

# French soft-paste porcelain during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries

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Abstract

In 1673 Louis XIV give to Edme and Louis Poterat the privilege of porcelain manufacture similar to the one bought from China becoming Rouen the first production center of soft-paste in France. After it, others follow being the better documented listed in this article.



Figure 1 - Portrait of Madame de Montespan (detail); oil on canvas; Henri Gascard; 1675 - 1685; © Morgane Mouillade.

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## Introduction

At the launch of the 17<sup>th</sup> century's last quarter the French invented the soft-paste<sup>1</sup> while attempting to

copy the Chinese porcelain that arrived in the country in large quantities, initially from de Dutch VOC and after 1664 mainly by the Compagnie Française des Indes Orientales. The new material had as drawbacks, a high production lost which dramatically increase costs and the difficulty of creating big pieces, due to the paste's low elasticity, however, these difficulties weren't enough to prevent the creation of several factories on the French territory during the late 17<sup>th</sup> century and the beginnings of the 18<sup>th</sup> century from whom stands out by their historical significance and/or exquisite production the workshops and factories that are listed in this document.

### Rouen (1673 – 1696)

The first production was in Rouen<sup>2</sup>, done in the faience workshops of Louis and Michel Poterat,

<sup>1</sup> Loosely speaking it was a moisture of limestone, sandstone, ashes and salt homogenized with black soap that after cooked became translucent as the hard paste although more thick and less hard than it. This paste was subjected to a high temperature becoming partially

vitrified. After this first step it was enameled, baked again and finally decorated by the technique of *petit feu*.

<sup>2</sup> Savary des Brûlons wrote in the first edition of the 1722's Dictionnaire universel du commerce [Froyssart 2007]: "There are 15 or 20 years was made in France an

although, with an experimental way and a reduced number of pieces achieved<sup>3</sup>. The initial stage is documented by a royal privilege issued in 1 October 1673 by Louis XIV to Edme Poterat in the name of Edme's eldest son, that permitted, for a thirty years period, the manufacture of any kind of dishes, pots and vases in porcelain similar to the Chinese as the production of polychromatic or blue and white faience in the Dutch's style [Lacombe 2006].



Figure 2 - Tiles; faience; Rouen, attributed to the workshop of Edme Poterat; circa 1660; © Metropolitan Museum of Art (MMA).

The way the Poterat family obtained the secret as the factors that had permitted the reappearance of the porcelain manufacture in 1673 at Rouen<sup>4</sup>, after a first European production at the Court of the Médicis in Firenze during the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, remained unknown. Anyhow, through the 18<sup>th</sup> century in France for obtaining a royal privilege was obligatory to deposit samples in the Chambre du Commerce that proved the existence of a novelty and a know-how worthily enough to be encouraged, moreover, being the receiver Edme Poterat, a producer from Rouen<sup>5</sup> although with more than 20 years experience and a 1670's sell of 100 m<sup>2</sup> of tiles and several vases to the Trianon de Porcelaine<sup>6</sup>, that was nevertheless solely

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*attempt to copy the Chinese porcelain: The first attempts were successful in Rouen, ... these objects in faience of the new plants are not classified as French faience but genuine porcelain invented by the French in recent years and successively produced in Rouen, Passy near Paris, and then in Saint-Cloud."*

<sup>3</sup> Later the factory of Saint-Cloud fabricates porcelain in a commercial viable scale.

<sup>4</sup> It also reappeared in Fulham between 1671 and 1673 [Lacombe 2006].

<sup>5</sup> A center that had a production volume, significantly lower than Delft or even Nevers [Lacombe 2006].

<sup>6</sup> A construction of five pavilions in the lands once belonging to the hamlet of Trianon, located Norwest from Versailles. It was erected by Louis XIV between 1670 and

a farmer of the faience's privilege owner Nicolas Poirel de Grandval<sup>7</sup> [Lacombe 2006] clearly indicates that the family had already made porcelain with a quality enough to be worthy of the privilege.



Figure 3 - Bottle marked with PROVA; soft-paste porcelain; Porcelain of Médicis, Firenze; 1550 - 1600; photo: Daniel Arnaudet; © Musée du Louvre.

Regardless Edme's status, in the year that followed the obtainment of the benefit, he bought to Poirel's son, the privilege of faience production. After his dead, in 1687, his widow and the youngest son become the factory's owners and Louis Poterat started a new factory.

Concerning these factories the Rouen's Intendant, Lefèvre d'Ormesson, reported in 19 June 1694 to Louis de Phélypeaux, the Count of Pontchartrain, the qualities of porcelain and Dutch's faience that was produced by Louis Poterat and the small usage the mother and Michel Poterat gave to the secret [Froyssart 2007]. Anyway, Louis also made small quantities and always alone, presumably by the heavy cost of production and the fear that his assistants steal the secret [Lacombe 2006].

Despite the low volume, the quality was high in both factories having their pieces a translucency and a delicacy that was only surpassed in later times by the factory of Sèvres [Lacombe 2006]. They also had a

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1671 as a retired place presumably to render encounters with his lover Madame de Montespan. The architecture and decoration were inspired on the accounts of missionaries placed in the Orient being their facades covered with monochromatic blue tiles.

<sup>7</sup> Although in 1656 it had already bought lands and built a new factory for the production of faience.

tonality which was less amber from the contemporary production of Saint-Cloud and a decoration of blue embroideries and pendants inspired in the stylistic arabesques of the illustrator and painter Jean Berain, a chief designer of Louis

XIV, similar to the employed in faience, being this decoration style allied with the bluish enamel the main factor in the attribution of paternity to unmarked objects [Munger 2003].



