

# Japanese Porcelain at Burghley House: The Inventory of 1688 and the Sale of 1888

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THE CELEBRATED INVENTORY OF THE household goods of the fifth earl and countess of Exeter taken in 1688<sup>1</sup> includes pieces of Japanese porcelain that are still in Burghley House. This makes those pieces, the earliest recorded Japanese porcelains in Europe, the earliest examples where we can confidently equate a seventeenth-century description with a specific extant object. As the inventory has not been published, it seems worth while to list here those pieces of porcelain that are inventoried. It will rapidly be seen that this list is not extensive and that by far the majority of Japanese porcelains that are in, or that have been in, the house are not included. This fact has sometimes been ignored and a false assumption made that all the porcelains at Burghley that are of seventeenth-century date are inventoried.

The seventeenth-century Chinese and Japanese porcelains at Burghley can be divided into four groups if we consider their arrival in the house only. The first group consists of the Chinese and Japanese porcelains that are inventoried, that were in the house before 1688; those will be discussed here. Second is the group of porcelains, nearly all Chinese, that came to the house in 1690 under the will of the countess of Devonshire to her daughter Ann, the countess of the fifth earl. These were carefully itemized in a list referred to here as the Devonshire Schedule.<sup>2</sup> This is a large group and needs consideration elsewhere; here we will mention only the sole Japanese piece. Note that this gift arrived after the 1688 inventory. Third is a group of Japanese porcelains, the majority blue and white, that were mostly not made specifically as export pieces and therefore must have been collected as “curiosities” in Japan by some Dutch trader, who sold them in turn to a British retailer; as we shall see, this unknown retailer seems to have sold them on to three houses, Burghley, Drayton House, and Welbeck Abbey (he has been called “the A1 dealer”, as all three houses are off the modern A1 road). The date of these

sales is unfortunately not recorded; they may have occurred as early as the last decade of the seventeenth century. Fourth are all the pieces that are not accounted for above; this may be or have been the largest group.<sup>3</sup>

The collection at Burghley House is extensive, but it was once larger; there was a sale at Christie’s in London on June 7 and 8, 1888, that included a considerable amount of “old Oriental porcelain.”<sup>4</sup> From the descriptions in that sale catalogue one can deduce the identity of some of the pieces that were sold, and from that one can determine that there were many pieces of seventeenth-century date that were not included in the 1688 inventory, even though many of them were surely made earlier. This either confirms continued acquisition by the Exeters, as one would expect, or implies that not all the porcelain was included in the inventory, which seems unlikely—or both.

There was another sale at Christie’s on July 13, 1959, of English, Continental, and Oriental porcelain, all from Burghley House.<sup>5</sup> This included three lots described as Japanese.

This paper discusses the 1688 inventory and its contents, and the sole Japanese item in the Devonshire Schedule; barely mentions the fascinating “nonexport group”; and analyzes the Japanese porcelain sold in 1888 and in 1959. It is an appropriate homage to Clare Le Corbellier because of her interest in the field and as a demonstration of how the Burghley, Drayton, and Welbeck collections provided the kind of material from which museums have eventually benefited through acquisition.

“An inventory of the Goods in Burghley House belonging to the Right Honble John Earl of Exeter and Ann Countesse of Exeter Taken August 21th 1688” was drawn up by the earl’s steward, Culpepper Tanner. The contents of each room are described sequentially, beginning at the Gothic Hall, in the center of the West Range of the house, and then the main entrance to the courtyard. To the north lay the earl’s suite of rooms, to the south, the countess’s. The living rooms were on the first floor; the State Apartments,

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still unfinished, were on the second floor. What is found in each room suggests the use of the room and the esteem in which the contents were held; thus it is worth recording in which room each piece of porcelain stood. Usually one can be fairly sure whether a piece is Chinese or Japanese from the description, but for the sake of accuracy all pieces described by Tanner will be recorded here. While a number of pieces can be recognized in the house today, it should be said immediately that some identifications are more secure than others. Thus some descriptions are unequivocal (for example, "2 China boyes wrestling"), others much less so, where there may be several options (for example, "2 wt Lyons"). Nearly all numbers of items in each room are odd numbers; this was, of course, for the sake of symmetry; most arrangements centered on a single item. Most of the porcelain was placed over the chimney or on cabinets; frequently it was arranged with other things, such as small items of sculpture. These are not listed here (though they would have been vital to the symmetry of arrangement), for this paper is concerned with identification rather than habitat. One further caveat: Culpepper Tanner may not have excluded European ceramics, majolica, delft, or other earthenwares; no specific example is known, but it is a possibility.

In Lord Exeter's Anty Room (anteroom) were thirteen pieces of porcelain:

China over ye Chimney

- 1 Indian queen, 2 wt fryars, 2 hawkes, 2 Dogs blue,
- 2 Red Dogs,
- 2 Birds upon Rocks, 2 wt Lyons

In Lord Exeter's Bedd Chamber were seventeen:

China over ye Chimney

- 2 large Ellephants, 2 large hundes, a preist on a Bufalor
- 1 large Rabitt browne, 4 litle Swallowes, 2 litle Swans
- 2 litle figures with froggs on their shoulders
- 1 Painted Cupp & Cover, 2 large blue and wt Coffe Dishes

In Lord Exeter's Dressing Roome were eleven:

China over ye Chimney

- 2 Doggs, 2 Lyons, 2 Staggs, 2 blue & wt Birds
- 1 heathen Godd with many Armes
- 2 figures with Juggs att their backs

In Lady Exeter's Anty Roome and Clossett were five:

Over the Chimney

China

- 1 Red little wrought Tea pott, [2 Jappan Beakers]
- 1 browne 1 wt Coffe Dishes, 2 litle fruit Dishes

In Lady Exeter's Bed Chamber were seventeen:

China over ye Chimney and in ye Roome

- 1 Large wt Bason Guilt Rimm & foott
- 2 Blue and wt Juggs Guilt Covers & feete
- 2 wt Nunns Sitting, 2 Rocks & figures under them
- 5 large blue & wt Coffe Dishes & salvers to them
- 1 Philligrin China Sugar Cupp
- 1 Large Brown Bason
- 1 Blue & wt Jarr & Cover, & 2 Beakers to itt

In Lady Exeter's Dressing Roome were nine:

China over the Chimney & other Things

- 2 large wt Doggs
- 2 wt Lyons with figures on Them
- 2 Brown & blue Coffee Dishes & Salvers
- 2 litle wt painted Coffe Dishes & Salvers
- 1 balld fryer sitting

In Lady Exeter's Clossett were seventeen:

China & other things over the Chimney

- 1 Brown & white relev'd Tea pott with Guilt handle, Spout Top & bottome & a litle figure & Chaines on the Topp of itt
- 1 white Tea pott & Cover, Guilt Spout & Chaine to itt
- 2 white Criples, & 2 white Nunns
- 1 Browne Coffe Dish Guilt foott
- 4 wt & painted Coffe Dishes, & 6 wt & painted Salvers

In the Best Bedd Chamber were twenty-five:

China & other figures etc. over ye Cabinett & Chimney

- 1 large Jarr & 2 large Beakers blue wt & painted
- 2 blue & wt botles & 2 litle Beakers
- 1 Coffe Dish with a foott, 1 Japan large Bowldish
- 1 large wt Indian Queene, 2 white Cocks
- 2 wt Sugar Cupps relev'd worke
- 5 pa[i]nted Coffe Dishes & 6 Salvers

