

Plate

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Ceramic plate with warm cobalt blue and white printed decoration and floral borders, belonging to a set of twelve called “Old English – 12 months series”. Each plate represents a month of the year. May”: a woman seated under a blossoming tree holds a bouquet in each hand; a young child is detaching twigs from the same tree. Both are wearing hats with bows.

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Fabricant / Éditeur Wedgwood

Date 1879

Materials ceramics, fine earthenware

Technique cooked, enamelled?, varnish?

Measurements 26,3 cm

Historical context

From the 17th to the 19th century, the ceramics and pottery industries expanded considerably in England. Numerous factories opened their doors, enabling the development of urban centers such as London, Kent and Devon. Among the most important manufacturers, the Wedgwood company in Staffordshire stands out. Founded in 1759 by Josiah Wedgwood, the company gained notoriety for its influence on ceramic manufacturing and production techniques, as well as for its Jasperware earthenware.

This ceramic plate is part of one of Wedgwood's most popular series: Old English, also known as Months of the Year. Conceived in 1878 by ceramic painter and illustrator Helen Miles, the series was first produced as a set of 12 individual tiles. These became so popular that the company decided to produce new formats such as decorative transferware plates. This painting technique involves placing strips of wallpaper on unfired earthenware to transfer ink before firing.

The fifth plate in this set represents the month of May. In the center, a woman and a young girl can be seen gathering flowers. Like the April plate, the illustration can be likened to the English saying "April Showers Bring forth May Flowers". The plate's border is decorated with a Bell Flower motif.

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