Figura 4 - a, b) Mustard pot with the arms of Jacques Asselin de Villequier; soft-paste porcelain; attributed to Louis Poterat; 1673 - 1696; © Froyssart. c) Mustard pot; soft-paste porcelain; attributed to Louis Poterat; 1673 - 1696; 9 cm; © Froyssart. d) Ovoid vase; soft-paste porcelain; attributed to Louis Poterat; 1673 - 1696; 18.5 x 13,5 cm; Photo: Bernard Roux; © Lacombe. e) Pseudo Chinese mark in vase; Photo: Samur Museum; © Lacombe. f) Vase pot-pourri; soft-paste porcelain; attributed to Rouen; circa 1695; 12.7 x 12.7 x 12.7 cm; © MMA. g) Small pot; soft-paste porcelain; attributed to Louis Poterat; circa 1690; 10 x 9.5 cm; © Froyssart.

In fact, the number of referenced objects is very scarce and between them the one which seems to attain a unanimous agree is a mustard pot decorated with the arms of Jacques Asselin de Villequier, a counselor to the parliament of Normandie in 1695, acquired circa 1847 by the time curator of Sevres Museum, Denis-Desire Riocreux. Beside it, other

pieces are appointed as belonging to Rouen's production although their unmarked characteristic<sup>8</sup> complicate the assignment, moreover, having the factory of Saint-Cloud beginning its production of

<sup>8</sup> With the exception of the ovoid vase that is the Museum of Saumur which have pseudo-Chinese marks.



soft-paste during the 1690s with the displacement of several workers from Rouen into it<sup>9</sup> [Lacombe 2006].



Figure 5 - Print from *Ornamental Drawings Invented by Jean Berain* (page 71); Jean Berain; late 17<sup>th</sup> century - early 18<sup>th</sup> century; 51.6 x 40.6 cm; © MMA.

In 1696 the privilege was renewed for a period of 20 years in the condition of the secret being revealed at the end of that time, however, Louis died of typhus in the same year and the quality production in Rouen was stopped with his death [Lacombe 2006] [Munger 2003]. A more modest production was kept but without quality enough to deserve a royal privilege [Lacombe 2006].

#### Factory of Saint-Cloud (1693 - 1766)

Under the protection of the Duc d'Orléans the factory of Saint-Cloud was the first major manufactory in France to make soft-paste in a commercial viable scale. It started the production in the early 1690s and obtained an official patent in 1702 although already in 1700 a factory's estate inventory included 3,146 pieces of porcelain [Getty M 2016] [Moonan 1999].

In the patent request the discovering of the secret<sup>10</sup> was attributed to the founder Pierre Chicaneau, however, Chicaneau wasn't the founder but instead a faience painter from the village of Saint-Cloud

<sup>9</sup> Among others, Jean Le Guay in 1686, Léonard Vallet in 1692, Jacques Maugras in 1693, Louis Vermeil in 1695 and Léger Bougier in 1696 [Lacombe 2006].

<sup>10</sup> Saint-Cloud developed a paste composed by sand, soda, alum, gypsum and salt. To this mixture fables quantities of chalk and calcareous marl were added.

recruited by the brothers Claude and Francois Reverend<sup>11</sup>. Claude in 1664 obtained a license to make faience and built the factory but in November 1666 he had to hand over the ownership to his brother due to his financial situation [Moonan 1999].



Figure 6 - Saucer; Saint-Cloud Factory; soft-paste porcelain; 1715 - 1725; D: 12.1 cm; © MMA.

Francois remained as director until 1674 when Chicaneau, by his turn, becomes the director and started a series of experiments that eventually lead to the discovering of the process. Chicaneau died in 1667 and one year later his widow, Barbe Coudray, married Henri Trou, a potter from Nevers and a esquire of the Duc d'Orleans. Later, in 1683, the couple bought the factory and finally in 1697 with three of the Chicaneau children established a separate company solely to produce porcelain, although the privilege wasn't extensible to Trou [Moonan 1999].

At first the decoration had a close resemblance with the production of Rouen consisting in blue lambrequins and embroideries influenced by the engravings of Jean Berain, but with time, the variety was gradually increased and polychrome chinoiserie, gilding, and relief decoration were included [Getty M 2016]. Independently of these last decorations be copies of the Chinese<sup>12</sup> and Japanese porcelains, the factory's soft-paste differed greatly

<sup>11</sup> Claude was a successful Paris salt merchant who imported faience from the Netherlands and Francois was a previous worker from the faience factories in Rouen between 1648 and 1653 [Moonan 1999].

<sup>12</sup> Circa 1720 it appeared a new gender customarily designated by Blanc de Saint-Cloud strongly influenced by the Chinese decorations of Blanc de Chine.

from their medium, having habitually a warm yellow

or ivory tone with a characteristic satin glaze.



Figure 7 - Factory of Saint-Cloud. a) Pot; soft-paste porcelain; 1695 - 1710; 25.2 x 13.3 x 13.2 cm; © MMA. b) Lidded ewer and basin decorated with a pattern of blue lambrequins; soft-paste porcelain; 1715 - 1720; © J. Paul Getty Museum. c) Pot of pomade with a relief decoration of a branch of prunes marked with S.C.T; soft-paste porcelain; 1700 -1750; h: 8.5 cm, d: 6 cm; © Galerie Orelly's. d) Sugar bowl decorated with blue de lambrequins; soft-paste porcelain; 1700 -1750; h: 10 cm, d: 10 cm; © Galerie Orelly's. e) Set of knives with porcelain handlers decorated with oriental motifs; soft-paste porcelain; 18<sup>th</sup> century; w: 21.3 cm; © Christophe Perlès. f) Tobacco box decorated with stylized oriental motifs; soft-paste porcelain; 18<sup>th</sup> century; d: 6.3 cm; © Christophe Perlès.

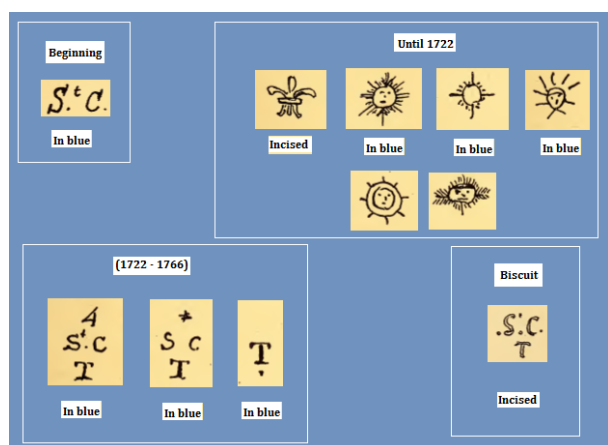


Figure 8 - Factory of Saint-Cloud marks [Auscher 1914].

