

WHITE IRONSTONE NOTES

VOL. 9 No. 1



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CONVENTION No. 8, 2002 AND MOLDS

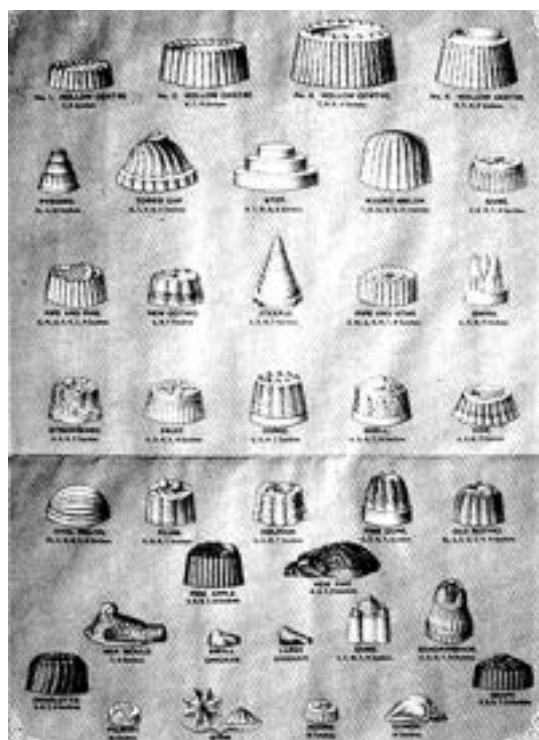
WHITE IRONSTONE MOLDS AND MOULDS

There is a saying we all have heard: "Half of the pleasure of food is in the presentation." This well explains why molds have been in use for many centuries. Whether used for fish, fowl or meat, pate or mousse, aspic or jelly, fruit, sweetmeats, ice cream, custard or pudding, these handsome shapers could change even a simple dish into a feast for the eyes as well as the palate. The early **moulds** (British spelling) were made of copper, pewter, and red or yellow ceramics. Cookbook-type instructions from as far back as the 17th Century detail the use and contents of moulds; later books include illustrations of the various forms 'turned out' -- some presented in photographs of elaborate displays on banquet, dinner and tier tables.

We have seen a few 19th Century photos showing large Victorian kitchens having huge wall cupboards filled with rows of copper moulds. They were ornamental as well as useful, and being quite costly, often were marked with the name of the property or initials of the owner, or even a crest. A poorer home would have used the ceramic moulds, many of which took their form from the early red and yellow wares.

With the arrival of white ironstone china, 'jelly' molds made of this body came to America along with the dinner sets and other table ware of the middle and late 1800s. Concurrently, however, the inexpensive molds made of white ironstone must have been very popular and also widely sold for use in Great Britain, for that is (continued on page 4)

IRONSTONE FOOD MOLDS



(continued from page 1) where we find them in sizable number today - and collect them there or when we can find them here.

We are amazed at the numerous ways and recipes used to prepare the grains, fruits, vegetables, seafoods and meats for molding. The usual binding ingredient for most of them was gelatin, which has remarkable decorative qualities. It was made from the gelatine-producing parts of animals, such as the feet of hogs, cows, and calves and the shaving of antlers. Boiled for hours and strained many times, the gelatin was then flavored with spices, wine, sugar, and lemon. The word jelly comes from the Italian 'gelare', meaning 'to freeze.' Also used was pectin, a jelling agent found in certain ripe fruits, for forming jams and jellies.

A favorite dessert of the time was the French blanc-mange, made from a gelatinous or cornstarch base and milk, and shaped in a mold. Blanc-mange, mousse, custard and pudding molds ranged in size from individual to huge. (The late 19th Century photo above, shows what may be a dessert and two filled molds.)

Fruit molds of grapes, pineapples, raspberries, plums, strawberries, pears, melons, or baskets of fruit were used for desserts. (Melon moulds were so favored that Thomas and John Wedgwood of Burslem offered them in ten sizes, at 10 pence a dozen, in 1750.) Asparagus was another favorite (see page 14.)

For fish, fowl, or other meats, gelatin was added to the natural juices to make the potted meats, often called aspics, that were molded. Pates, especially those made of livers, were shaped into the forms of rabbits, ducks, pheasants, chickens, calves or pigs. Seafood designs included whole fish, lobsters, shells, crayfish, creels with fish, and dolphins and turtles. In birds, the eagle (American?) was featured; in fowl, the pheasant and pigeon. The many animals included lions, squirrels and deer.

ant and pigeon. The many animals included lions, squirrels and deer.

Grains were identified by an ear of corn or a sheaf of wheat; in copper, atop the mold. Also very popular were the abstract gothic and geometric shapes, and the many that were just ribbed. There were the hollow-centered ones shaped like turbans, called Turks' caps. Later, Shelly made molds with the outer surface following the inner forms so that one could see its shape at a glance.

