

# The Mysterious Mr. Marshall Plagiarist Extraordinaire

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William Marshall of number 1, Holborn Bars, London, must have been quite a character. He was at various times a lottery dealer, publisher, pocket book maker, print seller, chapman, stationer, hardwareman, cutler and tea dealer, a bankrupt and, it transpires, a plagiarist.

My interest in him stems, of course, from research into transferware and related source prints, but in trying to unravel a little bit about him, I have been fascinated by the breadth of his activities. We find from announcements dated between 1816 and 1818 that he was licensed by the State Lottery at the Stamp Office “to divide lottery tickets into shares and to issue such chances”. An advertisement in *The Examiner* in July 1826 reads:

“Published by W. Marshall, No. 1 Holborn Bars; where are on Sale upwards of Three Hundred Views of Towns, Cities, and Gentlemen’s Seats, Dutch Subjects, splendid Prints by Stothard, engraved by Heath, &c. calculated for Illustration or Scrap Books. Collectors of Fine Engravings will find Marshall’s Prices for Prints considerably cheaper than any other House in the Kingdom.”

A similar advertisement appeared in *Marshall’s Christmas Box* for 1832 where the number of prints available was increased to five hundred.

However, by the time of this latter publication the *London Gazette* (an official publication for government and legal announcements) had already recorded that “A fiat in bankruptcy is awarded and issued forth against William Marshall of Holborn Bars ... pocket book maker, dealer and chapman ... and he being declared bankrupt” (*London Gazette*, 6 April 1832). It was not long before his assets in bankruptcy were ascertained: “Robert George Fane will sit on 14 August ... in order to audit the accounts of the assignees of the estate and effects of the said bankrupt” (*London Gazette*, 20 July 1832), and eventu-

ally the remaining assets were distributed: “Robert George Fane will sit on 27 September ... to make a dividend of the estate and effects of the said bankrupt” (*London Gazette*, 6 September 1833).

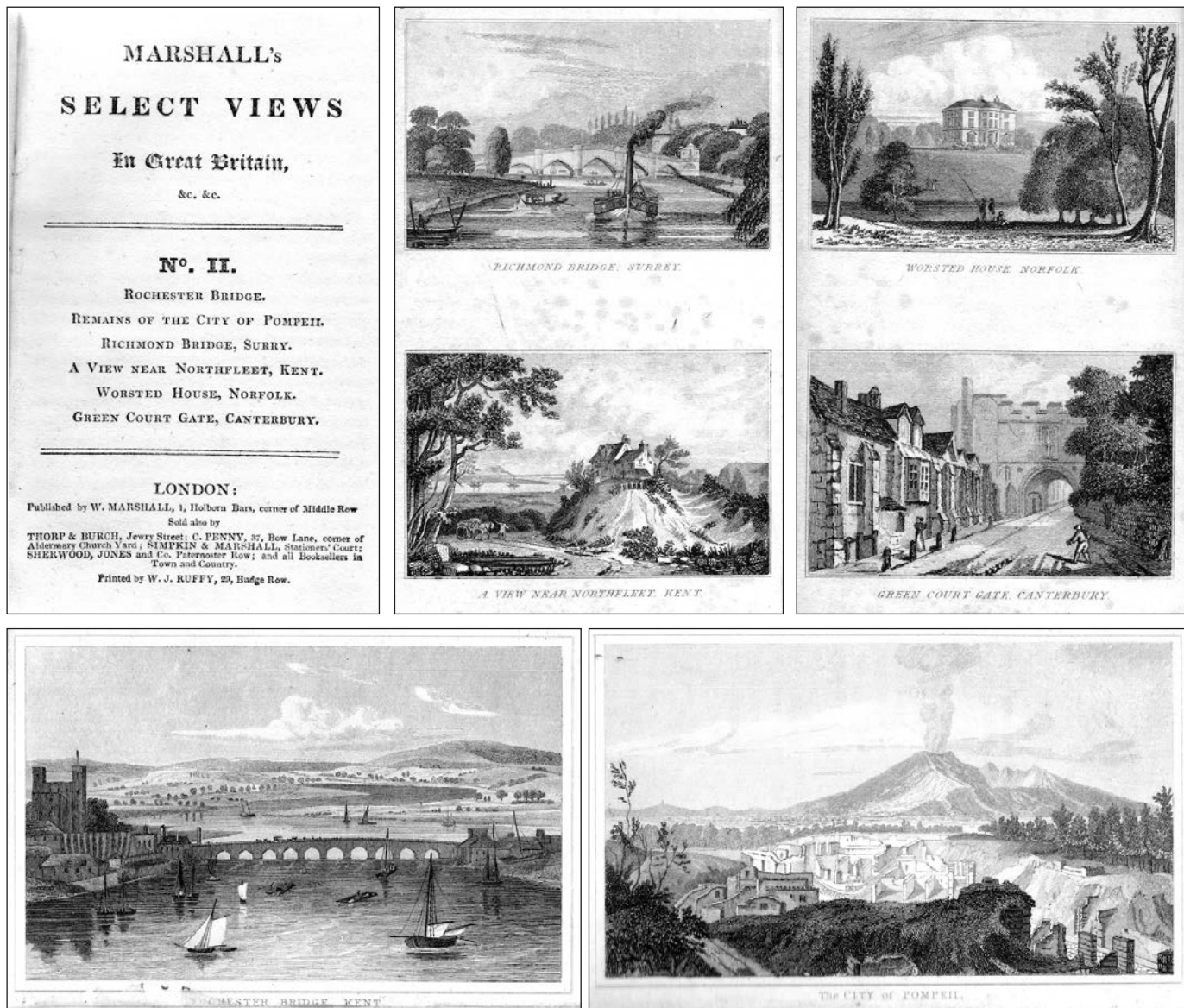
Notwithstanding these various pronouncements, his work as a publisher appears to have proceeded apace, and by 1836 he was very much still in business: “William Marshall, 1 Holborn Bars, corner of Middle Row, pocket book maker, stationer, hardwareman, cutler and tea dealer” (Records of the Sun Fire Office, 4 May 1836)

