

English delft

with 4 page Price Guide

by John Ainsley

English delft is a quite cheaply produced clay body covered with an opaque or white glaze containing tin. Its origins were Asian but it eventually found its way to these Isles via Spain and Italy. Now named after the Dutch pottery centre at Delft, it is customary to spell our English version with a small 'd'.

A Brief History

We can probably trace English delft to at least the late Elizabeth I period. A most famous plate, made in London in 1600 pronounces: 'The rose is red, the leaves are grene, God save Elizabeth our Queene'. Yet perhaps through to the middle of the seventeenth century its use was mainly decorative. Even by the end of the century farmers would still be eating off pewter and their workers from wooden trenchers, drinking from cups and bowls made from plain, unglazed earthenware or even leather. By the 1640s delftware potters were producing undecorated, plain white ointment and posset pots, candlesticks etc. Strangely, undecorated plates are rare. It was perhaps as late as 1680 before earthenware became cheaper and began, because it was so much easier to clean than wood, to replace the materials in use since the medieval period.

Where it was made

Because decoration had to be applied quickly to the absorbent tin glaze, delft developed a spontaneous and unsophisticated style. Blue was the common colour but brown, yellow, purple, green and red were used. It was produced in Lambeth and Southwark in London, particularly in Montague Close or Thames Street: at Bristol, (Brislington) Dublin, Limerick, Glasgow, Liverpool and Wincanton. It is rarely marked and such is the nature - a soft clay coated with a thin opaque tin glaze - that it is almost inevitably and always, damaged. Edges are frequently chipped at least and catalogues often don't bother to mention this in auction descriptions. Later, when I refer to the market and the illustrations, we will be able to check out this theme. Indeed the susceptibility to damage proved English delft's downfall as it was superseded in the second half of the eighteenth century by the new and more stable light density earthenware known as creamware, but that is another story!

The Market

Throughout this feature I have selected approximately a hundred items of English delft and numbered them for study purposes. These have been placed in price order from high to low. These present a serious opportunity to study the market. As well as studying the individual items these pages can be checked out from a statistical point of view. The combinations are endless. For example a reader may study auctions sources and hence get some idea of those auctions likely to handle English delft. Or one could look at the arithmetic. For example, take the first twenty two images in our study - the top end of the market. The total average buyers' price is over £550,000 and the average per lot over £25,000! In the world of antiques generally, the most important criterion is quality. Here evidentially it is not. Here there is nothing grand, but there is great charm. Here condition is almost irrelevant. If an archeologist was to find a seventeenth century commemorative plate, smashed into twenty pieces and lay it out in jigsaw fashion it would still be worth five figures. Here are items that could be displayed prominently at a boot fair, like the beaten up old cat at No. 2. And if the asking price were £10-20 most would pass it by - and pass up £50,000! And note also that at the lower end of the market prices rarely fall below a £100. Even the more common 8.5in or 9in late eighteenth century plates have a reasonable value and it is still possible to build an economical collection, which unlike many modern collectibles should prove a good investment.

There are other themes evident in these pages. Take for example drug jars. The highest price is over £8,000 at No. 10 and the lowest £423 at No. 54. Extracting these extremes, the average drug jar price in these pages is nearly £1,500! And on the same theme it is incredible that the ointment pot at No. 33 fetched nearly £1,300. And at No. 43 a further ointment pot, called a gallipot, because they originally arrived in galleys



London Delftware marriage dish painted with a nativity scene, dated 1638 in two places, the reverse with the potter's initials R.I. and the bride and groom's initials, 41.5cm diameter. Phillips, London. Jun 94. HP: £240,000. ABP: £282,300.

from the Mediterranean, fetched an astounding £764! Would you now pass up items like these in a boot fair or fleamarket?

Readers may have noticed fish decorating delftware. The first occurs at No. 18 and over £4,000! I have also included a char-pot at No. 27 which fetched £1,646! Of course in earlier centuries, before the days of the great sea fishing fleets there was a huge dependence on freshwater fish, the char being a member of the trout family. Why such pots have become known as char-pots is a mystery I haven't yet solved. These fish are nothing like trout and more resemble perch, perhaps a reader can help! Unfortunately no one can help the fact that about four years ago I turned down the offer of a char-dish for £400 - foolish to say the least! I have also included three flower bricks in these pages, at an average buyers' price of just under £1,300 see Nos. 28, 30 and 37. I cannot guarantee that our third example is English, but its price would seem to suggest this is the case. These rare items still occasionally appear at auction and continental versions can sell for as little as £300-400. English flower bricks rarely go below £700-800. See two further flower bricks at No. 48 and No. 53 which are almost certainly continental.

