

ROYAL WORCESTER EGG CODDLERS

Egg coddlers have been made in Worcester since the 1880's, however there is no record of when they were invented or who was the first to manufacture them. The first known Worcester coddlers were made at Grainger's China Works in the 1880's. 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.

Royal Worcester purchased the Grainger factory in 1889 and eventually closed down the Grainger works in 1902, moving all staff and production to the present Severn Street site. Royal Worcester continued to make coddlers, Worcester Willow and Pekin being the most popular designs.

From 1910 until 1928 Egg Coddlers are recorded in the Royal Worcester factory ledgers as 'Premier Egg Cups'. These are usually marked with the patent registration number 561564.

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.

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