Most of its pieces were small scaled items such as snuffboxes, beakers, saucers, tea bowls, cane handles, and cutlery handles due to the difficulty in controlling the soft-paste at the kiln. From them, the early pieces were marked with a sun-face and had a bluish tone colder than those which were produced

later, usually marked with a St. C above a T probably only bent after Barbe Coudray's death in 1722.

#### Factory of Ville l'Evêque (1711 - 1766)

Near 1711 a kind of Saint-Cloud's dependency was built by Marie Moreau, the widow of Pierre Chicaneau (son), in the rue de la Madeleine à la Ville l'Evêque in the nowadays 8<sup>e</sup> arrondissement de Paris. This dependency seems to be the result of a family cleavage between Henri Trou and the descendants of Pierre Chicaneau [Jacquemart 1875].

In fact, along its history, Ville l'Evêque had as directors and owners members of the Chicaneau family as Marie Moreau or their cousins Dominique Chicaneau and Marie Louise Soisson, being at least after 1724 Dominique Chicaneau its director, remaining however uncertain if he also was between 1711 and 1724 when he had the artistic direction of Saint-Cloud [Guillebon 1994][Jacquemart 1875]. In 1731

Dominique published a advertise specifying the factory production [Guillebon 1994]: “... *white and blue porcelains, in relief and decorated with leafs and in all colors for the table and hygiene ... handlers in relief in colors and blue for knives, spoons, forks ... snuffboxes, cane handlers and becs de corbin ...*”.



Figure 9 - Factory of Ville l'Evêque; small pot for milk; soft-paste porcelain; early 18<sup>th</sup> century; H: 7.3 cm; © Christophe Perlès.

Anyhow, due to the inexistence of marks most of those items were associated with the factory of Saint-Cloud, although the production marked with CM followed by a small cross, that possibly stands for Chicaneau Moreau [Guillebon 1994] be habitually attributed to Ville l'Evêque.

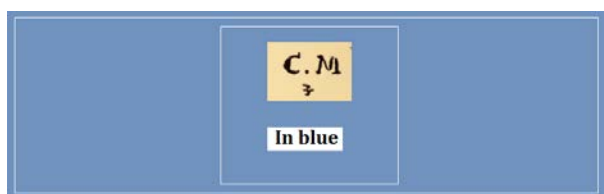


Figure 10 - Factory of Ville l'Eveque mark possibly standing for Chicaneau-Moreau [Auscher 1914].

When Dominique died in 1752 his widow took the factory until her death in 17 April 1766 with an associate, Martin Cathelin, and a director, Pierre Dubos. It seems that 1766 was a fatidic year for both factories having also Saint-Cloud, unable to compete with the more sophisticated products of the Chantilly and Vincennes, declared bankruptcy [Guillebon 1994] [Getty M 2016].

#### Factory of Lille (1711 - 1730)

Founded during the Dutch occupation of Lille by Barthélemy Dorez, a native from Douai, and his son in law Pierre Péliissier its production was firstly frequently credited to Saint-Cloud, although, the blue and white pieces had a rougher decoration

[Grollier 1922]. Anyhow the identification of pieces are extremely hard due to the employ of plenty letters in Saint-Cloud's production [Grollier 1922].



Figure 11 - Toilet pot; factory of Lille according to Grollier that attributes the mark to Joseph-François Boussemart or François Barthélémy Dorez [Grollier 1922] or atelier of Jean-Baptiste Bellevaux in Paris according to Dawson [Dawson 1994]; soft-paste porcelain; 1715 (circa); H: 5.4 cm; © The British Museum.

Between 1716 and 1717, Dorez becomes the only administrator and from 1720 until circa 1730, when the soft-paste production finished, he was in charge with his son, François Dorez [Jacquemart 1875]. From there on the factory only produced faience until its closure in 1790 [Grollier 1922].

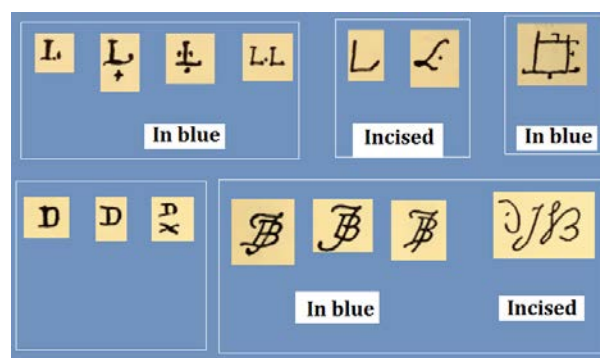


Figure 12 - Factory of Lille marks; [Auscher 1914]; 1<sup>st</sup> row) attributed to Lille. 2<sup>nd</sup> row 1<sup>st</sup> square) attributed to Dorez. 2<sup>nd</sup> row 2<sup>nd</sup> square) attributed to François and Barthélemy Dorez.

#### Factory of Chantilly (1725 - 1800)

Having as its first director Ciquaire Cirou, a former worker of Ville l'Evêque, the factory was founded in 1725 by Louis-Henri de Bourbon, prince de Condé. In 5 October 1735 obtained a royal patent where it's expressed the ten years of activity under the leadership of Cirou and the type of production it had, a porcelain that emulate the ancient Japanese with a quality as good as Meissen [Jacquemart 1875]. The



decree also referred the interest that the state had on the factory due to the competition with foreign

countries giving for this reason a 20 years privilege to produce porcelain in all forms and decorations.