Further themes may be left to the interested reader to pursue. Finally I would suggest that the collector who bought No. 82 for £141 did quite well as oval salts don't grow on trees. And even more surprising, how on earth did a trencher salt at No. 94 fetch only £76 in September 2000 at Woolley & Wallis? If this were to appear today one would expect in the right market, a hammer price of at least £150-300.

Ceramics



1
London Delftware marriage dish painted with a nativity scene, dated 1638 in two places, the reverse with the potter's initials R.I. and the bride and grooms initials, 41.5cm diameter. Phillips, London. Jun 94. HP: £240,000. ABP: £282,300.



2
Rare Delft tin glazed earthenware cat, 17thC, 5in high. Halls Fine Art, Shrewsbury. Mar 03. HP: £45,000. ABP: £52,931.



3
Fine London Delft pill slab, c1700. Bonham's, Bath. Jun 03. HP: £16,000. ABP: £18,820.



4
Rare early English Delft armorial plate dated 1653, painted in blue, yellow and ochre with the initial letters P, M & A, 1653, 22.5cm. Woolley & Wallis, Salisbury. Nov 01. HP: £10,200. ABP: £11,997.



5
Rare Delftware 'Fazackerly' palette puzzle jug, Bristol or Liverpool, c1760, 20cm. Sotheby's, Billingshurst. Nov 00. HP: £10,000. ABP: £11,762.



6
Rare English Delft Queen Caroline commemorative plate, dated 1738. Bonham's, Bath. Jun 03. HP: £9,800. ABP: £11,527.

Prices quoted are actual hammer prices (HP) and the Approximate Buyer's Prices. (ABP) The latter includes an average premium of 15% + VAT.



7
Dated delftware punch bowl, possibly Liverpool, 1775, inscribed 'Drive on my Jolly Fellows, the season is begun, God send a Plentous Harvest, with the approaching Sun, March 17th 1775, James Duke'. Sotheby's, Billingshurst. Jun 00. HP: £8,500. ABP: £9,998.



8
Rare Bristol delftware blue dash charger, c1700, painted with a figure full portrait of Prince George, initials PG, cracks, restoration, 35.5cm. Sworders, Stansted Mountfitchet. Jul 04. HP: £8,400. ABP: £9,880.



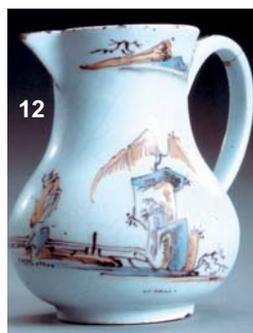
9
Very rare Liverpool Delft mug, printed by Sadler, c1762. Phillips, London. Feb 01. HP: £8,200. ABP: £9,645.



10
Lambeth Delft wet drug jar dated 1679, body inscribed below the spout 'S: Ros: Sol:-Cv: Ag' within baroque cartouche and above initials 'A-G' and the date 1679, flared foot, 28cm. Woolley & Wallis, Salisbury. Feb 03. HP: £7,000. ABP: £8,233.



11
Mid 18thC Delft plate, 'Success to the John & Mary, John Spencer', 23cm dia. Cheffins, Cambridge. Apr 03. HP: £6,400. ABP: £7,528.



12
Rare Delftware polychrome sparrow beak jug, probably London, c1765. Sotheby's, Billingshurst. Sep 00. HP: £6,200. ABP: £7,292.



13
Delftware 2-handled vase, painted with cattle, houses and haystacks, mid 18thC, 21cm high. (rim chip, scroll to one handle lacking and an 11cm hairline) Woolley & Wallis, Salisbury. May 03. HP: £6,200. ABP: £7,292.



14
Set 10 dated Delft plates, each initialled W over IE and 1700, crowned cartouches supported by griffins, 22.5cm dia. (two with damage) Cheffins, Cambridge. Apr 03. HP: £5,500. ABP: £6,469.



15
London delft oak leaf charger; c1690, 34.5cm. Dreweatt Neate, Newbury. Feb 04. HP: £5,500. ABP: £6,469.



16
Rare English delft punch bowl, attribution Brislington, c1680-90, painted in blue with 'China men in grasses', 34cm dia. x 15.4cm high. Hamptons, Godalming. Mar 02. HP: £4,800. ABP: £5,646.