Although ice cream molds made of metal sides hinged for easy removal, ice cream or sorbet molds were done in tall, conical ironstone. We have been served a bombe which, traditionally, is ice cream frozen in a rounded form and filled with a light, frozen center made of eggs and sugar. The one served was sweetened with honey and placed in a beehive mold (see page 5). However, we heard crying in the kitchen while attempts were made to 'turn it out' as a unit.

The shape of the mould sometimes indicated the food within. The advantage of copper versus white ironstone molds was ease of identification when compared to the ironstone's usually plain exterior. The low price of ironstone was a consideration, but its balance was the possibility of breakage. Today, we value them all!

The British potters of ironstone molds made them in many sizes, from wee one-fourth cup to over a quart. The few found with a potter's mark that can be dated usually are by Copeland, Minton or Wedgwood, some have impressed or underglaze numbers that probably represent the size or shape, but most are unmarked as they were considered commonplace. To us, the molds are handsome pieces and the variety of patterns offered is remarkable.

Harriet Denton



Molds from a 1870s Wedgwood Catalog

To see a positive image of a mold, rotate the page one quarter turn or 90 degrees.



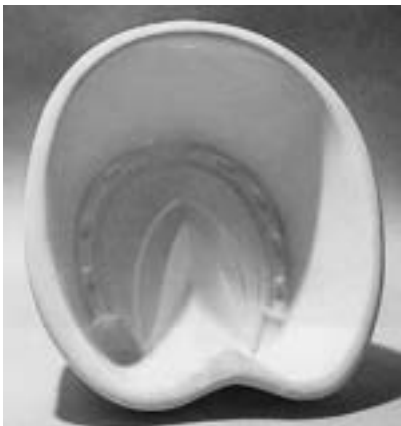
Reverse mold with a plain inside, 4" diameter by 4" high with registry mark of February 28, 1854. (Gould coll.)



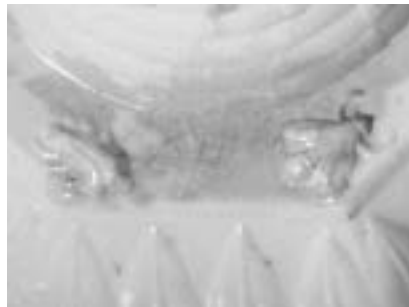
Patriotic Eagle & Stars mold which was made especially for the American market. (Moreland coll.)



Acorn, 5 1/2" L, 2 3/4" W, 1 1/2" H. (Denton coll.)

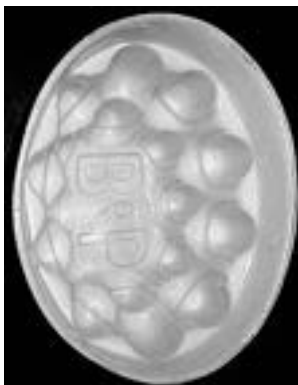
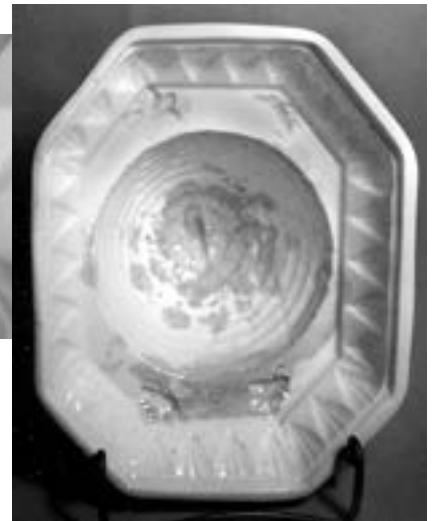


Rare Horse shoe shape mold, 6 1/4" long and 2 3/4" deep. Not very appetizing to a contemporary palate. We wonder if it tempted the 19th Century Victorians.



Beehive mold, 6 1/2" L, 5 1/2" W, 4 1/2" H.

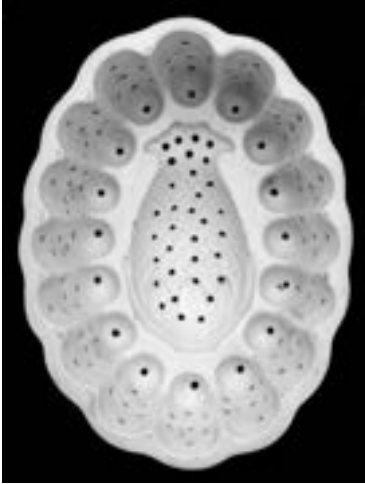
The Queen Bee sits atop and is served by the drone bees in the corners. (She produces!) (Denton coll.)



