**The Legend of the Willow Pattern**

*(1849, an English invention, designed to feed European romanticism and implicit prejudice towards China)*

**A powerful and rich mandarin lived in a sumptuous mansion (***house at centre of plate***) and worked for the emperor as a customs officer. He had a hardworking bookkeeper named Chang, who did all the drudgery while the mandarin took bribes from merchants.**

**Chang had fallen in love with the mandarin’s daughter, Koong-See.**

**She returned his love and met him among the orange-trees (***trees near the mansion***). The mandarin found out and built a fence (***fence in foreground of plate***) to keep the lovers apart and a separate house (***smaller house to left of central house on plate***) to seclude his daughter. He then betrothed her to a wealthy and elderly friend, Ta-Jin, who was a duke.**

**When they heard of this the lovers arranged to meet and elope.**

**They fled the house with a stolen box of jewels across a bridge, pursued by the mandarin (***three figures on the bridge***). The lovers escaped by boat with the help of a fisherman to a distant island (***boat and boatman, island with house in background of plate***) where they settled down happily. Duke Ta-Jin then sent soldiers to attack the island and they killed Chang.**

**In her grief Koong-See set the house on fire and died in the flames. The gods transformed the two lovers into immortal doves, united forever (***birds at top centre of Willow Pattern design***).**