Figure 13 - Factory of Chantilly; soft-paste porcelain. a) Wall clock; clock made by Étienne LeNoir; gilded brass; 1735 - 1740; 49.5 × 24.1 × 12.1 cm; © MMA. b) Jar with figures after a print by Jean Antoine Fraisse; 1735 - 1740; H: 27.9 cm; © MMA. c) Seated Chinese; ca. 1735; 26.7 x 12.5 x 18.4 cm; © MMA. d) Settled figure with globe; gilt bronze; ca. 1735; 16.5 cm; © MMA. e) Mustard pot with cover and stand; 1745 - 1755; H: 9 cm; © MMA. f) Canne handler; 1735 - 1740; L: 13,5cm; © Christophe Perlès. g) Flower seller; 1745 - 1750; H: 20.3 cm; © MMA. h) Cup and saucer; 1760 - 1765; H (cup): 6 cm; D (saucer): 12.4 cm; © MMA. i) Saucer; Diam: 11.4 cm; 1780 - 1790; © MMA.

In this way, the first pieces were mainly copies of the Japanese porcelain in the Kakiemon's style, a production whose origin is credited to the 17<sup>th</sup> century potter Sakaida Kakiemon that become massively exported to occident via the Dutch VOC during the Chinese turbulent period that mediated the fall of the Ming dynasty and the stabilization of the Qing dynasty. In fact, Grollier divides its production into two distinct periods: the first until circa 1735, that employed an tinny white and opaque enamel with the pieces marked with a red hunting horn without references to the molder or decorator and the second with a transparent and lacteous enamel with the pieces usually marked in blue [Grollier 1922].

In the first period the production consisted mainly in dinner table pieces, boxes, sculptures and turibles

with a reduced number of dishes manufactured and the absence of biscuits. Although the decorations were imitations of the oriental porcelain the forms had an accentuated European taste. The second period saw the decorations change becoming more European and similar to the productions of Vincennes and Sevres but still without the fabrication of biscuits [Grollier 1922]. Cirou stayed in the factory's direction until his death in 1751, presumably as a concessionaire<sup>13</sup>, and for there on the administration was taken by Buquet de Montvallier et de Roussière, between 1751 and 1754, Buquet de Montvallier, from 1754 to 1760 and Pierre Peyrard until 1776, with the last of these

<sup>13</sup> As a payment of 2,772 livres done after the 1740's death of the prince for the merchandises of the three previous years seems to indicate.

administrations becoming clearly directed to the commercial profitability with the production of innumerable table services [Chavagnac et Grollier 1906].



Figure 14 - Porringer with cover; factory of Chantilly; soft-paste porcelain, silver; 1732 - 1738; 12.5 × 18.1 cm; © MMA.

The same happened with the following administrations, Louis François Gravant, from 1776 to 1779, Dame Gravant, between 1779 and 1781, and Autheau de Surval until 1792. Finally from 1792 to its closure in 1800 the factory was directed by Christ-Potter, an Englishman from London and the presumable owner of other factories. During his period the production became more ordinary and the efforts to reactivate the factory were vain. He suffered a forced expropriation and in 3 December 1805 the tribunal of Senlis gave the factory's propriety to Jean-Georges Becht [Chavagnac et Grollier 1906].

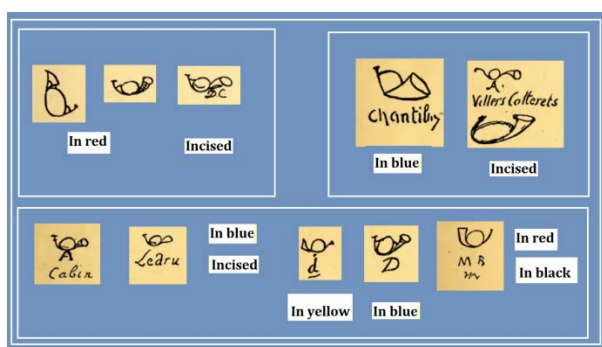


Figure 15 - Factory of Chantilly marks [Auscher 1914]; 1<sup>st</sup> row 2<sup>nd</sup> square) Chateau's marks. 2<sup>nd</sup> row) factory marks with the molder or painter name.

#### Factory of Mennecy (1734 - 1773)

A document issued by the Conseil de Commerce dated from 15 May 1748 recognized that François Barbin was producing porcelain for 14 years in the Parisien rue de Charonne. In the same document the

his demand to build an oven at this place with the excuse of finding a local with good painters is negated and the materials confiscated, however, confirms the possibility of maintaining the production in the lands of the duc de Villeroy under his protection [Grollier 1922].



Figure 16 - Six silver-mounted octagonal blade handlers; factory of Mennecy; soft-paste porcelain, silver; circa 1735; © Christie's Auctioneers.

Nevertheless, he had started to produce soft-paste before 1734. In fact: since 1715 his family lives at the Faubourg Saint-Antoine; in 1729, Barbin's pastes and enamels were referred by the collector of curiosities René-Antoine Ferchault de Réaumur [Guillebon 1994] and in 1733 with the quality of manufacturer of faience and porcelain he became installed in a house at the rue de Charonne which he bought in the following year [Guillebon 1994]. Documentary evidence connected to the marriage of the sculptor Joseph Hue with the address of Villeroy near Mennecy appears in 16 December 1737. In it is described that Hue and Barbin reside in the château de Villeroy although without give their occupation, however, the other witnesses were pointed as workers at the factory of Villeroy.

From 1738 to 1762 three addresses were listed, first Paris and Villeroy and later Mennecy [Chavagnac et Grollier 1906]. Anyhow, the 1748's<sup>14</sup> administrative denial for the construction of a stove at the rue de Charonne seems to have oriented him to the location of Mennecy where the white undecorated pieces

<sup>14</sup> However in the same year his son Jean-Baptiste had built at Vaugirard, with the benefit of the marquis de Fontanges, a faience factory that certainly it also produced porcelain [Guillebon 1994].



were manufactured and he appears in the parish records, saved from 1737 on, as producer of faïence

and porcelain, faïence maker or master of the factory in Villeroy [Guillebon 1994].