Two Brown & Polson, Blanc Mange molds with the recipe for corn flour blanc mange printed on the outside. How convenient! The mark is a shield with the words, 'Made in England' printed underneath. These are probably turn of the century.

Left: The inside of the smaller mold which I reversed and turned 90 degrees to give the illusion of molded food. The initials of B & P were cleverly impressed into the food as an advertising reminder.

PINEAPPLES, CHEESE MOLDS AND FLOWERS



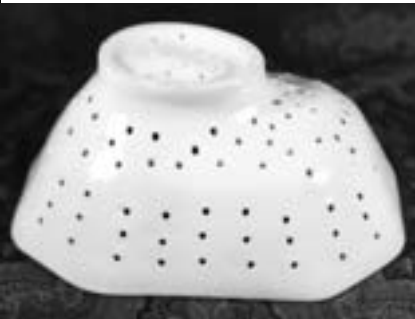
Pineapple cheese mold.

Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century cooks molded their cheeses into charming shapes. *An early recipe for an "Egg Cheese" recorded in an 18th to 19th Century Scottish cook book, called for 'three mutchkins of sweet cream, 1/2 mutchkin of white wine mixed with sugar, eggs and spice.'* Boiled and then turned into a mould that contains holes and set to drain away the whey, leaving the curds as a solid moulded form. Then unmoulded and served. These cheese or curd molds were sometimes lined with cheese cloth (which is how that loosely woven textile got its name.) In the standard Victorian cook book, Mrs. Beeton's Book of Household Management, there is also a Damson Cheese recipe in which the plum and cheese mixture was placed in very tiny earthenware molds (no drain holes mentioned.) A kind of Damson plum cheesecake? YUM! It tells us one way in which the mini molds (shown below) might have been used. They may have also been used for jellied garnishes to accompany meat dishes.

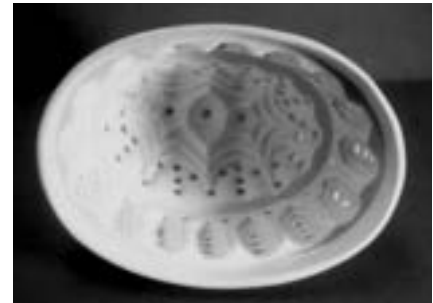
The number and variety of sizes of pineapple molds on this page is not surprising. The pineapple was an exceptionally popular shape since it symbolized welcome, hospitality and friendship.



Above: 'Curd' mold with a grape bunch, 7" long. (Gould coll.)



Above and right: Curd mold and its outside 7 1/2" long by 5 3/4" wide. (Allers coll.)



Above: Geometric cheese mold. (A. Miller photo & coll.)



Above: From bottom center of picture at left. 3" L Pineapple mold with an impressed '3' which is probably the size mark.



Left: Group of pineapple molds.



Right: From the center of picture at left, 6" long Pineapple mold marked Copeland. (Denton coll.)

To see a positive image of a mold, rotate the page one quarter turn or 90 degrees.



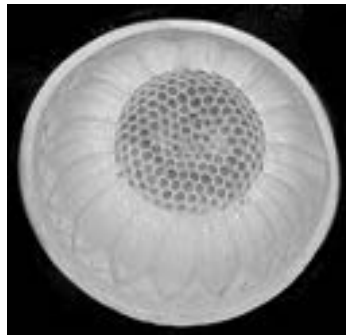
Two Tulip molds. (Denton coll.)



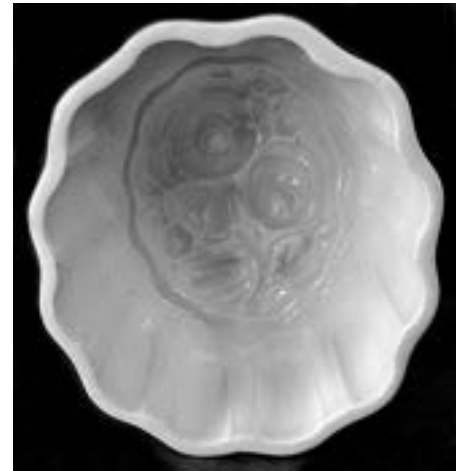
Lily with a Morning Glory border, 6 1/2" long by 5 1/8" wide and 3" high. (Gould coll.)



Sunflower mold inscribed on the bottom: Made by Walter Halford of Furnival, July 1901. The number 29 is impressed. (Gould coll.)



Similar sunflower mold without handles.



Three roses and a branch



Pineapple 6 1/4" long mold marked Copeland. (Gould coll.)