17
English delftware barrel, initialled B:P, dated Oct. 20, Deal, 1793, painted with grapes, vine leaves and view inscribed 'the Best under the Sun', pedestal stem, stem re-attached, 6.25in. Gorrings, Lewes. Dec 04. HP: £4,000. ABP: £4,705.



18
English Delft bowl, 22.5cm. Phillips, Scotland. Jun 00. HP: £3,500. ABP: £4,116.



19
18thC English Delft flower pot. Hamptons, Godalming. Mar 01. HP: £3,200. ABP: £3,764.



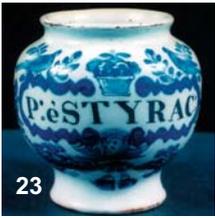
20
Delft 'Gardeners Arms' armorial plate, dated 1747, probably Liverpool. Peter Wilson, Nantwich. Feb 03. HP: £2,700. ABP: £3,175.



21
Bristol Delft 'Farmyard' plate painted in blue with a peacock stood before sponged trees, 22cm dia, c1740, typical rim chips. Bearn's, Exeter. Jun 05. HP: £2,400. ABP: £2,823.



22
English delft, probably Brislington, shallow dish decorated with three simple pomegranates about a central motif in green, red, yellow enamels within a blue dash border, 35cm dia, mid 16thC, cracked. Bearn's, Exeter. Jun 05. HP: £2,300. ABP: £2,705.



23
Early 18thC English delft jar; prob. Bristol, inscribed, 3.5in high. (slight wear to rim) *Wintertons Ltd, Lichfield. Feb 02. HP: £2,200. ABP: £2,587.*



24
Bristol delft shallow dish decorated with a tulip and two buds in yellow, blue, green and red enamels within a broad stylised band and sponged flat rim, 35cm dia, c1720, stapled. *Bearne's, Exeter. Jun 05. HP: £1,700. ABP: £1,999.*



25
English Delft wet drug jar painted a blue cartouche and inscribed 'O:Solani', 16cm high. *D M Nesbit & Company, Southsea. Oct 03. HP: £1,600. ABP: £1,882.*



26
Delftware blue/white posset pot and cover, late 17thC, 19cm. (cover cracked and well re-glued and perhaps associated) *Woolley & Wallis, Salisbury. Nov 03. HP: £1,600. ABP: £1,882.*



27
Liverpool delft char-pot, manner of Zachariah Barnes, 23cm dia, 3rd Qtr 18thC. (minor rim chips) *Dreweatt Neate, Newbury. Jun 02. HP: £1,400. ABP: £1,646.*



28
18thC English Delft flower brick, chinoiserie decoration, 7in. *Gorringes, Lewes. Jun 00. HP: £1,300. ABP: £1,529.*



29
Rare 18thC Delft ballooning plate with leaf swag border, 9in. (2in crack and fritting) *Gorringes, Lewes. Jul 02. HP: £1,250. ABP: £1,470.*



30
18thC English (?) Delft flower brick with flowers and birds, 8in. *Gorringes, Lewes. Jun 00. HP: £1,200. ABP: £1,411.*



31
Lambeth delft blue and white wet drug jar, named for O:SAMBUC, 20cm high, c1780. (some chips and glaze flakes) *Dreweatt Neate, Newbury. Jun 03. HP: £1,100. ABP: £1,293.*



32
Lambeth delft blue and white wet drug jar, named for O:LAURIN, 20cm high, c1780. (some chips) *Dreweatt Neate, Newbury. Jun 03. HP: £1,100. ABP: £1,293.*

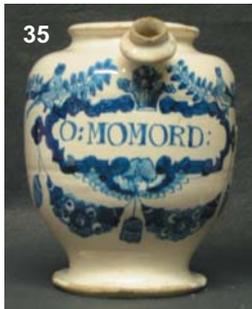


33
Lambeth Delftware ointment pot, inscribed in blue 'Thou Valle 21 hay Market', 1.5in high. *Cotswold Auction Company, Gloucester. Oct 05. HP: £1,100. ABP: £1,293.*



34
English delft puzzle jug of traditional form, mid 18thC, 18cm. (crack around base of handle and small glaze chips) *Woolley & Wallis, Salisbury. Jun 00. HP: £1,000. ABP: £1,176.*

Images are in descending hammer price order enabling the reader to follow the market in English delft from top to bottom.