In the Drawing Roome were twenty-four:

China etc. over ye Chimney & in the Chimney

- 1 Large Jarr & 2 Large Juggs painted China

1 large Blue & wt Bason  
 2 painted fryors, 2 painted Cocks, 2 faulcons  
 2 painted Relev'd brown Juggs with handles Guilt Rimms  
 2 Red Tea potts relev'd, 2 wt high Cups relev'd  
 2 Green Scollupt Dishes, 2 larger wt painted Dishes  
 2 Brown Dishes, 2 litle wt painted Dishes

In the Marble Salloon Roome were four:

4 China ffaulcons on ye Like pedestalls

In the Dininge Roome were thirteen:

China & other Things over the Chimney  
 2 browne painted Staggs, 2 wt ffryars  
 1 Madona, 2 figures Sitting in Chaires  
 2 wt Lyons with figures on Them  
 2 large B[l]ue & white Dishes, 2 Lesser Dishes

In the Tea Roome were eleven:

China over the Chimney  
 1 Large Motled Mastife Dogg  
 1 white Cock, 1 Turk painted, 2 laughing fryars  
 2 Juggs like Rocks  
 1 White Tea pott & Cover litle  
 1 wt Sugar Cup relev'd  
 2 painted Coffe Dishes & Salvors

All these rooms are on the first floor, the last five in the South Range. In the Wardrobe or Closet Chamber, probably on the first floor in the East Range, was one piece of porcelain: "2 China boyes wrestling." The total number of pieces, taking pairs or sets to be one item, is eighty-three.

#### ANALYSIS OF THE 1688 INVENTORY

The porcelain is discussed room by room, as in the inventory, in the cause of clarity.

In Lord Exeter's Anty Room:

"1 Indian Queen" is perhaps the most contentious item in the list. No figure now in the house except blanc de chine could fit this description. It is often claimed that this is the famous figure bought by Augustus Franks and formerly at The British Museum,<sup>6</sup> which is said to come from Burghley House. The size given by Jenyns and that in the 1888 catalogue, 12 inches or 30.2 centimeters, fit. But in the 1888 sale, lot 206 is of a pair of figures, and there is only one mentioned here. As it is not



Figure 1. Figure of a woman, possibly "1 Indian queen." H. 11 7/8 in. (30.2 cm). Possibly sold from Burghley House in 1888. Stolen from The British Museum (Franks 1214+). (photo: courtesy of The British Museum)

recorded how Franks acquired it, it may have been purchased from the marquess privately, though there is no record of this, and it is unlikely. The case remains open (Figure 1).

"2 wt fryars" were surely blanc de chine, possibly Lohan.

"2 hawkes" do not give enough information.

"2 Dogs blue" more than likely represent the single Japanese *shishi*<sup>7</sup> still in the house (Figure 2).

"2 Red Dogs" might have been Yixing.

"2 Birds upon rocks" might have been blanc de chine or, equally likely, have resembled the Japanese figure of a bird on a rock in The British Museum and its pair in the Ashmolean Museum.<sup>8</sup>

"2 wt lyons" may refer, as Lang suggests, to the blanc de chine *shishi*<sup>9</sup> now in the house; I think this unlikely, as these figures are more likely to be those ("2 large wt Doggs") in Lady Exeter's Dressing Roome; see below. But they were surely blanc de chine.



Figure 2. Probably one of "2 Dogs blue." H.  $4\frac{1}{4}$  in. (11.5 cm). Burghley House Collection

In Lord Exeter's Bedd Chamber:

"2 large Ellephants" are both still in the house (Figure 3).<sup>10</sup>

"2 large hinde" One of these may have been sold at Christie's, July 13, 1959, lot 22; see under the Dining Room, "2 browne painted Staggs."

"A preist on a Bufalor" is surely the celadon and biscuit figure still in the house. It is included here, as it may be Japanese (Figure 4).<sup>11</sup>

"1 large Rabitt browne" may have been Japanese (Arita), but there is no evidence.

"4 litle Swallowes" and "2 litle Swans" seem more likely to be blanc de chine than anything else.

"2 figures with with froggs on their shoulders" must have been Chinese figures of Gama Sennin with his familiar, a three-legged toad.

"1 Painted Cupp & Cover" and "2 large blue and wt Coffe Dishes" do not give enough information.

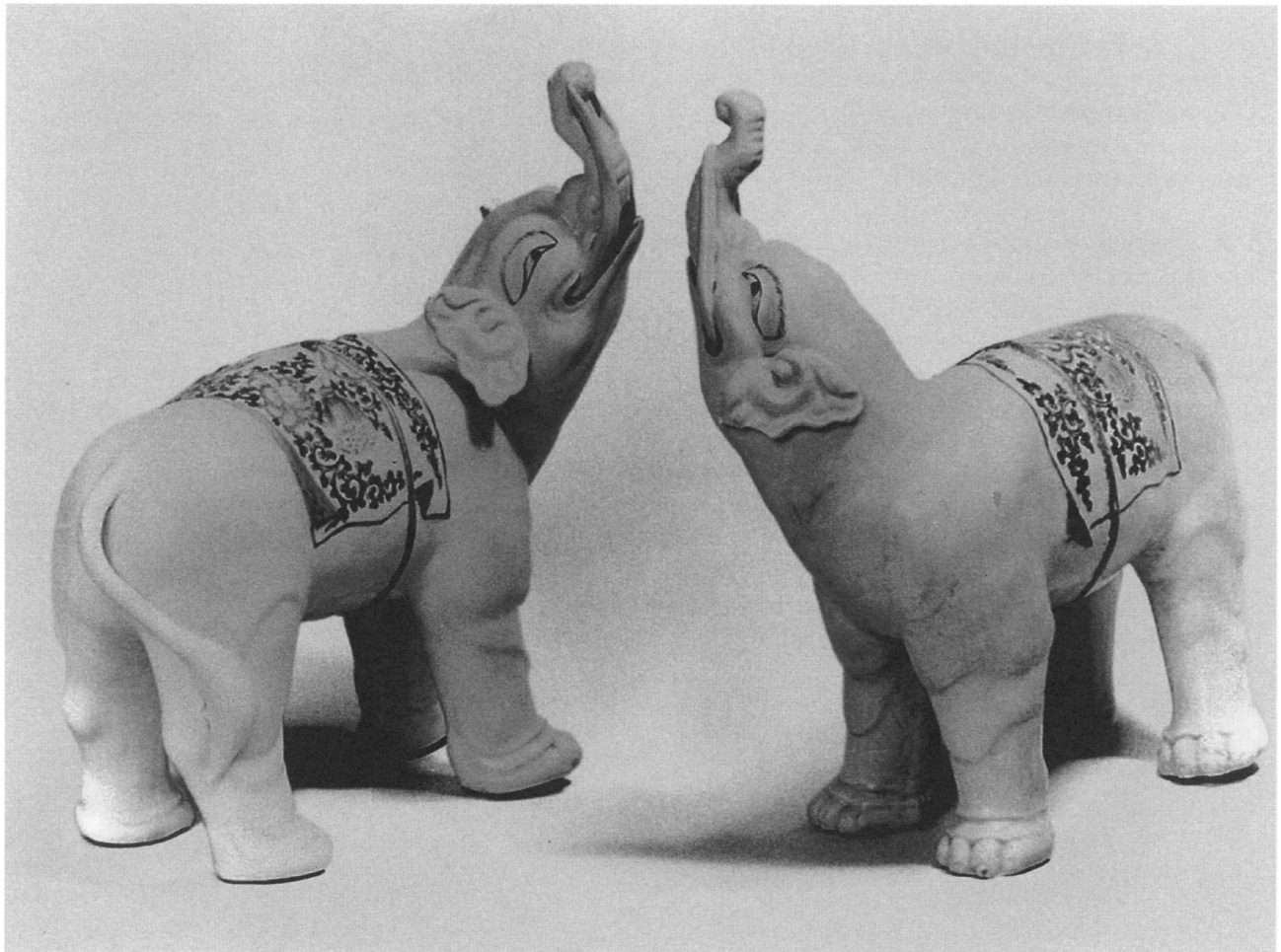


Figure 3. "2 large Ellephants." H.  $11\frac{1}{4}$  in. (28.5 cm). Burghley House Collection