Figure 17. Factory of Mennecy: a) Parfum fountain; soft-paste porcelain; circa 1755; marked DV under the base; h: 17.5 cm; © Gazette-Drouot. b) Monkey riding a dog; 1745 - 1750; 15.7 × 12.1 cm; © MMA. c) Silver-mounted snuff-box with the shape of a sphinx; 1756; h: 6cm, w: 6.4 cm; © Christie's Auctioneers. d) Dish; 1760 - 1765; 3.8 × 24.3 × 20.3 cm; © MMA. e) Fountain with cover and spigot; 1745 - 1750; 31.8 × 15.2 × 19.1 cm; © MMA. f) Peasant Woman with Child; 1750 - 1760; height: 18.3 cm; © MMA. g) Detail of e).

Until 1752, the place of the pieces' achievement remains uncertain, but despite be Paris, Villeroy, Vaugirard or in site, the production of Mennecy was always large and often marked with the initials DV, a possible reference to the duc de Villeroy. At the factory beginnings, Barbin employed a tinny enamel but later he used a cupreous one [Grollier 1922]. The stannous pieces were habitually marked in color, mostly in blue and rarely in black or red, and the cupreous marked in the paste having also the initials of the decorator, painter or sculptor [Chavagnac et Grollier 1906].

Production consisted in polychromatic figures, regardless of Vincennes' privilege<sup>15</sup>, biscuits, knives handlers with polychrome reliefs under a white or yellowish background and a good number of pieces for table services or toilette, although with a small number of dishes. First statues had a naïf type but

<sup>15</sup> A royal decree issued in 1745 that forbade Barbin or everyone else to made polychromatic porcelain or employ in their workshops previous workers from Vincennes without a writted permission of Charles Adam being the offenders subject to a financial amend of 3,000 livres and the confiscation of pastes, materials and the finished pieces that were found in place [Chavagnac et Grollier 1906].

progressively they become more erudite [Grollier 1922] [Jacquemart 1875]. Enamelled Chinese decorations were rare and seemed the second epoch of Chantilly although with a more careful and perfected design as like the monochromatic blue decorations typified by the factory of Saint-Cloud. In the common polychromatic decorations the painters often copied the Vincennes's style although it's difficult to find pieces with its backgrounds in turquoise, rose or green [Chavagnac et Grollier 1906].



Figure 18. Group with young boy and girl; factory of Mennecy; soft-paste porcelain; 1750 - 1770; height: 26.5 cm; © Christie's Auctioneers.

After the 1751's innovation of biscuits at Vincennes, Mennecy produced them in a good number and quality, although with a paste less white and rougher<sup>16</sup>. Anyhow these pieces attained high values as a big statue of a bird in biscuit recorded with a sold price of 600 livres at the register of the dealer d'Obled in the department of Seine [Chavagnac et Grollier 1906].

From 1752 on its son, Jean-Baptiste, appears in the Mennecy's parish records as the director of the Villeroy porcelain factory established in Mennecy and in 1753 as one of the entrepreneurs of the same factory. Later in 1756 the duc change lands with Jean-Baptiste which seems to indicate that he owns the factory [Chavagnac et Grollier 1906].

<sup>16</sup> The Sèvres technical director, Vogt, give the composition of Mennecy's paste: silica, 69,79; alumina, 4,78; iron oxide, 1,24; tannic acid, 0,20; lime, 12,71; potash, 3,29; soda, 5,43; magnesium, 1,86; saline oxide of manganese, 0,07; loss to strong fire, 1,10; total: 100,47 [Chavagnac et Grollier 1906].



Figure 19 - Factory of Mennecy; statue of a gentleman; soft-paste porcelain; 1752 - 1773; marked DV on the paste; height: 11.4 cm; © Galerie Arcanes.

These series of events made Chavagnac and de Grollier deduce that François Barbin had directed the factory until 1751, passed the direction to his son in 1752 and associated with him from 1753 until 1762. In this date he retired having died in Mennecy in 27 August 1765 followed by Jean-Baptiste less than a month later, in 14 September of the same year [Chavagnac et Grollier 1906].

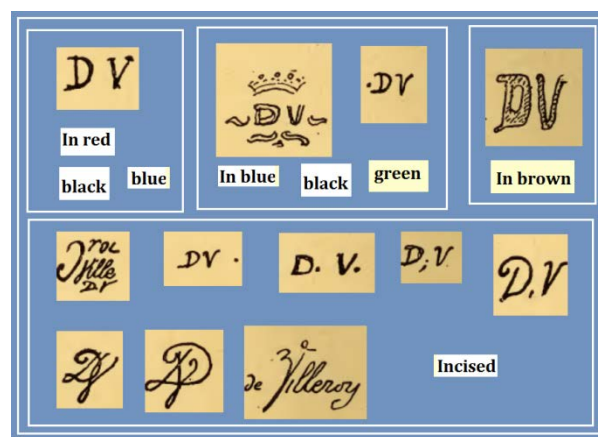


Figure 20 - Factory of Mennecy marks [Auscher 1914].

Between 1766 and 20 November 1768 the factory was directed by Antoine Merle, remaining however uncertain if it was appointed by the Barbin's successors or by Joseph Jullien a painter from the factory of Sceaux since 1754 [Chavagnac et Grollier 1906] and Symphorien Jacques, a sculptor that worked in Mennecy since 12 June 1763 [Chavagnac et Grollier 1906] and later had the factory's direction. Joseph and Symphorien were already entrepreneurs of the

Sceaux factory being reported in April of 1769 as the masters of the factories of Villeroy and Sceaux.

During their direction, although the quality was maintained, the number of workers seems to have diminished and in 1773 they displaced the factory to Bourg-la-Reine under the protection of the Comte d'Eu. Nevertheless, in 23 July of the same year, they still required the deposition of the marks D. V. for Villeroy and B. R. for Bourg-la-Reine, presuming the interest of maintaining the Mennecy's production until the end of the year [Chavagnac et Grollier 1906].