35
English Delft wet drug jar painted a cartouche with birds and floral swags and inscribed 'O:Momord', 14cm high. *D M Nesbit & Company, Southsea. Oct 03. HP: £960. ABP: £1,129.*



36
18thC Bristol Delft punch bowl, interior inscribed 'One More Bowl and Then', 10.5in dia. *af. Tring Market Auctions, Herts. May 02. HP: £820. ABP: £964.*



37
Early 18thC Delft flower brick. *Gorringes, Bexhill. Sep 01. HP: £800. ABP: £941.*



38
Lambeth delftware ballooning plate, painted with an ascending hot-air balloon within formal garland border; c1785, 9in. *Gorringes, Lewes. Nov 05. HP: £800. ABP: £941.*



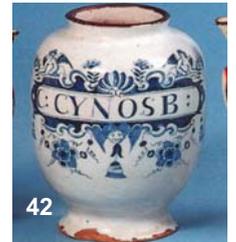
39
English Delft drug jar, c1700, inscribed 'U:NICOTIAN'; on a label, surmounted by cupids and shell above tassels and swags, 18.5cm. *Sworders, Stansted Mountfitchet. Feb 05. HP: £720. ABP: £846.*



40
18thC Delft charger; probably Bristol, 14in. *Gorringes, Lewes. Jun 03. HP: £700. ABP: £823.*



41
18thC English Delft blue and white drug jar, title E:LENTIVUM on a winged angel and scroll label, 20cm high. *Phillips, Bath. May 00. HP: £680. ABP: £799.*



42
18thC English Delft blue and white drug jar, titled C:CYNOSB on a winged angel and scroll label, 21cm high. *Phillips, Bath. May 00. HP: £650. ABP: £764.*



43
London delft blue and white gallipot, 9cm high, first quarter 18thC. (minor rim chips) *Dreweatt Neate, Newbury. Jun 03. HP: £650. ABP: £764.*



44
English Delft drug jar, c1700, inscribed 'C. AURANT.' on a label, surmounted by cupids and a shell above tassels and swags, chip to lip, cracked, 18cm. *Sworders, Stansted Mountfitchet. Feb 05. HP: £650. ABP: £764.*



45
18thC Dutch Delft charger, polychrome painted with chinoiserie scene depicting a lady on a terrace, 13.5in. *Andrew Hartley, Ilkley. Apr 00. HP: £640. ABP: £752.*



46
17th/18thC Delft drug jar, marked 'Smoruru', 8in. *Denhams, Warnham. Aug 03. HP: £600. ABP: £705.*

Ceramics



47
Liverpool blue and white delft puzzle jug, c1750. Wintertons Ltd, Lichfield. Nov 03. HP: £600. ABP: £705.



48
18thC delftware flower brick, pierced top, painted with flowers in blue, block feet, 5in long. Goringes, Lewes. Nov 05. HP: £600. ABP: £705.



49
18thC delftware cress dish, concave pierced top, painted with islands and foliage in blue in Chinese style, 8.75in. Goringes, Lewes. Apr 05. HP: £600. ABP: £705.



50
Delftware colander bowl, top with concentric holes, prob. London, c1760-70, 21.5cm. Restoration to rim. Woolley & Wallis, Salisbury. Nov 03. HP: £550. ABP: £646.



51
London Delftware barber's bowl, flared rim with a thumb depression, first half 18thC, 27.8cm. Woolley & Wallis, Salisbury. Nov 03. HP: £540. ABP: £635.



52
Twenty square Delftware blue/white tiles, prob. from a fireplace, 18thC, 13cm. Some damage. Woolley & Wallis, Salisbury. Nov 03. HP: £460. ABP: £541.



53
18thC Delft blue and white flower brick with floral decoration, minor damage, 5ins Goringes, Bexhill. Mar 02. HP: £420. ABP: £494.



54
Blue and white delft drug jar probably London, mid 18thC, titled 'u apostolar' on a fruit, peacock and cherub label, monogram 'ap' in blue on base, 17.5cm high. Hampton & Littlewood, Exeter. Jul 04. HP: £360. ABP: £423.



55
18thC English delftware plate with polychrome floral decoration within a scrolling foliate manganese border, 12in. (chipped and repaired) Goringes, Bexhill. Mar 02. HP: £340. ABP: £399.