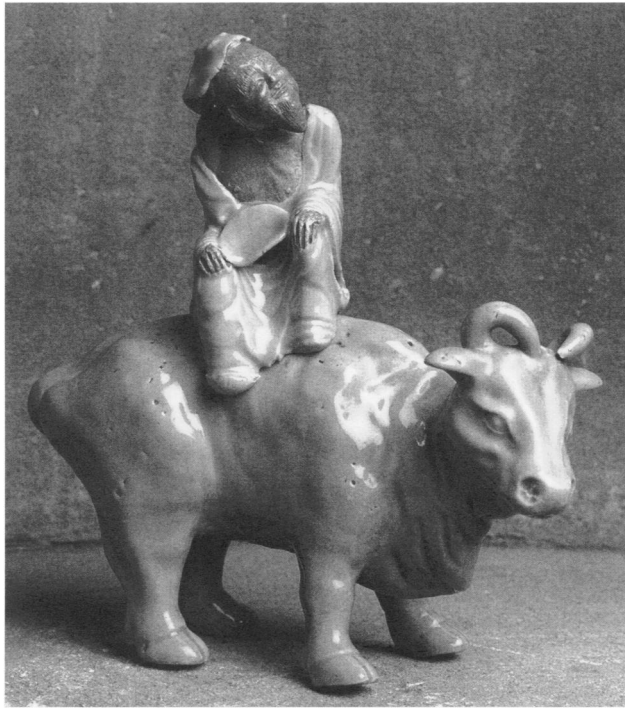


Figure 4. A "preist on a Bufalor." H. 9 $\frac{7}{8}$  in. (25 cm). Burghley House Collection



Figure 5. Probably one of "2 blue and wt Birds." H. 7 $\frac{7}{8}$  in. (18 cm). Burghley House Collection

#### In Lord Exeter's Dressing Roome:

"2 Doggs" or the "2 Lyons" may be the pair of small Japanese colored *shishi* both still in the house, though this is contentious.<sup>12</sup>

"2 blue and wt Birds" must be the now single figure still in the house (Figure 5).<sup>13</sup>

"1 heathen Godd with many arms" would have been a blanc de chine figure of the Taoist divinity Tou-Mu.<sup>14</sup>

"2 figures with Juggs att theire backs" are clearly the pair of figures both still in the house (Figure 6).<sup>15</sup>

#### In Lady Exeter's Anty Roome and Clossett:

"1 Red litle wrought Tea pott" was probably Yixing.

"2 Jappan Beakers" were probably lacquered and are included here only in case they were not.

"1 browne" and "1 wt Coffe Dishes" and "2 litle fruit Dishes" might be anything.

#### In Lady Exeter's Bed Chamber:

"1 large wt Bason Guilt Rimm & foott" was probably blanc de chine mounted in silver gilt.

"2 Blue and wt Juggs Guilt Covers & feete" have not enough information.

"2 wt Nunns Sitting" were probably blanc de chine Kuanyin figures.

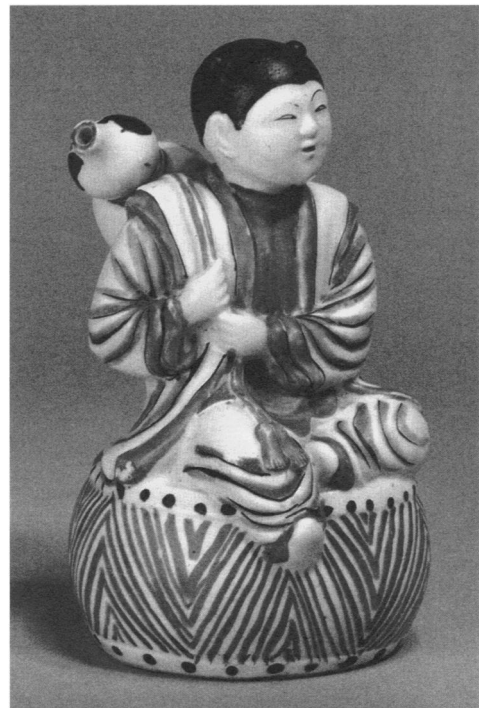


Figure 6. One of "2 figures with Juggs att their backs." H. 5 $\frac{1}{4}$  in. (14 cm). Burghley House Collection





Figure 7. One of “2 Rocks & figures under them.” H. approx. 7 1/8 in. (18 cm). Sold from Burghley House in 1888. The British Museum (1216+)

“2 Rocks & figures under them” were sold in 1888 as lot 198, and one is now in The British Museum (Figure 7).<sup>16</sup> These closely resemble the figures with tigers still in the house.<sup>17</sup> One would expect to find these in Tanner’s inventory, but they do not seem to appear, unless, and this is unlikely, they are the “2 Jugs like Rocks” in the Tea Roome (see below).

“5 large blue & wt Coffe Dishes & salvers to them” cannot be identified.

“1 Philligrin China Sugar Cupp” of unknown shape was mounted in filigree gilt-metal mounts.

“1 Large Brown Bason” might be Chinese or South-east Asian.

“1 Blue and wt Jarr & Cover, & 2 beakers to itt” suggest the remnants of a garniture, Chinese or Japanese.

In Lady Exeter’s Dressing Roome:

“2 large wt Doggs” may well be the pair of *shishi* on pedestals,<sup>18</sup> both still in the house, rather than the

“2 wt lyons” in Lord Exeter’s Anty Roome discussed above, simply because we know of no other figures that could be described thus, no white dogs big enough.

“2 wt Lyons with figures on Them” are surely represented by the blanc de chine figure,<sup>19</sup> one of which is still in the house.

“2 Brown and blue Coffe Dishes & Salvers” and “2 litle wt painted Coffe Dishes & Salvers” are unidentifiable.

“1 balld fryer sitting” must be the blanc de chine figure of the sitting Budai,<sup>20</sup> still in the house. There is a similar figure in The Metropolitan Museum of Art (inv. 32.100.422; see Figure 11 in Daniëlle Kisluk-Grosheide’s article in this publication.

In Lady Exeter’s Clossett:

“1 Brown & white relev’d Tea pott with Guilt handle, Spout Top & bottome & a litle figure & Chaines on the Topp of itt” is unidentified.

“1 white Tea pott & Cover, Guilt Spout & Chaîne to itt” was surely mounted blanc de chine.

“2 white Criples” must have been blanc de chine, possibly Taoist immortals.

