

# SHELLEY IN THE PRESS



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1930 'Vogue' and 'Mode' tea and coffee cups became art deco classics. The Regent shape tea, coffee and dinner sets, 1932-4 (right and far right) were among the most popular designs

# CUPS THAT CHEER

CARYLL FARALDI reassesses the art of a Staffordshire pottery

Between the wars Shelley Pottery was a household name, and some of the fine and distinctive bone china produced then is, remarkably, still in use today.

Much sought after by collectors, the ceramics produced by the Shelley family firm span nearly 100 years from the early 1870s to the late 1960s, when many of the Staffordshire potteries which had remained virtually unchanged since the 18th century were merged into mass-manufacturing conglomerates.

A new book\* written by three collectors, and the travelling exhibition they have organised which opens at the Geffrye Museum, London, on Friday, illustrate the history of the pottery during this period, the heyday of English ceramics.

The first recorded potters in the Shelley family had a thriving trade in earthenware plates and dishes in the 18th century, when their customers included Josiah Wedgwood. But their involvement with what was to become Shelley Pot-



**Elegant 'Queen Anne' tea services, 1927-9, in rustic and floral patterns**

teries began in 1872 when J.B. Shelley went into partnership with J.F. Wileman, to form Wileman and Co at Longton, Stoke-on-Trent.

The company prospered and in

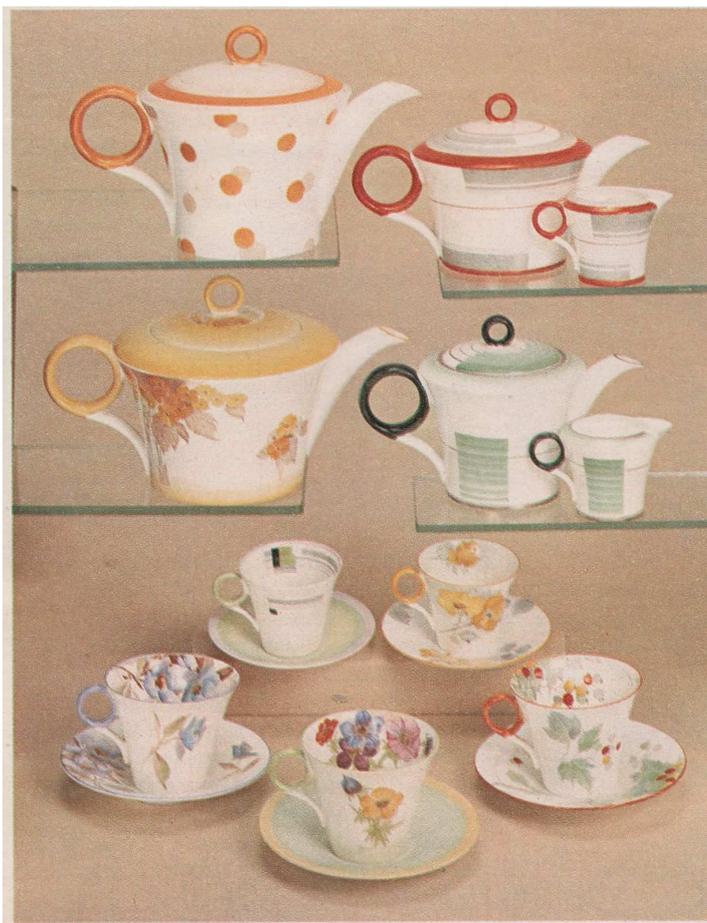
1896 two ranges were introduced which proved immediately successful and long-lasting. The first was the brilliantly coloured underglazed earthenware 'Intarsio', which was originally designed in

art nouveau style. The other was their famous 'Dainty White' china, with its fluted panels and scalloped edges, which was made by the company for 70 years until it closed down in 1966.

For many people, however, name Shelley is synonymous with the fine bone china tea and coffee services of the 1920s and 1930s, including the elegant 1926 octagonal shaped 'Queen Anne' in rustic and floral patterns. In 1930 Eric Slater created for Shelleys the ultra-modern geometric 'Vogue' and 'Mode', which became art deco classics. The cups were conical with triangular handles.

A discerning 1930 buyer with an eye to the future would have paid £2 8s 9d (£2.44) for a 21-piece 'Vogue' teaset in that characteristic design of the 1930s, the Sunray pattern.

\* 'Shelley Potteries' by Chris Watkins, William Harvey and Robert Senft, published by Barrie & Jenkins, £15.



Plates 7, 11, 12 and 13 from 'Shelley Potteries'