56
Mid 18thC English Delft polychrome plate painted in blue manganese and yellow with Chinese islands pavilions and trees, 36.5cm dia. Cheffins, Cambridge. Feb 06. HP: £340. ABP: £399.



57
Early 18thC English delftware bowl, 'Success to Trade', legend painted to interior, flowers to exterior, 9in, and a late 18thC creamware mug, painted monogram - both cracked. Goringes, Lewes. Oct 04. HP: £320. ABP: £376.



58
Delft bleeding bowl, c1720, inside painted with stylised plants, two lug handles, restored, 19.5cm. Sworders, Stansted Mountfitchet. Feb 05. HP: £320. ABP: £376.



59
18thC delftware plate, primitively painted with flowers, 8in, and a pair of smaller, similar plates, 7in. Goringes, Lewes. Apr 05. HP: £300. ABP: £352.

Inclusion in this Section does not guarantee an English origin, although the majority of attributions, where claimed, will be safe.



60
18thC polychrome Delft charger, centred a floral display and floral sprigs to border, 13.75in dia. Dee, Atkinson & Harrison, Driffield. Apr 02. HP: £280. ABP: £329.



61
English delft polychrome plate, prob. Bristol, painted in Fazackerly manner, 23cm dia, c1760. (chips, hairline crack) Dreweatt Neate, Newbury. Jun 03. HP: £280. ABP: £329.



62
Pair of mid 18thC Delft plates painted in blue and manganese, 17.5cm dia. Cheffins, Cambridge. Feb 05. HP: £280. ABP: £329.



63
Delft blue/white 'masonic' mug, mid 18thC, painted with blue floral sprays and masonic symbols, some damage, 14.5cm high. Hampton & Littlewood, Exeter. Jul 04. HP: £260. ABP: £305.



64
Pair of English delft plates, blue painted with chinoiserie landscapes, 9in wide. Andrew Hartley, Ilkley. Feb 02. HP: £250. ABP: £294.



65
Twenty three Delft blue and white tiles, 19thC, mainly depicting ships at sea and figures on horseback. Rosebery's, London. Mar 02. HP: £220. ABP: £258.



66
Early 18thC English Delft blue and white charger with floral decoration, marked 10 on base, 14in. (chipped) Goringes, Bexhill. Mar 02. HP: £220. ABP: £258.



67
18thC English delftware fruit bowl, painted with a formal design of floral drapes in blue, green and yellow enamels, 8.75in. Goringes, Lewes. Apr 05. HP: £220. ABP: £258.



68
English blue and white delft charger, c1750, probably Bristol, reverse with O and X motifs, 36cm. Hampton & Littlewood, Exeter. Apr 04. HP: £200. ABP: £235.



69
Bristol blue and white Delft charger, c1750, decorated in the centre with an urn of flowers, 33.5cm dia. Sworders, Stansted Mountfitchet. Feb 05. HP: £200. ABP: £235.



70
Two 18thC delftware chargers, both painted in underglaze blue, one with floral central design and patterned border, the other with terrace scene and floral border, 13.5in. Goringes, Lewes. Jan 04. HP: £190. ABP: £223.



71
18thC English delftware plate, painted with a gentleman in a garden in blue, 7.75in. Goringes, Lewes. Jun 03. HP: £190. ABP: £223.



72
Bristol Delft square inkwell. Goringes, Bexhill On Sea. Sep 04. HP: £180. ABP: £211.



73
Mid 18thC Delft plate, c1750, 9.75in dia. *Dee, Atkinson & Harrison, Drifffield.* Dec 00. HP: £170. ABP: £199.



78
Blue and white Delft plate painted with houses, plants and rocks within a central reserve, possibly Lambeth, 11in dia., rim chips. *Tring Market Auctions, Herts.* May 02. HP: £150. ABP: £176.



82
18thC Lambeth Delft plate decorated in blue, manganese, green and yellow with 'Ann Gomm' design, 9in dia (rim fritted), and an 18thC delft oval salt partly decorated in blue, 4 x 3in. *Canterbury Auction Galleries, Kent.* Dec 05. HP: £120. ABP: £141.



87
Two English Delft plates, both decorated with flowers, 9in. *Gorringes, Lewes.* Jan 04. HP: £95. ABP: £111.



92
Bristol delft charger c1770, painted in blue with a central chinoiserie pattern of a building and a tree, within a 'cracked ice', manganese border and further buildings, 34cm dia. *Hampton & Littlewood, Exeter.* Jul 04. HP: £80. ABP: £94.