“2 white Nunns” are likely to have been blanc de chine Kuanyin figures.

“1 Browne Coffe Dish Guilt foott” is unidentified.

“4 wt & painted Coffe Dishes, & 6 wt & painted Salvers” would have been a set of six, possibly early famille verte, possibly Imari.

In the Best Bedd Chamber:

“1 large jarr & 2 large Beakers blue wt & painted” was probably an Imari garniture, which may be represented in the house by single jars,<sup>21</sup> though both have covers and no cover is mentioned by Tanner.

“2 blue & wt botles & 2 litle Beakers” possibly, but not necessarily, en suite, could have been Chinese or Arita.

“1 Coffe Dish with a foott” may have been a stem-cup.<sup>22</sup>

“1 Japan large Bowldish” is of an unknown shape and may have been lacquered.

“1 large wt Indian Queene” would have been a blanc de chine figure,<sup>23</sup> possibly still in the house.

“2 white Cocks” must be the blanc de chine rather formalized figures both still in the house.<sup>24</sup> Other versions in the house are in the inventory: the Japanese white version, with some enameled details, in the Tea Roome; the enameled Japanese version in the Drawing Roome. Which is the earliest version is not known.

"2 wt Sugar Cupps relev'd worke" would have been blanc de chine modeled in relief.

"5 pa[i]nted Coffe Dishes & 6 Salvers" would have been a set of early famille verte or Imari.

In the Drawing Roome:

"1 Large jarr & 2 Large Juggs painted China" were not necessarily Chinese, but more likely Imari.<sup>25</sup> It is here assumed that "painted" means "enameled," but this may be misleading. There is not enough evidence to decide.

"1 large Blue & wt Bason" might have been a Wanli bowl,<sup>26</sup> but this cannot be ascertained.

"2 painted fryors" must be enameled, but there is little else to go on.

"2 painted Cocks," one of which, in early Kakiemon

style, is still in the house.<sup>27</sup> For a similar model in white, see the Best Bedd Chamber (Chinese), above, and the Tea Roome (Japanese), below (Figure 8).

"2 faulcons" both Arita and blanc de chine hawks of this period are known.

"2 painted Relev'd brown Juggs with handles Guilt Rimms" are the pair of mostly biscuit, iron-washed, modeled, and partially enameled mugs or tankards,<sup>28</sup> both still in the house (Figure 9).

"2 Red Tea potts relev'd" were probably Yixing with raised decoration.

"2 wt high Cups relev'd" were probably blanc de chine, with raised decoration.

"2 Green Scollupt Dishes" may have been celadon, or possibly monochrome green-enameled Chinese.

"2 larger wt painted Dishes" are likely to have been Japanese. Could there be a distinction between

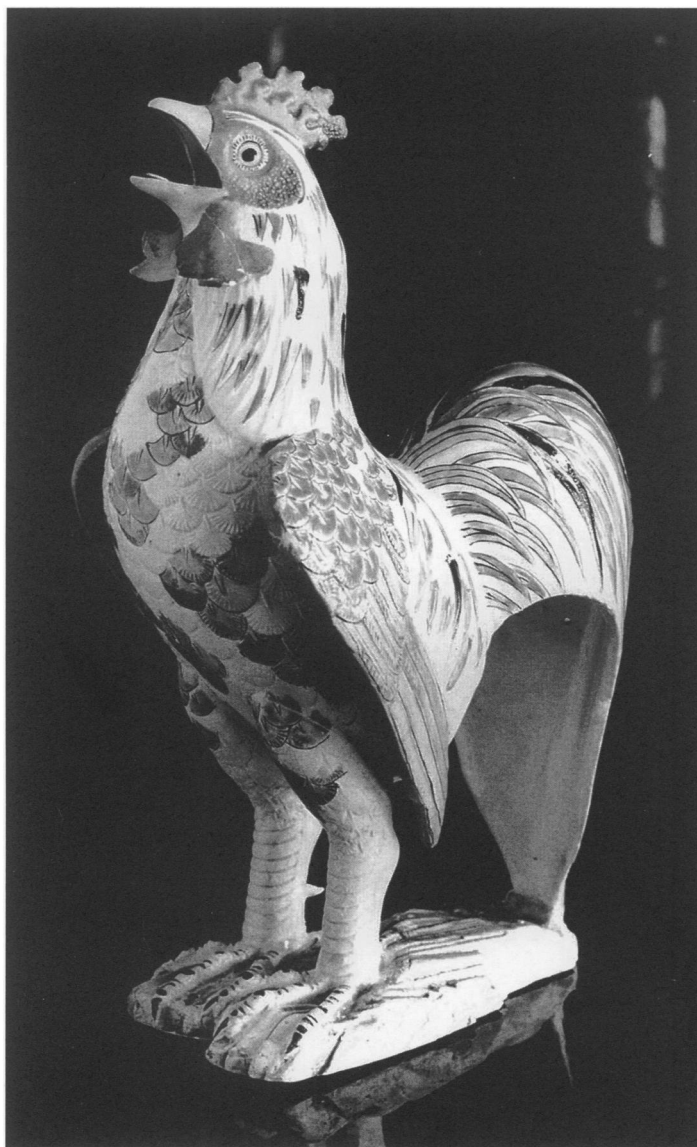


Figure 8. One of "2 painted Cocks." H. 11 in. (28 cm). Burghley House Collection

Figure 9. One of "2 painted Relev'd brown Juggs with handles Guilt Rimms." H. 5 3/4 in. (15 cm). Burghley House Collection



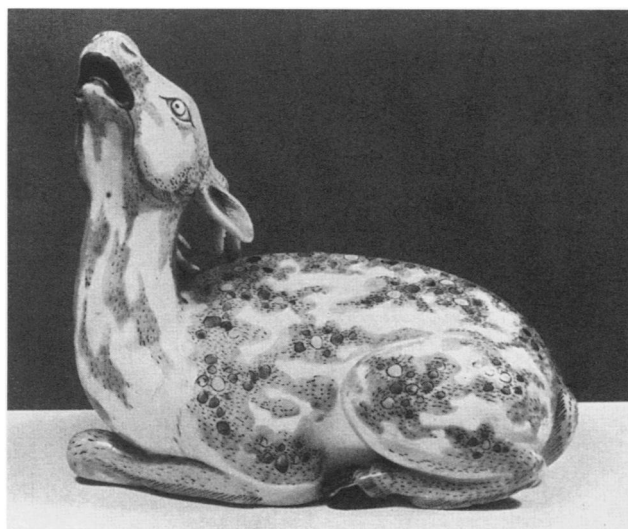


Figure 10. Probably one of "2 browne painted Staggs." L. approx. 9 in. (23 cm). Sold from Burghley House in 1959 (lot 22) (photo: after Soame Jenyns, *Japanese Porcelain* [London, 1960])

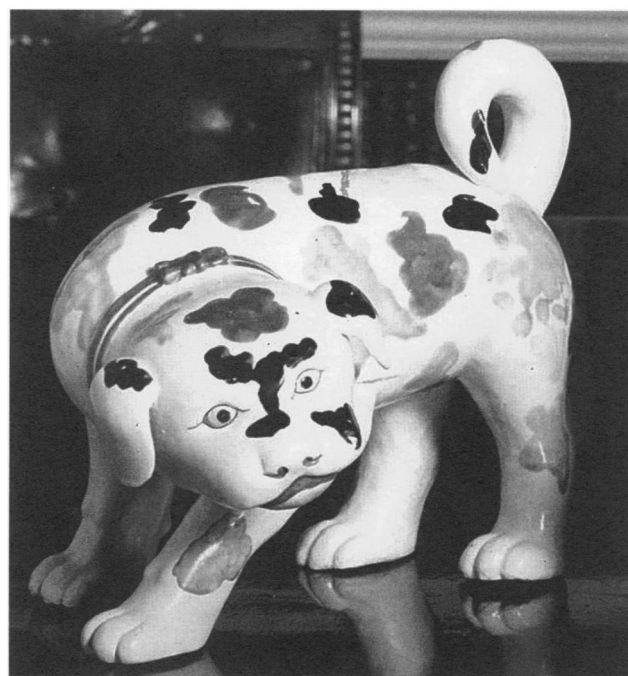


Figure 12. Probably "1 white Cock." H. 8 7/8 in. (22.5 cm). Burghley House Collection

"wt painted" and "wt & painted" (see Lady Exeter's Clossett)? Could one be Kakiemon and the other Imari, and if so, which is which?