However, the purpose of this article is not to write a biography of Marshall but to look at his publishing and print selling businesses insofar as they contribute to our knowledge of transferwares.

To return to the previously referenced advertisement in *The Examiner* for July 1826, a further part read:

“Just Published, No.20 of Marshall’s *Select Views in Great Britain*, containing Six fine Engravings, with Letter-Press Descriptions, price only 6d. Two Volumes of this Work are completed, each containing Seventy Two Prints, price 6s 6d each, in boards. Two numbers will be regularly published monthly, until the Work is finished. This Work (the Plates alone of the Two Volumes published having cost One Thousand Guineas) may be deemed the most complete and cheapest Topographical History of remarkable Places and beautiful Seats in the Kingdom. Sold by all booksellers, and Published by W. Marshall, No. 1 Holborn Bars.”

It is this particular publication which is of interest to us here. As noted, it was a part-work, which means that it was issued in regular parts which, when complete, could be bound up to make a volume. This was not an uncommon way for books containing prints to be published at the time, and was presumably adopted to help the publisher’s cash flow. When



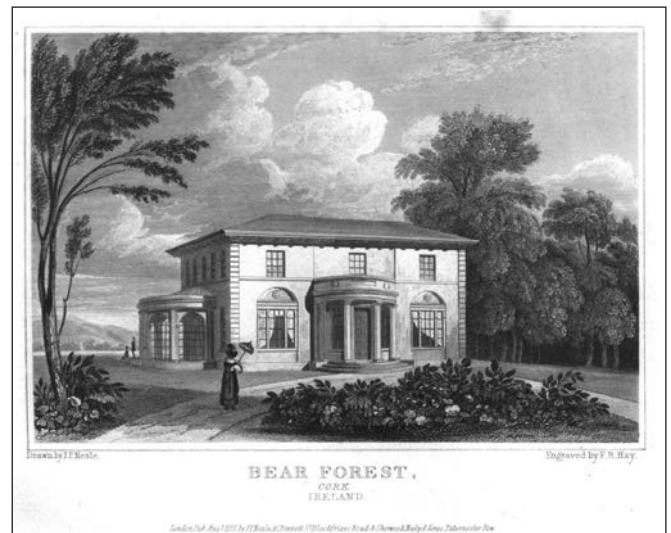
**Figure 1.** Five typical pages from one issue of *Marshall's Select Views in Great Britain &c.*

the book was completed, the publisher would bind up the individual parts to be sold as a complete volume. This, incidentally, helps to explain why the date of publication which often appears beneath an engraving can be a year or two earlier than the date of the completed book in which it appears.