#### Factory of Bourg-la-Reine (1773 - 1804)

With the dislocation to Bourg-la-Reine, they also abandoned their position in the factory of Sceaux and least than a year later, in 16 Mars 1774, Joseph Jullien died aged of 49 years, becoming his son, Joseph-Léon Jullien, the associate of Symphorien Jacques until 1784 when he unsuccessfully try to ingress in the factory of Sèvres [Chavagnac et Grollier 1906]. After Joseph-Léon's departure, Symphorien Jacques becomes associated with his son Charles-Symphorien Jacques that stayed as the only director in 1790.



Figure 21 - Factory of Bourg-la-Reine; soft-paste porcelain. a) sugar pot; 1773 - 1804; incised B.R.; height: 13 cm; © Oger-Blanchet. b) sugar pot; soft-paste porcelain; small toilet pot; 1773 - 1804; incised B.R.; height: 7.5 cm; © Le Polychineur. b)

Circa 1799 Symphorien Jacques died and in 28 July 1804 the factory close being sold in 27 February 1806. The production of these last years had a quality hitch and it seems that the factory was never very successful at least in the words of Chavagnac and Grollier which referred the predominance of faience over porcelain, the reduced and uninteresting number of analyzed pieces and the absence of sculptures in the production [Chavagnac et Grollier 1906].

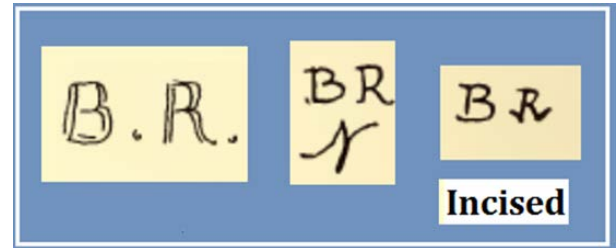


Figure 22 - Bourg-la-Reine marks [Auscher 1914].

#### Factory of Sceaux (1748 - c. 1810)

In 1748, the faience maker Jacques Chapelle and the architect L. F. de Bey build a porcelain factory that was subjected to close by a Conseil d'Etat du Roi decree in 28 January of the following year. The interdiction was a consequence of the 1745's privilege granted to Vincennes but Chapelle and Bey detour it by creating a factory of "faïence japonnée", in the lands of the duchess du Maine [Sèvres 2013]. In this way, they discreetly continued to made porcelain while essaying other pastes as the faience covered with cupreous enamel habitually referred as fine earthenware [Sèvres 2013]. In 25 January 1755 the duchess died and the factory stayed without patronage although Chapelle obtained the permission to continue the exploitation in 25 June of the same year. In fact Chapelle did good faience molded with trims and reliefs covered by a white enamel which received attractive paintings in colors and gold [Sèvres 2013].

Debarrassed of Bey on 1759, Chapelle devolved the production and obtained an admirable health until 12 June 1765 when he rented the factory for a period of nine years to Joseph Julien, a painter that worked in the factory since 1754. Julien associated with the sculptor Symphorien Jacques and they started to administrate it simultaneously with the exploitation of the factory Mennecy, a logistic achievement since the former factory was located circa 30 Km away [Jacquemart 1875].



In 29 April 1772 the renting period finished and Chapelle sold the factory to the squire and quartermaster of the king's house, Richard Glot. Glot was a experimented sculptor and buyed with the

factory the secrets and procedures of the ancient owner having retomed the production of soft-paste around 1775 when he obtained the protection of the duc de Penthievre [Jacquemart 1875].



Figure 23 - Factory of Sceaux. a) Tureen; faience; attributed to J. Chapelle; circa 1755 - 1763; height: 17 cm, diam: 31 cm; marked with the arms of the Duchesse du Maine; © Galerie Orelly's. b) Toilet jar; soft-paste porcelain; 1775 - 1780; height: 10 cm; © MMA. c) Vase pot-pourri with neoclassic shape; soft-paste porcelain; circa 1780; height: 14 cm; © Bils Céramiques. d) Toilet jar; soft-paste porcelain; 1775 - 1793; marked with an anchor; © Victoria and Albert Museum. e) Box; soft-paste porcelain; 1777; 16 x 11.5 cm; © Leiloeira BestNet.



Figure 24 - Pot Pourri Bowl and Cover; factory of Sceaux; soft-paste porcelain; 1750 - 1760; height: 10.3 cm, width: 17.6 cm; © Adrian Sassoon.

The soft-paste porcelain was habitually marked with SX but under the protectorate of the duc it started to be marked with an anchor sometimes with the word SCEAUX underneath. Other mark with the letters SP also appears, possibly meaning Sceaux-Penthievre, although Jacquemart considered its manufacture inferior to what is customarily produced by Glot [Jacquemart 1875].

At the beginnings of the French Revolution the mark changed to a simple SCEAUX and Glot become the mayor of the village, however, due to his commitment against some political decisions he

was jailed. After been released in 14 July 1795 he rented the factory to Pierre-Antoine Cabaret dictating the end of the artistic production due to the new owner lack of interest in producing other than common dishware [Jacquemart 1875].

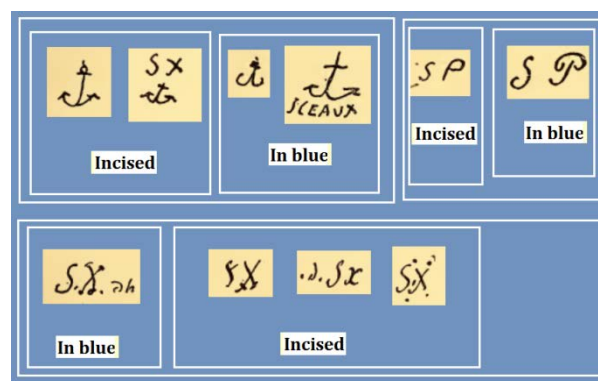


Figure 25 - Factory of Sceaux marks [Auscher 1914]. 1<sup>st</sup> row) marks which can be attributed to Duc of Lille. 2<sup>nd</sup> row 1<sup>st</sup> square) attributed to Dorez. 2<sup>nd</sup> row 2<sup>nd</sup> square) attributed to François and Barthélemy Dorez.