"2 Brown Dishes" are, again, possibly Yixing.

"2 litle wt painted Dishes" are probably Japanese (see above).



"2 browne painted Staggs" may well have been the pairs to the "2 large hinde" in Lord Exeter's Bedd Chamber (see above). Two among these four, making a pair, may have been sold at Christie's, July 13, 1959, lot 22, though Culpepper Tanner would certainly have known the distinction between the sexes, unlike, apparently, Christie's cataloguer (Figure 10). "2 wt ffryers" were, again, probably blanc de chine. "1 Madona" was probably a blanc de chine Kuanyin figure; these were frequently mistaken for, or appropriated as, the Madonna.

Figure 11. Probably "1 Large Motled Mastife Dogg." L. 9 1/4 in. (24 cm). Burghley House Collection



"2 figures Sitting in Chaires" are fortunately both still in the house, for in the absence of the qualifying abbreviation "wt" we would not know they are blanc de chine.<sup>30</sup>

"2 wt Lyons with figures on Them" are blanc de chine;<sup>31</sup> one is still in the house.

"2 large B[l]ue & white Dishes" might be Wanli *kraak*, as there are several in the house, but there is not enough information.

"2 lesser Dishes" are likely to have been of the same pattern as the above.

In the Tea Roome:

"1 Large Motled Mastife Dogg" so exactly describes the dog in the house (Figure 11) that it is difficult to believe it cannot be so, in spite

of the fact that there are today two such figures still in the house, and only one appears in Tanner's inventory.<sup>32</sup> There is a similar example in The Metropolitan Museum of Art (inv. 1975.268.529).

"1 white Cock" is probably the Japanese version of this model (see under the Best Bedd Chamber and the Dining Roome, above),<sup>33</sup> still in the house (Figure 12).

"1 Turk painted" and "2 laughing fryars" are unidentified, the latter possibly figures of Budai.

"2 Juggs like Rocks" might be the figures of tigers on trees (see above, in Lady Exeter's Bedd Chamber) in the house<sup>34</sup> (Figure 13).

"1 White Tea Pott & Cover litle" must be blanc de chine.

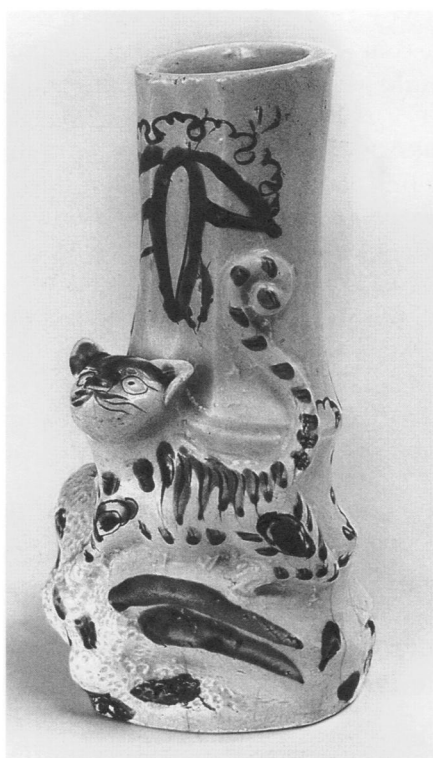


Figure 13. Possibly one of "2 Juggs like Rocks." H. 6¼ in. (16 cm). Burghley House Collection



Figure 14. "2 China boyes wrestling." H. 12½ in. (30.7 cm). Burghley House Collection



Figure 15. A "pair of Boxes of three pieces Each painted in colours garnisht with philgrin Top Bottoms Hinges and Clasps." H. 2¼ in. (6.5 cm). Burghley House Collection

"1 wt Sugar Cup relev'd" must have been blanc de chine with raised modeled decoration.

"2 painted Coffe Dishes & Salviers" are likely to have been enameled Japanese.

In the Wardrobe or Closet Chamber:

"2 China boyes wrestling" is actually a single figure of two wrestlers, one of the most famous Japanese porcelains still in the house (Figure 14).<sup>35</sup>

Ten pieces of Japanese porcelain still in the house may be among those listed in the 1688 inventory. Of these, five are almost certain: the "2 large Ellephants" (Figure 3); the "2 figures with Juggs att their backs" (Figure 6); the "painted Cock" (Figure 8); the "2 painted Relev'd brown Juggs with handles Guilt Rimms" (Figure 9); and the "2 China boyes wrestling" (Figure 14). There is much less certainty over the other five, though it can be stated that they were probably in the house: the "2 Dogs blue" (Figure 2); the "preist on a Bufalor" (Figure 4); the "blue and wt Bird" (Figure 5); the "Large Motled Mastife Dogg" (Figure 11); and the "white Cock" (Figure 12).

#### THE DEVONSHIRE SCHEDULE

For the sake of completeness, the sole Japanese porcelain identifiable in the Devonshire Schedule of 1690 is included here:

"A pair of Boxes of three pieces Each painted in colours garnisht with philgrin Top Bottoms Hinges and Clasps," still in the house, are a pair of miniature

*jubako*, or tiered boxes, of blue, white, and red enameled Imari,<sup>36</sup> exactly like the pair from the collection of Sir Hans Sloane, which in 1723 became the foundation collection of The British Museum (Figure 15).<sup>37</sup>

#### THE SALE OF 1888

Catalogue of OLD ORIENTAL PORCELAIN and Objects of Art, and ancient and modern plate, the property of the MARQUIS OF EXETER, from Burghley House: which will be sold by auction, by Messrs Christie, Manson & Woods . . . on Thursday, June 7, 1888, and following day . . .

