

## BOOK REVIEW

### A Yorkshire Source of Decorated Paper in the Eighteenth Century

Tanya Schmoller  
Privately Printed 2003  
28pp soft-cover  
£16.00

This is an account of the migration of a style of paste paper from Saxony to Fulneck in Yorkshire in the 1760's. 'Herrnhut paper', according to Albert Haemmerle (Buntpapier), 'is exceptional in its use of manual dexterity and inventiveness... The patterns were partly drawn free-hand with the finger and partly with wooden combs, or wooden patterned rollers and little wheels. The colours... were restricted mainly to a light or dark crimson, a rich Prussian blue, and a dark olive green. Some sheets are two-tone, and a few have three colours. Although each individual page is not immediately distinguishable from papers manufactured elsewhere, there are common features which do point to the same origin.'

Richard Wolfe (*Marbled Paper, its history, techniques and patterns*) states that 'by the mid-seventies [1770's], Herrnhut papers were distributed throughout Germany where they were quite popular for bookbinding... ; large numbers of them were exported and used abroad. Many missionaries... set out from Herrnhut.'

In the early 18th century the Moravian Church, a non-conformist Christian sect, found refuge in Saxony and was called Herrnhut. It formed the model for a similar church set up in Fulneck in 1743. For reasons of religion the church faithfully recorded its transactions. Shafts of light fall upon the workings of this church community in Yorkshire and how it came to be that the Single Sisters first produced patterned papers in the German style in 1766 and, a year later, took responsibility for mixing the colours, a secret seemingly closely held by the German brother who carried with him from Saxony the art of coloured paper. Production was profitable, but apparently began to decline in the 1780's and to cease altogether by the end of the century.

Regrettably it has not been possible to establish much about the characters central to this endeavour, which is no cause for surprise. Although the source of the raw materials cannot be given with certainty, and the method of manufacture is not described here, some information is offered as to the customers and quantities supplied, including a suggestion that the paper may have been used to cover State documents in the 1760's.

This is an assiduously researched account of an early native source of patterned paper, which includes both coloured illustrations of paper covered church journals as well as two reproductions executed by Victoria Hall tipped in, and therefore warrants reading.

Alan Isaac