In the case of *Select Views in Great Britain*, the introduction to the first issue is dated January 1825 and a total of 48 parts were issued, twelve of which would be bound up make a volume, the complete set consisting of four volumes. The 1826 advertisement refers to two volumes (the first twenty four parts) already being complete and two further parts being issued each month. On this basis the four volumes would have been completed by the end of 1826

although I am fairly certain this schedule was not achieved, and the last issue probably appeared later in 1827 or possibly even in 1828. Certainly the subsequent 1832 advertisement states that it was complete in 48 numbers and four pocket volumes.

Each number was made up with a title page, several pages of text and four pages of engravings, two with a single engraving on the page and two with two engravings. The books themselves are very small, the page size being around 4.5 by 3 inches, so even the full-page engravings are much smaller than most prints found in other topographical books of the period, and those which were printed two to a page are very small indeed. No wonder that "collectors of fine engravings will find Marshall's prices for prints



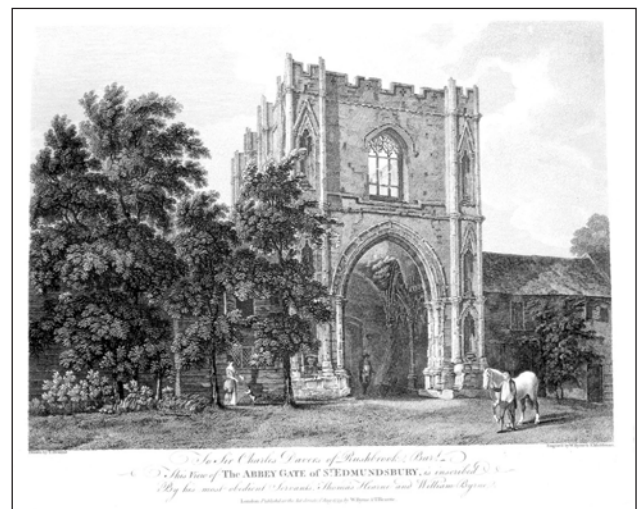
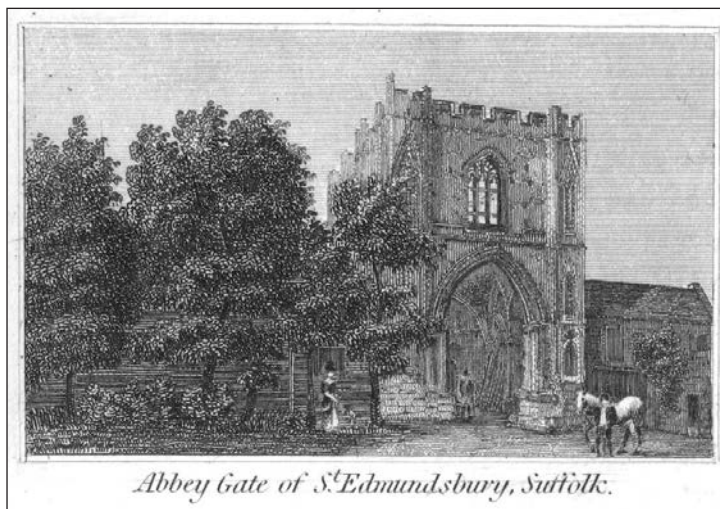
**Figure 2.** Comparative views of Bear Forest in Ireland from Marshall (left) and John Preston Neale's *Views of the Seats* (right).

considerably cheaper than any other House in the Kingdom"! A typical set of title page and four pages of engravings from the second part of *Select Views* are shown here (figure 1).

My interest in the publication was aroused when I discovered that it might be the source for some British views printed on transferware and this did indeed, prove to be the case. However, the more research I did, the more the situation became confused. I began to realise that Marshall was not only heading for bankruptcy but was not averse to plagiarism. It transpires that a number of the engravings in *Select Views* are actually copied from prints published earlier and I offer here a number of examples:

The first source book is John Preston Neale's well-known *Views of the Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland*, published between 1818 and 1823. The example shown here is a view of Bear Forest in Ireland (figure 2), used by several potters for patterns in blue and white, but Marshall copied several other prints from the same source.