#### FIRST DAY'S SALE

##### OLD JAPAN PORCELAIN

- 119 A PAIR OF ROUND DISHES, enamelled and painted with flowers in the centre, and flowers in red medallions on the border—18½ in. diam.
- 120 A PAIR OF DEEP DISHES, with vases of flowers in the centre, and flowers in compartments on the border; and a dish, with flowers in the centre, and openwork border—10¾ in. diam.
- 121 A PAIR OF DISHES, with fluted borders, painted with birds, flowering plants, and rocks—12 in. diam.
- 122 A SET OF SIX DISHES, with vases of flowers in the centre, and chrysanthemums and foliage in gold, on black ground, on the borders—10¾ in. diam.
- 123 A PAIR OF BASINS, with fluted borders, and painted with flowers—6 in. diam.; and a smaller fluted basin, with figures on circular red medallions
- 124 A PAIR OF ROUND DISHES, with flowers and birds in the centre, and openwork white borders—10 in. diam.
- 125 A PAIR OF SMALL DOUBLE GOURD-SHAPED BOTTLES
- 126 A FLUTED VASE, painted with flowers, and flowers in compartments on the neck—20½ in. high
- 127 A PAIR OF LARGE BEAKERS, with kylin in medallions, and flowers and ornaments in blue, red, and gold—23 in. high
- 128 A PAIR OF SQUARE BOTTLES WITH STOPPERS, painted with flowers in colours, on pale blue and white ground—10½ in. high
- 129 A PAIR OF CISTERNS, with foliage and flowers in red, blue gold, and chrysanthemums inside—15½ in. diam.
- 130 ANOTHER, with two ladies in a garden, and flowering shrubs, borders of ornaments inside—18 in. diam.
- 131 A TALL VASE, painted with landscapes in two oval-shaped medallions, and flowers in upright

medallions in dark-blue borders with scroll foliage in gold — 24 *in. high*

#### SECOND DAY'S SALE

- 192 A PAIR OF ROUND DISHES, with fluted borders, painted and enamelled with flowers and ornaments in compartments 10¼ *in. diam.*  
193 ANOTHER, with chrysanthemums in the centre and on the border — 10¾ *in. diam.*  
194 A DISH, with circular ornament in the centre, and fan-shaped ornaments and flowers on the border; and a pair of ditto, with landscapes and buildings in the centre, and flowers on fluted borders  
195 A PAIR OF SPIRALLY FLUTED BASINS, painted and enamelled with flowers inside and out  
196 A PAIR OF HEXAGONAL BOXES AND COVERS, with hawthorn foliage and flowers  
197 A PAIR OF FLUTED BASINS, with foliage and flowers in compartments, and with flowers and raised chrysanthemums inside; and a pair of fluted stands, with flowers  
198 A PAIR OF CURIOUS MATCHPOTS, formed as trunks of trees, with female figures, flowers, and foliage in relief in colours — 7¼ *in. high*  
199 A TEAPOT AND COVER, with upright handle, painted with trellis and chrysanthemums in red and gold  
200 ANOTHER, with ladies and children in a garden  
201 A PAIR OF EWERS, with waves in low relief, and enamelled borders, spout and handle — 8 *in. high*  
202 A PAIR OF SHELL-SHAPED BOXES AND COVERS, on three feet, with flowers in colours, and shells and marine plants in white and gold, or red ground  
203 A PAIR OF FIGURES OF DUCKS, with coloured plumage  
204 A PAIR OF FIGURES OF TIGERS, on pedestals painted with plants — 9¼ *in. high*  
205 A HEXAGONAL URN AND COVER, with raised coloured figures and flowers in five medallions, on feet formed as children — 16 *in. high*  
206 A PAIR OF FIGURES OF LADIES, with coloured drapery — 12 *in. high*

#### MOUNTED ORIENTAL PORCELAIN

- 221 A PAIR OF OLD JAPAN BEAKERS, painted and enamelled with birds and flowers, the feet and necks mounted with old chased and pierced silver gilt — 9 *in. high*

#### ANALYSIS OF THE 1888 SALE

- Lot 127 The large beakers might have resembled the florid Imari pair in the house,<sup>38</sup> but could not have

been the “2 Jappan Beakers” in Lady Exeter’s Anty Roome, as they are surely too late in date, and those were probably lacquer.

Lot 128 The square bottles probably resembled those from Blenheim Palace now in the Salting Collection in the Victoria and Albert Museum (ca. 1508–1910).<sup>39</sup>

Lot 129 The pair of cisterns sound very similar to the Imari pair still in the house.<sup>40</sup>

Lot 131 The tall vase almost certainly belonged to a group of finely decorated Imari wares with painted decoration in oval or otherwise-shaped medallions and poem-slip (*tanzaku*) medallions on a blue ground overpainted in gold. An example from the Salting Collection is in the Victoria and Albert Museum (ca. 1508–1910)<sup>41</sup>, and a covered vase of this type is in The Metropolitan Museum of Art (inv. 23.225.115).

Lot 197 Could the fluted stands with flowers have been Kakiemon salts, similar to the one in the house?<sup>42</sup>

Lot 198 The matchpots must be the “2 Rocks & figures under them” listed in the 1688 inventory in

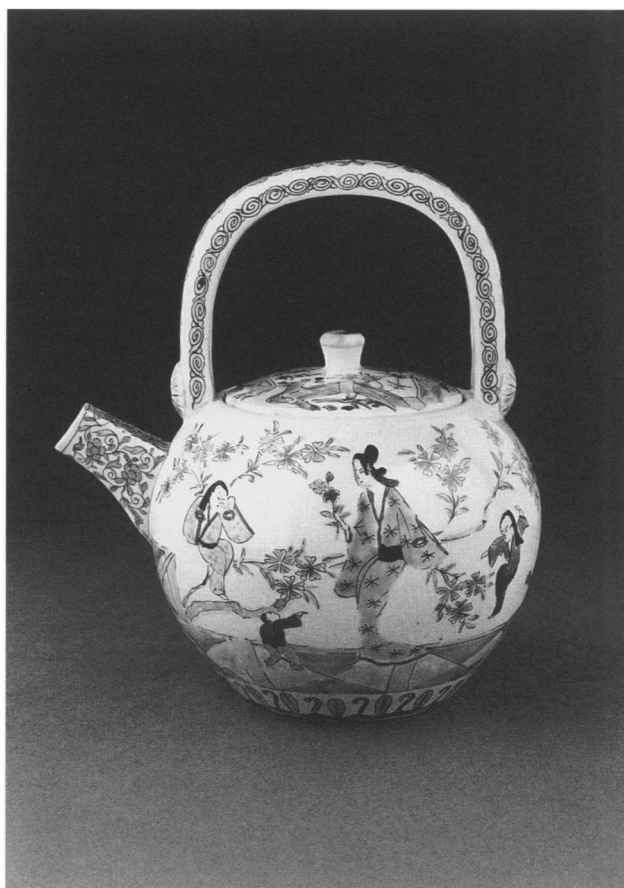


Figure 16. The teapot sold from Burghley in 1888 (lot 200) may have been this model. H. 6½ *in.* (16.4 *cm.*). The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (Reitlinger Gift, 1978.451)

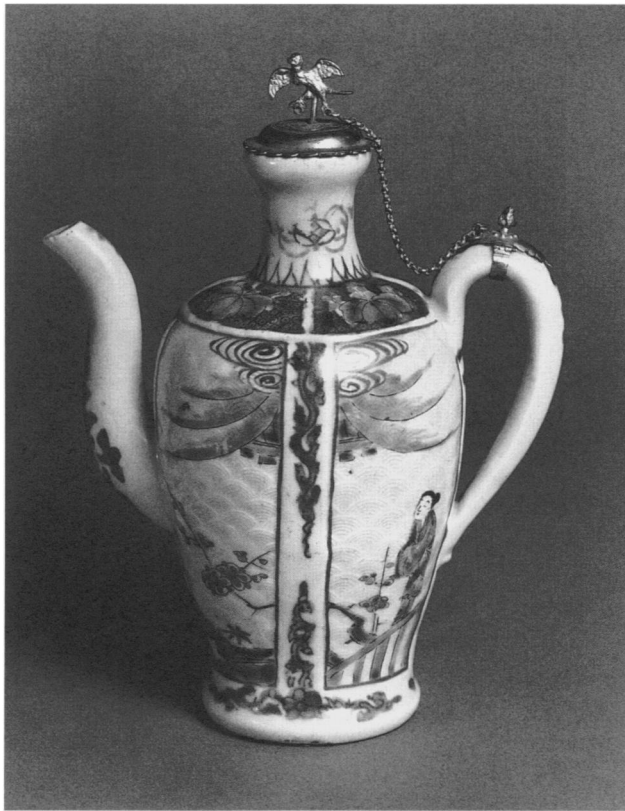


Figure 17. The pair of ewers sold from Burghley in 1888 (lot 201) may have been this model. H. 7 in. (17.7 cm). The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (Reitlinger Gift, 1978.638)