Factory of Vincennes (1741 - 1756) and Sèvres (1756 - 1804)

In the summer of 1740 Claude Humbert Gérin which had previously worked with the brothers Gilles and Robert Dubois, that had previously worked in the factory of Chantilly, found a way to produce a lacteous paste that convinced in April of the following year the Marquis Orry de Fulvy, the Intendant des Finances and the King's Commissioner

for the French East India Company, to finance the production workshop located in a wing of the Château de Vincennes known as La Tour du Diable [Lecoq 2010]. In September arrived the ceramist Louis-François Gravant to be in charge of the pastes and glazes but in a while he took over the command and in 1745 the workshop was finally able to produce a paste that result in a splendid soft porcelain when fired [Lecoq 2010]. Still in 1745, at 24 of July, the

factory was granted with the exclusivity of production in the Saxony's style. The privilege, that last for twenty years, was armored by a clause that punish with imprisonment the workers who left the plant without official permission and the confiscation of the objects and a fine for the factories that offend it, being them also forbidden to employ previous employees from Vincennes without the factory agreement [Lecoq 2010].



Figure 26 - a) Vase Pot-pourri; soft-paste porcelain; factory of Sèvres; Jean-Claude Duplessis; 1757-1758; 44.8 x 37.5 x 19.4 cm; © Metropolitan Museum. b) Sculpture of a fight between a dog and a hyena (after d'Oudry's work); factory of Vincennes; soft-paste porcelain; 1751; width: 32 cm; © Christophe Perlès. c) Banquet Table with Trionfi, arranged for Cardinal Leopold de Medici; Pierre Paul Sevin; watercolor; 1677; height: 14.4 cm, width: 23.3 cm; © National Museum of Stockholm, Sweden. d) Pygmalion and Galatea; factory of Sèvres; soft-paste porcelain; 1764-1773 (circa); a B Cursive inscription mark at top of base probably for Bachelier; height: 36.1 cm; © British Museum.

Until then Vincennes' artists were directly inspired by Meissen products, however, the 1748's arrival of goldsmith and bronze worker Jean-Claude Duplessis started a novel era for forms and decorations that conduced in 1750 to the employment of over 100 workers, being 45 of them women and girls that made porcelain flowers supervised by Mrs. Gravant [Munger 2000] [Lecoq 2010]. In 1751 the Marquis deceased and Louis XV became the owner of 25% of the factory's capital. It was renamed as Manufacture Royale de la Porcelaine de France and started to mark its products with the double L monogram. Five years later, in the summer of 1756 presumably due to the will of the king's lover, the Marquise of Pompadour, the factory was transferred to Sèvres in the neighborhoods of her Chateau de Bellevue.

Louis XV became the only owner in 1 October 1759 and the factory started an exclusive production of luxury items for the court and aristocracy that were

also frequently used as diplomatic gifts<sup>17</sup>. From there on he took an interest in the factory's production, visiting it regularly and transforming a few rooms of his apartments at Versailles into a porcelain shop to display and sell the recent pieces during the celebrations of the year's end [Lecoq 2010].

Although the soft-paste required low temperatures in the production process and allowed a multivariate palette both factories also managed to be notable in the manufacture of small unglazed monochromatic statues which emulate the 17<sup>th</sup> century's sugar sculptures that frequently festooned the dinner tables during the dessert dish [Jones 2016]. Their production started at Vincennes circa 1751, when Jean-Jacques Bachelier was the master of the atelier of sculpture, and in them: the unglazed showed the technical and artistic skills; the white surface

<sup>17</sup> The king's decision seems to be a consequence of the previous society bankruptcy originated by the expenses done with the transferring and the displacement of more than two hundred specialized workers and families.

contrast the gaudy atmospheres of the rococo decorations; being individually modeled allowed variations in the final group reflecting the consumers' taste [Jones 2016].



Figure 27 - Bol sein; factory of Sèvres; soft and hard-paste porcelain; Louis Le Masson; Jean-Jacques Lagrenée, Louis-Simon Boizot; 1787; © Sèvres Cité de la Ceramique.

In fact, the virtuosity of those pieces show the French effort in the creation of a porcelain's brand basing the models in prints and drawings of recognized artists such as François Boucher [Geiger 1999]. With the nomination of Etienne-Maurice Falconet to the head the atelier of sculpture in 1757 that the factory started to reproduce in porcelain the marble sculptures done by the same artist such as the Falconet's works *Pygmalion et Galaté* or *L'Amour menaçant*. Circa 1768 it was discovered kaolin in a hill nearby Saint-Yrieix-la-Perche,

Located at 40 km south of Limoges and one year later the chemist Pierre Joseph Macquer produced approximately 400 pieces that were presented to the king and Madame Pompadour in the festivals of the year's end [d'Albis 2002]. These pieces had conducted in the seventies to the creation of a new atelier exclusively dedicated to the hard-paste that worked along with the soft-paste atelier, until 1804, when the production of soft-paste was abandoned [Landaïs 1963].

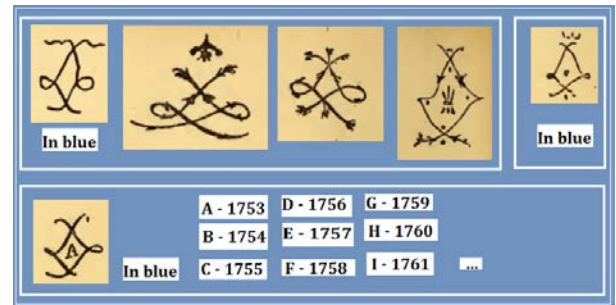


Figure 28 - Marks of Vincennes and Sèvres [Auscher 1914]; 1<sup>st</sup> row 1<sup>st</sup> square) First Vincennes' marks. 1<sup>st</sup> row 2<sup>nd</sup> square) between 1745 and 1753. 2<sup>nd</sup> row 2<sup>nd</sup> square) before 1753: the letter corresponds to the year.