74
Bristol Delft plate, painted in oriental style with a building in a fenced garden within a cross hatched and foliate border with further buildings to the rim, 22cm dia, with a pair of Herculeanum blue and white plates, loosely painted with foliate stems, butterflies and bugs within a fluted cross hatched border. (3) *Rosebery's, London.* Dec 04. HP: £170. ABP: £199.



79
Pair of English Delft blue and white plates, painted with buildings in landscape within a cross hatched border, 17/18thC, 22.5cm dia, together with two other delft plates. (4) *Rosebery's, London.* Dec 04. HP: £150. ABP: £176.



83
English blue and white delft plate probably Bristol, c1770, painted with a chinese figure seated near rocks and trees, within floral and figure panel borders, 28.5cm. *Hampton & Littlewood, Exeter.* Jul 04. HP: £110. ABP: £129.



88
18thC Liverpool delft plate, blue painted with a river scene with trees and dwelling in the Oriental manner, 8.75in dia. *Dee, Atkinson & Harrison, Drifffield.* Sep 05. HP: £95. ABP: £111.



93
Delft ware plate. *Great Western Auctions, Glasgow.* Sep 05. HP: £75. ABP: £88.



75
English Delft polychrome dish, painted in blue, green and iron red with a flowering stem on a pale blue ground and within a foliate border, 34cm dia. *Rosebery's, London.* Dec 04. HP: £170. ABP: £199.

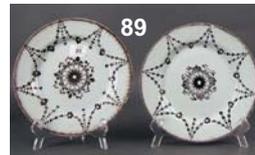
These 100 or so examples represent only a small percentage of the delft, faience and maiolica available on our Website Gold Services at www.antiques-info.co.uk



80
Liverpool Delft plate, mid 18thC, painted with a bird above a banded hedge within a peony border; rim chips, 23cm. *Sworders, Stansted Mountfitchet.* Nov 04. HP: £140. ABP: £164.



84
18thC London Delft plate, painted Chinese riverscapes in blue, (cracked) 9in. *Gorringes, Lewes.* Jan 03. HP: £110. ABP: £129.



89
Pair of 18thC Lambeth Delft plates decorated in manganese in the Neo-Classical manner with central circular paterae, floral swag borders, 9in dia. (rims chipped and fritted). *Canterbury Auction Galleries, Kent.* Dec 05. HP: £95. ABP: £111.



94
Delft trencher salt, 18thC, 9cm long. (rim chip 2.2 x 6mm) *Woolley & Wallis, Salisbury.* Sep 00. HP: £65. ABP: £76.



76
Pair of mid 18thC London Delft plates, c1750. *Dee, Atkinson & Harrison, Drifffield.* Dec 00. HP: £160. ABP: £188.



81
English Delft pearlware glazed punch bowl, centrally painted in underglaze blue with a classical figure of plenty before a fenced garden and within a flowerhead banded border, 30cm dia. *Rosebery's, London.* Sep 04. HP: £120. ABP: £141.



85
Pair of English delft tiles, painted with a running youth in blue against manganese, 5in, and a similar tile in manganese. *Gorringes, Lewes.* Apr 05. HP: £110. ABP: £129.



90
Mid 18thC Bristol Delft polychrome dish painted with eight red floral rim panels, 34cm dia. *Cheffins, Cambridge.* Feb 05. HP: £90. ABP: £105.



95
Delft blue and white plate, late 18thC, painted with a vase and floral pattern, within a stylised border, 25.5cm. *Hampton & Littlewood, Exeter.* Jul 04. HP: £52. ABP: £61.



77
Three English Delft plates, 18thC, a pair, both decorated with a fence and flowers, and another small plate, 25 and 23cm. (3) *Sworders, Stansted Mountfitchet.* Nov 04. HP: £160. ABP: £188.



86
Pair of 18thC delft ware plates, painted with foliage in blue, red and yellow (1 a.f.), 9in. *Gorringes, Lewes.* Apr 02. HP: £100. ABP: £117.



91
Delftware blue and white chinoiserie-decorated plate and a similar polychrome-decorated plate. (a.f) *Gorringes, Bexhill.* Feb 06. HP: £85. ABP: £99.



96
Delftware blue and white bowl. *Gorringes, Bexhill.* Oct 05. HP: £50. ABP: £58.