Figure 18. The pair of figures of ducks sold from Burghley in 1888 (lot 203) almost certainly resembled this model. L. 4 5/8 in. (11.7 cm). The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (1983.242)

when he saw one, even such an exotic one as a mandarin. This means that they were probably acquired later (Figure 18).<sup>49</sup>

Lot 204 The pair of tigers, instantly recognizable, and quite distinct from dogs or *shishi* or "lyons," probably date from the very end of the seventeenth century or possibly even the early eighteenth century. There was a pair at Drayton House.<sup>50</sup> The presence of tigers at Drayton and their absence from Tan-

Lady Exeter's Bed Chamber (see above), one of which is now in The British Museum (see Figure 7).<sup>43</sup> Similar figures with tigers instead of ladies, probably not listed by Tanner, are now in the house.<sup>44</sup>

Lot 200 The other teapot sounds like one in the Reitlinger Collection in the Ashmolean Museum (Figure 16).<sup>45</sup>

Lot 201 The pair of ewers sound like the one in the Reitlinger Collection at the Ashmolean Museum (Figure 17).<sup>46</sup>

Lot 202 Shell-shaped boxes are known on white grounds, on celadon grounds, and on the biscuit; red-ground examples appear to be unrecorded.

Lot 203 The pair of figures of ducks might be two figures of either sex or a true pair, a duck and a drake. There are Early Enamelled figures of exotically painted mandarin ducks and drakes in the Gubbay Collection at Clandon Park<sup>47</sup> and a smaller version of the drake in the Ashmolean Museum.<sup>48</sup> No duck (or drake) is mentioned in the 1688 inventory; while these are certainly earlier in date than that, we can rely on Tanner to have recognized a duck



Figure 19. The pair of tigers sold from Burghley in 1888 (lot 204) almost certainly resembled this pair. H. 9 1/8 in. (24 cm). (photo: courtesy of Christie's)

ner's inventory; their presence later at Burghley; and the presence at both Drayton<sup>51</sup> and Burghley<sup>52</sup> of the otherwise unrecorded figure of a bird on a branch confirm our post-1688 dating of the blue-and-white series mentioned above—which also extends to some colored pieces apparently found only at Burghley, Drayton, and Welbeck Abbey (Figure 19).

Lot 205 The hexagonal urn was surely the same as that illustrated here as Figure 20.<sup>53</sup>

Lot 206 The pair of figures of ladies with colored drapery cannot have been the familiar Kakiemon *bijin* figures, like the one in the Metropolitan Museum,<sup>54</sup> for they are too tall. Nor can they have been the slightly earlier figures like those formerly at Drayton,<sup>55</sup> for these are too short. The figure in The British Museum<sup>56</sup> is the correct size and may well be one of these figures, which are not, as seen above, identifiable with certainty in the 1688 inventory.

#### THE 1959 SALE

Catalogue of an important collection of ENGLISH, CONTINENTAL AND ORIENTAL PORCELAIN, sold by order of the Most Honourable the Marquess of Exeter, K.C.M.G.

Removed from Burghley House, Stamford which will be sold by Christie, Manson & Woods, Ltd. . . . on Monday, July 13, 1959.

- 1 Twenty-three Japanese circular plates painted in blue, red and gold with fan-pattern panels and flowering plants—8½ in. diam.
- 2 A pair of Japanese circular bowls and covers, decorated with circular chrysanthemums on rouge-de-fer grounds within trellis-pattern borders, the interiors with flowering branches to the borders—4 in. diam.
- 22 AN IMPORTANT PAIR OF JAPANESE FIGURES OF A STAG AND A DOE, recumbent with their heads turned, partly decorated with medallions and hair markings on a pale aubergine ground—9 in. long—Arita—late 17th century.

Almost certainly the "Two Staggs" mentioned in the 1688 inventory of Burghley House.

#### ANALYSIS OF THE 1959 SALE

Lot 22 The stag and doe were probably one of the "2 large hindes" in Lord Exeter's Bedd Chamber in 1688, and one of the "2 browne painted Staggs" in the Dining Roome, in spite of the zoological inexactitude at Christie's (see Figure 10).



Figure 20. The hexagonal urn sold from Burghley in 1888 (lot 205) almost certainly resembled this model. H. 15¾ in. (40.3 cm). (photo: courtesy of Barry Davies Oriental Art)

#### CONCLUSION

The 1688 inventory of the contents of Burghley House lists several Japanese porcelains still in the house; these are the earliest recorded pieces in Europe, so far as is known, where there is a secure correlation between inventory and the actual pieces. Thus at least five pieces are securely datable to before 1688 and several others possibly so. But there is more to be seen in this inventory. The earliest piece



of colored Japanese porcelain in the house is surely the figure of an immortal riding on a tortoise.<sup>57</sup> This can be tentatively dated to 1665, when such a figure appears in the Dutch shipping lists,<sup>58</sup> and yet it does not appear in Tanner's inventory. Either it was not in the collection and arrived later, or Tanner missed it. Tanner may not have been infallible; it has, for instance, been suggested here that the "Large Motled Mastife Dogg" (Figure 11) may be one of two now in the house, whereas Tanner lists but one. The tortoise figure has enamels that are clearly earlier than those on any other piece in the house; it is closely followed by the "2 figures with Juggs att theire backs" (Figure 6). The bird on a tree, not in the 1688 inventory,<sup>59</sup> is probably contemporary, from a different enameling workshop, possibly that ancestral to the Kakiemon.

Most importantly, this inventory proves that the Kakiemon palette of enamel colors was fully developed before 1688, for the elephants (Figure 3) are enameled in the Kakiemon palette. This has usually been assumed to be the case; here is hard evidence that it was so.

Japanese porcelain contributed an important part of the decoration of many rooms in the house, in particular those rooms used every day by Lord and Lady Exeter. When the State Apartments on the second floor were completed by the ninth earl, many of these porcelains migrated into these grand rooms, upwardly mobile. Ranked, perhaps, with Chinese porcelain and small sculpture in symmetrical arrangements in tiers over the chimney (chimneys mostly occupied the corners of rooms in the seventeenth century) or on Japanese lacquer cabinets, these provided an exotic and prestigious show.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to record his thanks to Lady Victoria Leatham and to Jon Culverhouse.

