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The 2020 American Ceramic Circle Book Award

The American Ceramic Circle Book Award, established in 2005, recognizes English-language publications that advance the study of ceramics, present new scholarship and interpretations, and, in doing so, become important and standard references in the field.

After the careful review of several worthy books, the ACC Book Award Committee identified this year's winner as *Birds, Bugs and Butterflies: Lady Betty Cobbe's 'Peacock' China, A Biography of an Irish Service of Worcester Porcelain* by Alec Cobbe. The volume was published by Boydell Press in 2019 to accompany an exhibition of the same title, curated by Cobbe, at Dublin Castle in Ireland.

Birds, Bugs and Butterflies follows the author's journey to research and reassemble a large portion of the impressive first-period Worcester dinner and dessert set commissioned in the mid-eighteenth century by the author's ancestor Lady Betty Cobbe for Newbridge House in County Dublin, Ireland. The table set is known as the 'Peacock' service for its vivid and elaborate painted decoration. As Worcester's business records for this period were destroyed, Alec Cobbe's discovery of family papers containing details about the service's purchase over a period of years give unprecedented insight into the firm's interaction with early customers. Cobbe's research also provides important information on Irish social life and patronage during the mid-eighteenth century. Cobbe examines the service's painted decoration and its sources; the historical context of its forms; and traces the dispersal and recent reassembly of more than 160 pieces of the original set.

Containing a bounty of lush, full-color images, the striking design of *Birds, Bugs and Butterflies* rivals the beauty and appeal of the porcelain service itself. A significant new contribution to the literature on Worcester porcelain, this book is a skillful blend of storytelling and scholarship, providing a highly readable, informative and rewarding discussion on the subject.

Suggestions or recommendations for books published in 2020 to be considered for the 2021 American Ceramic Circle Book Award can be sent to ACC Book Award Chair Amy Dehan at amy.dehan@cincyart.org.