers Death Index at the Trenton Historical Society. William Wood's widow, Mary E. Gallimore, is recorded in both the 1910 and 1920 U.S. census returns but not in the one from 1930 so the supposition is that she died sometime during the twenties, but I have not been able to identify precisely when. The reference to her in the 1920 census gives her age and birth place wrongly and her daughters' ages as well; therefore it is possible that she had died even earlier and these entries refer to different people altogether.

#### References

1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901 UK census returns per Ancestry.co.uk.

1880, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930 U.S. census returns per Ancestry.com.

Birth, Marriage and Death certificates from UK General Register Office

*William Henry Goss* by Linda & Nicholas Pine; Milestone Publications, Portsmouth UK 1987

*Belleek - Collectors Guide and Reference* by Richard K. Degenhardt; Portfolio Press, Huntington, NY 1978

*Collecting American Belleek* by Loman & Petula Eng; Schiffer Publishing, Atglen, PA 2003

"Our Home in the West -Staffordshire Potters and their Emigration to America in the 1840s" - Article by Miranda Goodby from *Ceramics in America* 2003, Chipstone Foundation.

Web sites:-

"American Art Tile 1876-1941" by Norman Kartson; Michael Freedman Publishing, NY 1998

"A History of Belleek" by the Belleek Collectors Club on Collector's Café website

Various Trenton Newspapers on-line

#### *Synopsis of William Wood Gallimore and Family*

- 1841 Born on 7 February at 2.10 pm at Furlong Cottage, Burslem
- 1851 Living at Bucks Lane, Burslem with parents
- 1861 Still living with parents at Rose Street, Hanley - a Potter's Modeller most probably working for Goss & Peake
- 1863 First visit to Belleek and cooperation with Mrs. Armstrong
- 1866 Marries Mary E. Stevenson in Stoke
- 1867 Birth of Flora at Stoke
- 1868 Birth of Marian at Stoke
- 1870 Almost certainly back in Belleek. Birth of Mary [Madeleine]
- 1873 Birth of William in Ireland
- 1876 Birth of Jesse Albert in Stoke
- 1878 Birth of Bertram in Stoke
- 1880 Birth of Lawrence in Stoke
- 1881 Family living at 9 Prospect Place, Hanley except William Jr. with grandparents
- 1883 Death of mother, Esther, at 25 Vincent Street, Hanley  
Birth of Victor
- 1884 Family emigrates to Trenton, New Jersey
- 1886 William W. and son return briefly to England
- 1887 Birth of Archibald at New Jersey
- 1891 Death of father, William, at Trenton
- 1898 Death of Jessie at Trenton
- 1899 Death of Lawrence at Trenton
- 1900 Family at 471 Bellevue Avenue, Trenton  
Death of William Wood Gallimore on July 28<sup>th</sup>
- 1901 Death of Flora at Trenton
- 1909 Death of son, William, at Trenton
- 1921 Death of Victor at Trenton

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