Another book quite widely used by the potters was Thomas Hearne and William Byrne's *Antiquities of Great Britain* (1786-1807) and the example of Marshall's plagiarism shown here is a view of the Abbey Gate at Bury St. Edmunds in Suffolk (figure 3). At least four of Hearne's views were copied.



**Figure 3.** Comparative views of the Abbey Gate of St. Edmundsbury in Suffolk from Marshall (left) and Thomas Hearne's *Antiquities of Great Britain* (right).



**Figure 4.** Comparative views of Herstmonceux Castle in Sussex from Marshall (left) and John Greig's *The Antiquarian Itinerary* (right).

A less common source for the potters was John Greig's *The Antiquarian Itinerary* (1815-1818) but Marshall copied at least two of his prints. The example shown here is Herstmonceux Castle in Sussex (figure 4).

Like John Preston Neale and Thomas Hearne, William Angus found the views in his two-volume book *The Seats of the Nobility and Gentry in Great Brit-*

*ain and Wales* (1787-1815) popular with the potters. Marshall's pirated example shown here depicts Newnham Court in Oxfordshire (figure 5) and in this case he must have suffered from loss of memory, printing the same view twice, once in Volume 3 of *Select Views*, part number 28 and again in Volume 4, part number 42.

John Britton and Edward Wedlake Brayley's multi-



**Figure 5.** Comparative views of Newnham Court in Oxfordshire from Marshall (left, two different issues) and William Angus' *The Seats of the Nobility and Gentry* (right).



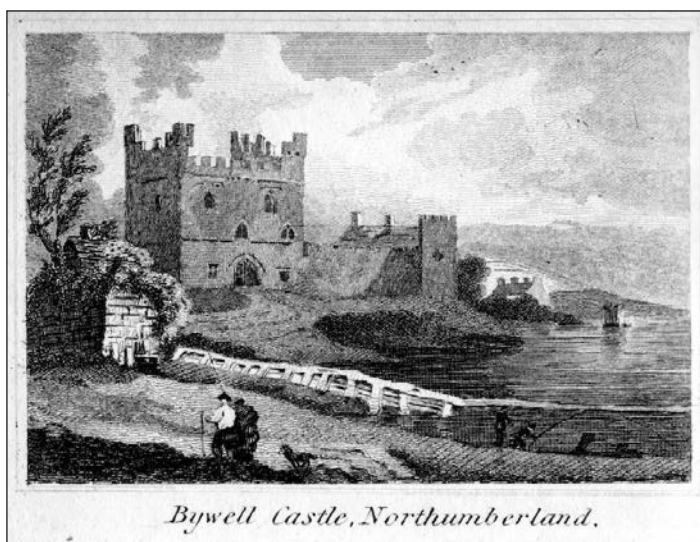
**Figure 6.** Comparative views of the Entrance to Hampton Court Palace in Middlesex from Marshall (left) and Britton & Brayley's *The Beauties of England and Wales* (right).

volume tour de force *The Beauties of England and Wales* (1801-18115) did not escape Marshall's notice either. The example illustrated here shows the entrance to Hampton Court Palace (figure 6), but at least two others were copied by Marshall.

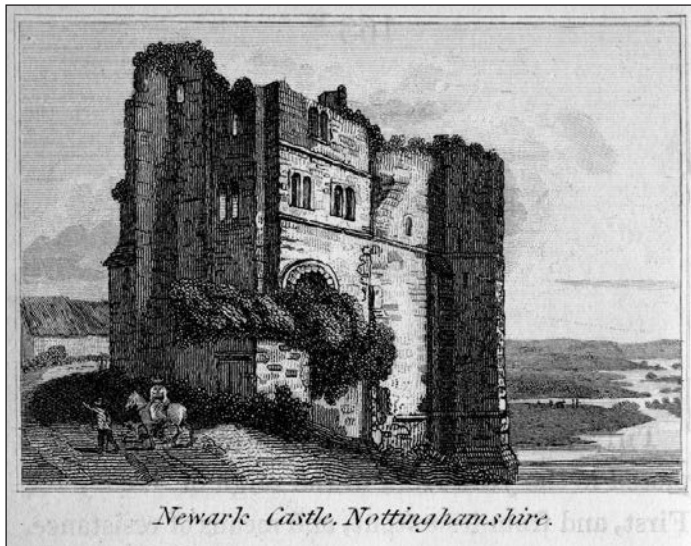
Marshall did not restrict himself to the more popular books of the period. One more expensive work was Sir Walter Scott's *The Border Antiquities of England and Scotland* (1814-1817) and Marshall used Luke Chennel's fine view of Bywell Castle in Northumberland (figure 7) for one of his copies. As far as I can tell this is a lone example from Scott's book.

