

Royal Worcester Egg Coddlers

There is no record of when egg coddlers were invented or who was the first to manufacture them, but they started to become popular in Europe in the late 19th century. The first known Worcester coddlers were made at Grainger's China Works in the 1880s. They were made of earthenware, fired at a very high temperature. They were sold plain white or decorated with a single coloured, printed pattern such as Willow or printed birds. Very early coddlers have a flat cover without the ring handle.

A large set of Royal Lily pattern egg coddlers, (also called Kitchener Pots), were used on board the Imperial Yacht of the last Tsar around 1900. The Duchess Eggs, as they were called, were the standard first course on Sunday nights in the Baltic, prepared for the Tsar's sister, the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg.



From 1910 until 1928 Egg Coddlers are recorded in the Royal Worcester factory ledgers as 'Premier Egg Cups', perhaps relating to their high-class associations. They are usually marked with the patent registration number 561564, the most popular Royal Worcester designs being, Worcester Willow and Pekin

In 1931, a new material, Fireproof Cooking Porcelain was used to make coddlers and other Oven -to-tableware items. This true hard porcelain was developed by Royal Worcester to resist thermal shock.

Most Royal Worcester coddlers are made in two sizes, standard and King size, however between 1973 and 1988 a larger 'Maxime' size was also produced in some designs.



Dating and Marks -

The marks on the underside of coddlers are very difficult to date, they do not vary very much because of the small size of the coddler base.

1890 - 1902 - Early Grainger coddlers are marked with a Grainger shield mark and a year letter (A=1891 to L=1902).

1902 - 1930 - Royal Worcester examples made between c.1902 and 1930 have a Royal Worcester mark and the word Crownware printed in a ribbon or the words 'Royal Worcester Vitreous'.

1931 - c.1950 - From 1931 the marking is usually the words Royal Worcester England printed in straight lines in green.

1950 - 1983 - From the 1950's a scrolled W inside a circle was used with the words Royal Worcester Porcelain, Made in England in black.

From 1983 a standard Royal Worcester mark in black was used on all coddlers.

From 1991 in addition to the factory mark you will find two pairs of small numbers in grey or white. The first pair is the printers number, the second pair of numbers indicate the year of manufacture. ie. 55-97 = 1997, 46-01= 2001



Patterns - A very large range of patterns have been used to decorate Royal Worcester egg coddlers. Most of them are lithographed tableware designs, however plain coloured coddlers and hand painted coddlers (signed by the artist) were also made in the years between the two world wars. To date over 100 different designs have been recorded.

Copyright 2009 Worcester Porcelain Museum

The Worcester Porcelain Museum
Severn Street, Worcester
WR1 2ND
Telephone +44 (0)1905 21247

e-mail:
info.admin@Worcesterporcelainmuseum.org

Registered Charity No.223753