## NOTES

1. Culpepper Tanner, "An inventory of the Goods in Burghley House belonging to the Right Honble John Earl of Exeter and Ann Countesse of Exeter Taken August 21th 1688." MS, Burghley House. Transcribed by Jon Culverhouse, Oliver Impey, and Mimi Morris.
2. Will of Elizabeth, countess of Devonshire, "Conveyance and Schedule of Gift," April 18, 1690, MS, Burghley House.
3. The books cited here describing or illustrating the Japanese porcelain in Burghley House are: [Gordon Lang], [*The Wrestling*

- Boys*], exh. cat., Burghley House (Stamford, 1983); *The Burghley Porcelains*, exh. cat., Japan House, New York, and High Museum of Art, Atlanta (New York, 1986); John Ayers, Oliver Impey, and J.H.V. Mallett, *Porcelain for Palaces*, exh. cat., British Museum (London, 1990); Oliver Impey, *Four Centuries of Decorative Arts from Burghley House*, exh. cat., Cincinnati Art Museum; Society of Four Arts, Palm Beach; New Orleans Museum of Art; Santa Barbara Museum of Art; and Columbia Museum of Art, South Carolina (Alexandria, Va., 1998).
4. *Catalogue of OLD ORIENTAL PORCELAIN and Objects of Art, and ancient and modern plate, the property of the MARQUIS OF EXETER, from Burghley House: which will be sold by auction, by Messrs Christie, Manson & Woods . . . on Thursday, June 7, 1888, and following day . . .* (London, 1888).
  5. *Catalogue of an important collection of ENGLISH, CONTINENTAL AND ORIENTAL PORCELAIN, sold by order of the Most Honourable the Marquess of Exeter, K.C.M.G. Removed from Burghley House, Stamford which will be sold by Christie Manson, & Woods, Ltd . . . on Monday, July 13, 1959* (London, 1959).
  6. Ill. in Soame Jenyns, *Japanese Porcelain* (London, 1960), fig. 55B; Ayers, Impey, and Mallett, *Porcelain for Palaces*, fig. 164 (British Museum acc. no. JA Franks 1214+).
  7. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 55.
  8. Oliver Impey, *Japanese Export Porcelain: Catalogue of the Collection of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford*, forthcoming, fig. 125.
  9. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 245.
  10. Ill. inter alia in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 92; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 93; Ayers, Impey, and Mallett, *Porcelain for Palaces*, fig. 160; Impey, *Four Centuries*, fig. 76.
  11. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 170, as Chinese, and in *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 96, as Japanese.
  12. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 87; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 87; Ayers, Impey, and Mallett, *Porcelain for Palaces*, fig. 167.
  13. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 54; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 81; Ayers, Impey, and Mallett, *Porcelain for Palaces*, fig. 156.
  14. P. J. Donnelly, *Blanc de Chine: The Porcelain of Tehua in Fukien* (London, 1969), pl. 99.
  15. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 95; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 89; Ayers, Impey, and Mallett, *Porcelain for Palaces*, fig. 162.
  16. British Museum acc. no. Franks 1216+. Illustrated in Jenyns, *Japanese Porcelain*, fig. 53A. The pair to this figure was on the art market in 2002 (Dreweatt Neate, Donnington, July 26, 2002, lot 90, unsold). It had belonged to Sir Hercules Read, keeper of the Department of British and Medieval Antiquities and Ethnography at The British Museum at the time of the 1888 sale.
  17. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 86; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 85.
  18. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 245; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 9.
  19. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 241. See the Dining Room, below.
  20. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 234; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 13.
  21. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 119 or 121; for the latter, see also *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 7.
  22. Probably not one of the Kakiemon goblets in the house. See Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, figs. 84, 85; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 107; Ayers, Impey, and Mallett, *Porcelain for Palaces*, fig. 89.
  23. Possibly Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 240, but as there is no mention of the acolyte figure, more likely the large Kuanyin figure; see *ibid.*, no. 236 (unillustrated).
  24. Ill. in *ibid.*, fig. 244.
  25. If "painted" also includes blue and white, might the Juggs have

- been Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 49; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 45; Impey, *Four Centuries*, fig. 87?
26. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 128.
  27. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 88; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 90; Ayers, Impey, and Mallett, *Porcelain for Palaces*, fig. 169; Impey, *Four Centuries*, fig. 79.
  28. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 83; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 98; Ayers, Impey, and Mallett, *Porcelain for Palaces*, fig. 87; Impey, *Four Centuries*, fig. 75.
  29. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 243; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 11.
  30. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 235; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 12.
  31. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 241. See Lady Exeter's Dressing Room, above.
  32. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 91; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 92; Ayers, Impey, and Mallett, *Porcelain for Palaces*, fig. 175; Impey, *Four Centuries*, fig. 78.
  33. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 89; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 91.
  34. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 86.
  35. Ill. inter alia in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 96 and cover; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 95; Ayers, Impey, and Mallett, *Porcelain for Palaces*, fig. 163; Impey, *Four Centuries*, fig. 77.
  36. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 97; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 73; Impey, *Four Centuries*, fig. 73.
  37. Oliver Impey, "[Sir Hans Sloane as a collector of] Oriental Antiquities," in Arthur MacGregor, ed., *Sir Hans Sloane: Collector, Scientist, Antiquary. Founding Father of the British Museum* (London, 1994), pp. 222–27.
  38. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 122.
  39. Ill. in Ayers, Impey, and Mallett, *Porcelain for Palaces*, fig. 222.
  40. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 116.
  41. Ill. in Ayers, Impey, and Mallett, *Porcelain for Palaces*, fig. 223.
  42. See Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 76; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 99.
  43. British Museum acc. no. Franks 1216+. Ill. in Jenyns, *Japanese Porcelain*, fig. 53A.
  44. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 86; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 85.
  45. Ill. in Impey, *Japanese Export Porcelain*, fig. 361.
  46. Ill. in Jenyns, *Japanese Porcelain*, fig. 59B; Impey, *Japanese Export Porcelain*, fig. 89.
  47. See Ayers, Impey, and Mallett, *Porcelain for Palaces*, fig. 171, for a drake.
  48. See Impey, *Japanese Export Porcelain*, fig. 184.
  49. Ill. in Ayers, Impey, and Mallett, *Porcelain for Palaces*, fig. 168. See also Impey *Four Centuries*, Appendix 1.
  50. See Ayers, Impey, and Mallett, *Porcelain for Palaces*, fig. 168.
  51. Formerly Drayton House, now Ashmolean Museum; see Impey, *Japanese Export Porcelain*, fig. 72.
  52. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 90.
  53. Barry Davies, *Oriental Art Ltd, Ko-Imari from the Collection of Oliver Impey*, exh. cat. (London, 1997), no. 124.
  54. Ill. in Barbara Ford and Oliver Impey, *Japanese Art from the Gerry Collection in The Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1990), fig. 50.
  55. See Impey, *Japanese Export Porcelain*, fig. 72.
  56. British Museum acc. no. Franks 1214+. See Jenyns, *Japanese Porcelain*, no. 55B.
  57. Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 93; *The Burghley Porcelains*, fig. 88; Ayers, Impey, and Mallett, *Porcelain for Palaces*, fig. 158; Impey, *Four Centuries*, fig. 74.
  58. T. Volker, "Porcelain and the Dutch East India Company," *Mededelingen van het Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde* 11 (1954), p. 152. The cargo of the ship the *Nieuwenhoven* included "295 small statuettes on tortoises."
  59. Ill. in Lang, *Wrestling Boys*, fig. 90, with its counterpart formerly at Drayton, Impey, *Japanese Export Porcelain*, fig. 70.