The same might be true for John Storer and John Greig's *Antiquarian and Topographical Cabinet* (1807-1811). This was a popular set of books and quite widely used by the potters for views in blue and white. Marshall certainly copied their view of Newark Castle in Nottinghamshire (figure 8) but this is a lone example to my knowledge.

I hasten to note that I have not carried out a full survey of Marshall's prints and their origins. I have unearthed the copies noted above without too much effort and I am sure there must be other examples to be found.



**Figure 7.** Comparative views of Bywell Castle in Northumberland from Marshall (left) and Sir Walter Scott's *The Border Antiquities of England and Scotland* (right).



**Figure 8.** Comparative views of Newark Castle in Nottinghamshire from Marshall (left) and Storer & Greig's Antiquarian and Topographical Cabinet (right).

The purpose of all this research was, of course, to find source prints for views on transferware, and although initially I felt that these small Marshall books were unlikely to have been of much interest to the potters, it transpires that they were quite widely used.

Ralph Hall used several Marshall prints for views in his "Picturesque Scenery" series. The example

shown here is "Fulham Church Middlesex" (figure 9) but others copied from Marshall are "Dreghorn House, Scotland", "St. Woolston's, Kildare, Ireland", and "Tewin Water, Hertfordshire".

Minton used a couple of Marshall's prints, including "Castle Grantuly, Perthshire" for one view in his "English Scenery" series (figure 10). It is worth making the point that Minton's engravers embel-



**Figure 9.** "Fulham Church, Middlesex" from Ralph Hall's "Picturesque Scenery" series and the matching print from Marshall's Select Views.



**Figure 10.** Untitled view of Grantuly Castle in Perthshire from Minton's "English Scenery" series and the matching print from Marshall's Select Views.

lished the Marshall view with a fairly extensive foreground (this is true for other identified views in the same series) but the use of Marshall as a source is confirmed by the survival of the print in the Minton archives (see Geoffrey H. Priestman, *An Illustrated Guide to Minton Printed Pottery, 1796-1836*, plates 7.29 and 7.30).

William Adams used several different sources for his Bluebell Border series but just one view is copied from a Marshall print. This is "Wolvesey Castle, Hampshire" (figure 11) which, although it appears on a plate, seems to be quite uncommon.

Several unidentified makers used Marshall prints too. Examples are shown here from the "Diorama"



**Figure 11.** "Wolvesey Castle, Hampshire" from Adams' Bluebell Border series and the matching print from Marshall's Select Views.



**Figure 12.** “View of Southampton, Hants” from the “Diorama” series by an unknown maker and the matching print from Marshall’s Select Views.

series (“View of Southampton, Hants”, figure 12); the Flower Medallion Border series (“Whitney, Oxfordshire”, shown on a mismarked platter, figure 13); and the Morning Glory Border series of teawares (“Frognall Priory, Hampstead” and “Bear Forest, Ireland”, figure 14). In all three of these series, other views are also copied from Marshall.

These illustrations show only a few of the transferware views copied from Marshall prints. Other series involved include the “Belle Vue” series, Ralph Hall’s “Select Views” series, The Elkins & Co. “Irish Scenery” series, and the Tams’ Foliage Border series. There are also at least two individual views, not from series, one being the Adams view known as