#### Factory of Orléans (1753 - 1768)

In a document dated from 8 June 1777 the opening of the factory is established in 13 May 1755 under a king's privilege extensible for a period of twenty years which was renovated for a 15 years period in 7 May 1775. The factory that seems to be oriented to faïence's manufacture was directed by Gérault-Daraubert which adopted a special mark consisting in a lambel with three pendants when he decided to do porcelain.



Figure 29 - Factory of Orléans. a) Group representing a scene from bacchanal; soft-paste porcelain; circa 1755; height: 27 cm; © The Sale Room. b) Two sculpture fixed on a wooden base; soft-paste porcelain; 18th century; height: 15 cm; © Sale Room.



The porcelain was firstly done with the clays from Beylen, near the Flanders, and later from Paris, Saint-Mamers and la Loire. It had a white and translucent type resembling the productions of Menecy and Sceaux. Statues and biscuits had an well developed fabrication that employed a significant number of sculptors and molders. In 1764, Gérault acquire a kaolin mine near Saint-Yrieix-la-Perche and starts to fabricate hard-paste.

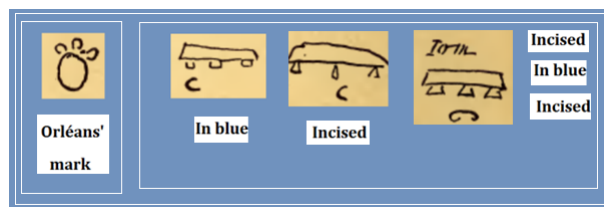


Figure 30 - Factory of Orléans' marks [Auscher 1914]; 1<sup>st</sup> square) Faïence's mark. 2<sup>nd</sup> square) Porcelain's marks.

### Factory of Crépy-en-Valois (1762 - 1770)

Co-founded in the October of 1762 under the protection of the duc de Valois, Philippe d'Orléans<sup>18</sup>, by the art dealer Pierre Bourgeois<sup>19</sup> and Louis-François Gagnepain a previous worker of the factory of Menecy, had as its first director Pierre Clostermann. It counted with 22 full time employees, that made a production mostly in the rococo style [Crépy 2015], and 5 types of incised marks on their pieces: CREPY; C.P.; D.C.P.; D.C.O. and D.C.V.



Figure 31 - Factory of Crépy-en-Valois; soft-paste porcelain; Pair of Gardeners; 1765 - 1770; marked with CREPY; height: 12.1 cm and 12.7 cm; © Metropolitan Museum Art.

The factory had an well established clientele as an order of 2.200 snuff-boxes in different shapes to Saint-Honoré's shop in 11 December 1766 seems to

<sup>18</sup> Exploiting the duc's privileges of production accorded between 1752 and 1785.

<sup>19</sup> Established in the Parisien, rue Saint-Honoré.

confirm. Anyhow economic difficulties allied with the death of Louis-François Gagnepain<sup>20</sup> conduced to its closure in October of 1770 [Crépy 2015].



Figure 32 - Factory of Crépy-en-Valois. a) Group of two putti that shows signs of re-firing; 1762 - 1770; DCO marked; height: 12.1 cm, width: 12.1 cm; © Victoria and Albert Museum. b) Crépy-en-Valois marks [Auscher 1914].

### Factory of Étioilles (1768 -?)

Established in Étioilles near Corbeil by a certain Monnier in association with a man named Pellevé the factory had produced soft and hard porcelain decorated in monochromatic blue in the Saint-Cloud's style. The deposited mark in Sèvres was a concatenation of the letters M and P presumably the initials of the two associate [Jacquemart 1875].



Figure 33 - Factory of Étioilles. a) Tea jar; hard-paste porcelain; 1770; © World Imaging. b) Factory of Arras marks [Auscher 1914].

### Factory of Arras (1770 - 1790)

The factory was built by, a ceramist from Lille, to compete with the Dutch factory of Tournay having for it the support of the États d'Artois which had financed the plant until 1773. Circa 1772 Boussemaert associates with Delahaye and the sisters Delemer in the production of a white

<sup>20</sup> The 6 of July 1770.

yellowish soft-paste that was rough and opaque [Auscher 1914].



Figure 34 - Refreshing pot with decoration a la brindille; 18<sup>th</sup> century; factory of Arras; marked AR in blue; dim: 21.8cm, high: 16.5cm; © Bils-Ceramiques.

The enamel was shady and most of decorations were monochromatic blue although there was also polychromatic decorations done with the technique of *petit feu* mostly for the table and toilette services [Auscher 1914].



Figure 35- Factory of Arras marks [Auscher 1914].

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Figure 27:  
<http://www.sevrescitceramique.fr/site.php?type=P&id=630>;

Figure 29: <https://www.the-saleroom.com/en-us/auction-catalogues/valerieregis/catalogue-id-valrie10002/lot-03a1a518-94e8-42ee-988a-a556011c15c0>; <https://www.the-saleroom.com/en-us/auction-catalogues/valerieregis/catalogue-id-valrie10002/lot-ecfc7392-1423-48c9-910a-a556011c15c0>

Figure 31:  
<http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/201406>;  
<http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/201405>

Figure 32: <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O99641/two-putti-with-grapes-figure-group-crepy-en-valois/>;

Figure 33:  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Porcelain\\_in\\_the\\_Mus%C3%A9\\_des\\_Arts\\_D%C3%A9coratifs#/media/File:Etiolles\\_hard\\_paste\\_tea\\_jar\\_1770.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Porcelain_in_the_Mus%C3%A9_des_Arts_D%C3%A9coratifs#/media/File:Etiolles_hard_paste_tea_jar_1770.jpg)

Figure 34: [http://bils-ceramiques.com/index.php?id\\_product=290&controller=product&id\\_lang=2](http://bils-ceramiques.com/index.php?id_product=290&controller=product&id_lang=2)