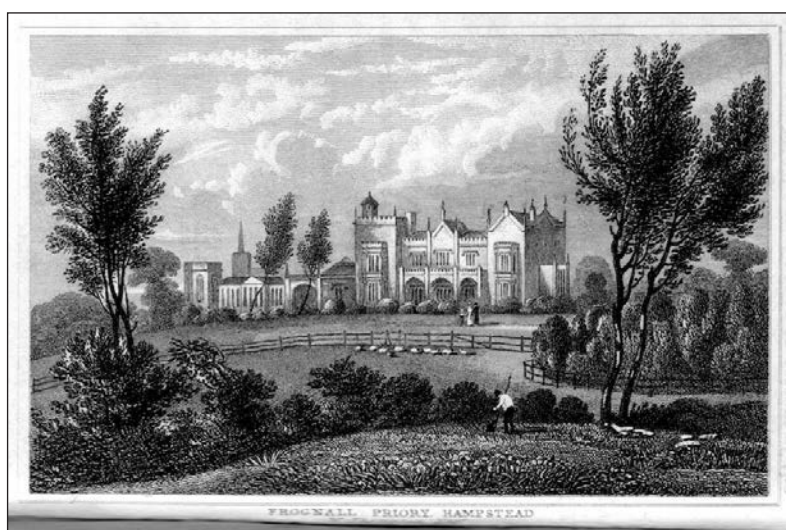
**Figure 13.** “Whitney, Oxfordshire” (mismarked) from the Flower Medallion Border series by an unknown maker and the matching print from Marshall’s Select Views.

Whitby Harbour (although it actually depicts West Cowes on the Isle of Wight), the other being a tea set made by Clews which uses a view of Purton in Wiltshire.

And finally, the mention of the Clews brothers leads to perhaps the most important discovery of all. In 1826 Ralph & James Clews introduced their States Border or “America and Independence” series. This is a fine series printed in the typical dark blue favoured for the American market. It is characterised by a broad floral border featuring the chain of States, and small central vignette views flanked by figures emblematic of America, with a portrait of Washing-

ton, and Liberty, representing independence (figure 15). The series was clearly created to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of 1776.

In the past, writers such as Norman Wolfe and David & Linda Arman have identified three of the central views as English country houses, supposedly copied from engravings in John Preston Neale’s *Views of the Seats*. However, not only can the actual source for the three identified views now be revealed as Marshall’s *Select Views* but all except one of the remaining views in the series can also be identified from Marshall’s prints. The full list of identified



**Figure 14.** “Frognall Priory, Hampstead” and “Bear Forest, Ireland” from the Morning Glory Border series by an unknown maker and the matching prints from Marshall’s *Select Views*.





**Figure 15.** Border, emblematic figures, and typical impressed mark from Clews' States Border series.



views complete with the Armans' references and their provisional titles, are shown in Table 1.

It can be seen that of the fourteen recorded views in the series, thirteen are now identified. This leaves just one scene to be located (figure 29), which is Arman 6: Mansion, foreground a lake with swans. I suspect it was too much to solve the entire puzzle in one go!

One point to be made is to avoid identifying any scene on transferware without really good proof. The view which the Armans described as a Dock, with large building and ships (figure 24), has appeared in the literature as a view of the New York customs house. Clearly this was a somewhat optimistic guess which got into print and then grew like

Topsy, until it almost became fact. Let us all resolve not to repeat unsubstantiated information.

The obvious remaining question is why did the Clews factory use British views to decorate a series clearly intended for the American market? My suspicion is that they wanted to produce something for the fiftieth anniversary of independence but their decision was made too late to procure suitable American views. This would explain why the views are very small within the overall design, possibly a deliberate ploy, and also why the individual scenes are not titled. Most of the other series made by Clews bear individual titles, but they would not want to bring the buyers attention to the fact that these central views were not American. Very cunning these potters!

| <i>View</i>                    | <i>Arman Reference</i>                                         | <i>Illustration</i> |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Bear Forest, Ireland           | Arman 9<br>Two-storey building with curved drive               | Figure 16           |
| Belton House, Lincolnshire     | Arman 15<br>Mansion, winding drive                             | Figure 17           |
| Bishton Hall, Staffordshire    | Arman 3<br>Building, fishermen with nets                       | Figure 18           |
| Burley, Rutlandshire           | Arman 10<br>Building in distance, women in foreground          | Figure 19           |
| Bushy Park, Middlesex          | Arman 2<br>Building, deer on lawn                              | Figure 20           |
| Carlton Hall, Northamptonshire | Arman 8<br>Three-storey building, two wings and centre section | Figure 21           |
| Coghill Hall, Yorkshire        | Arman 14<br>Mansion, circular drive                            | Figure 22           |
| Doveridge Hall, Derbyshire     | Arman 13<br>Building, two wings, water in foreground           | Figure 23           |
| Yarmouth, Town Hall and Quay   | Arman 4<br>Dock, with large building and ships                 | Figure 24           |
| Gunnersbury House, Middlesex   | Arman 12<br>Mansion, small boat with flag in foreground        | Figure 25           |
| Lartington, Yorkshire          | Arman 5<br>Building, sheep on lawn                             | Figure 26           |
| St. Woolston's, Kildare        | Arman 7<br>Three-storey mansion, small extension to left       | Figure 27           |
| Trematon Castle, Cornwall      | Arman 11<br>Castle with flag, boats in foreground              | Figure 28           |

**Table 1.** *Identified views in Clews' States Border series with Arman references.*

**Acknowledgements:** I would like to express particular thanks to Terry Neale-Sheppard for access to the original Marshall volumes and for his never-ending supply of images, to Chet Creutzburg for help with illustrations of the States Border series, and to Kurt O'Hare for providing me with good images of them. Other images have kindly been supplied by Nadine Carroll (Buchanan Street Antiques), Hallidays, Nancy Woods Kniep and Colin Knight. I must also record my thanks to the Transferware Collectors Club for their grant which has played its part in helping me to continue my research into British views.



**Figure 16.** Bear Forest in Ireland.



**Figure 17.** Belton House, Lincolnshire.



**Figure 18.** Bishton Hall, Staffordshire.





**Figure 19.** Burley, Rutlandshire.



**Figure 20.** Bushy Park, Middlesex.



**Figure 21.** Carlton Hall, Northamptonshire.

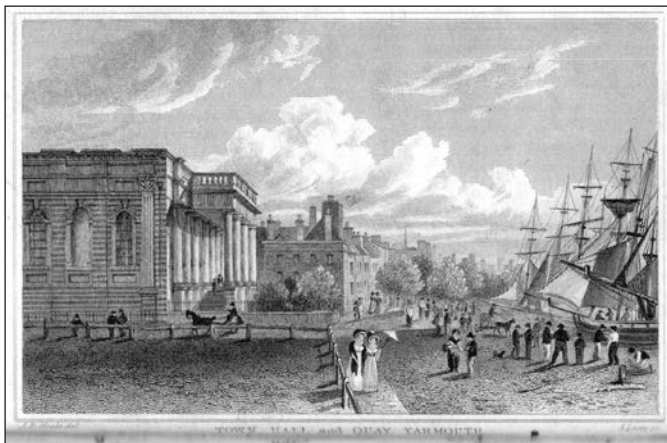




**Figure 22.** Coghill Hall, Yorkshire.



**Figure 23.** Doveridge Hall, Derbyshire.



**Figure 24.** Great Yarmouth, Norfolk.





**Figure 25.** Gunnersbury House, Middlesex.

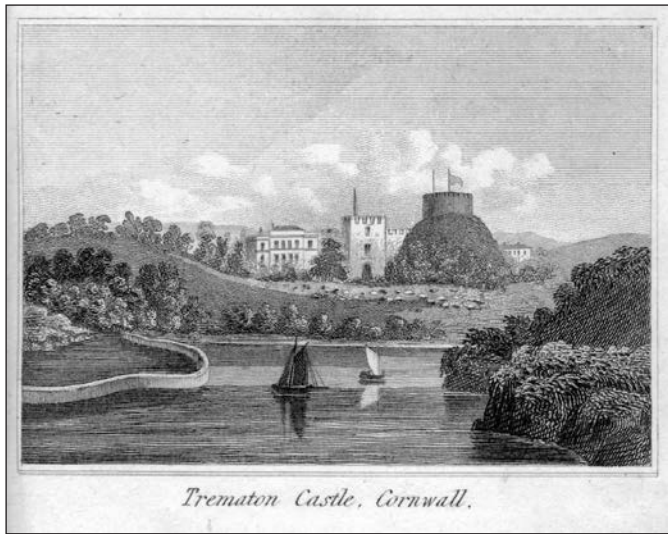


**Figure 26.** Lartington, Yorkshire.



**Figure 27.** St. Woolston's, Kildare, Ireland.





**Figure 28.** Trematon Castle, Cornwall.



**Figure 29.** The only remaining unidentified scene.