PINEAPPLE MOUSSE

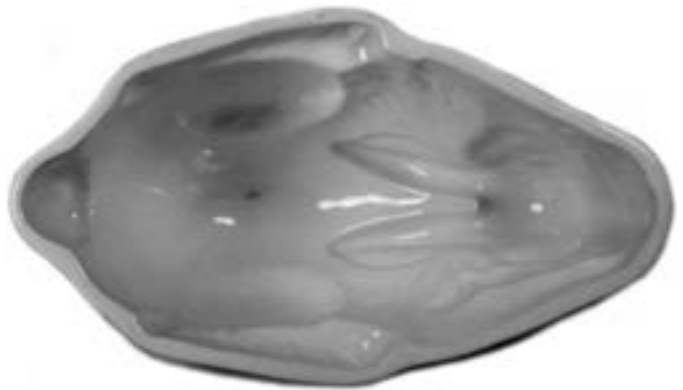
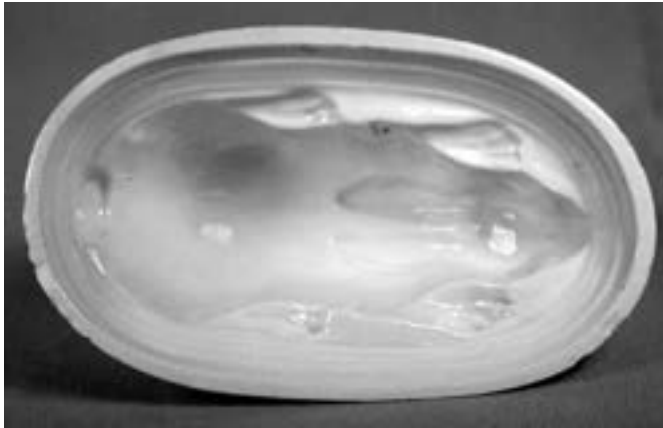
Ingredients: 10 oz. preserved pineapple, 2 oz. of castor sugar, 3/4 oz. of gelatine, 1/2 gill of pineapple syrup, 1 1/2 gills of cream, 1 1/2 gills of lemon or wine jelly.

Method: Mask the jelly mold with a thin layer of jelly. Pound and chop the pineapple finely and rub it through a hair sieve. Dissolve the sugar and gelatine in the pineapple syrup and let mixture cool. Melt the remainder of jelly and let it cool, and whisk it over ice to a stiff froth. Add this and the stiffly-whipped cream to the pineapple puree. Stir in the gelatine when cool. Pour in pineapple mould and remain on ice for 2 hours.



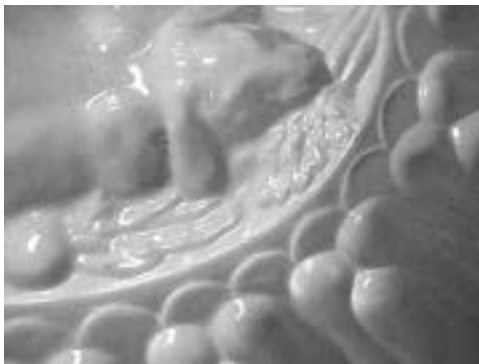
Some hearts to go with the flowers. (Denton coll.)

ANIMALS

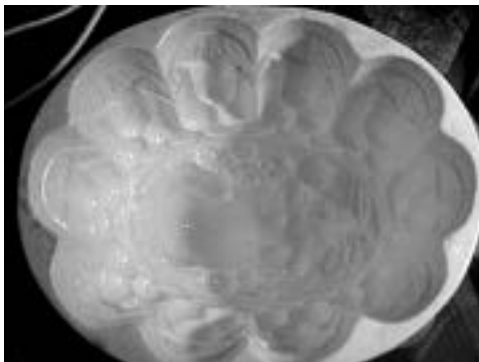


Above and left: Bunny mold and its outside shape.

*Above right and right: Another bunny mold and its outside.
(Both Allers coll.)*



*Turtle mold with mark, G.M.T. & Bro, Germany, 3816/2.
(Denton coll.)*



Easter lamb mold. Top photo shows a detail of the lamb's head

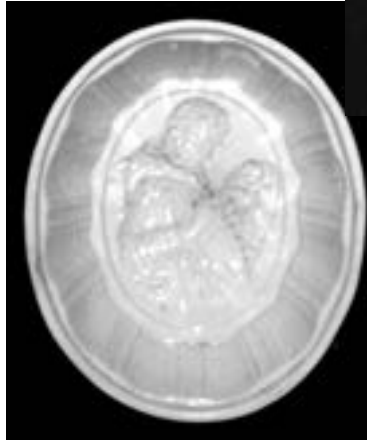


Deer found on the Internet.

ANIMALS



Above: Recumbent lion, . 6 1/4" long.
(Gould coll.)



While searching our archives, we came across this mold which was sent in 1997, depicting a man and woman embracing. It is unmarked except for an impressed '7' and has three legs. (Gonzales photo & coll.)



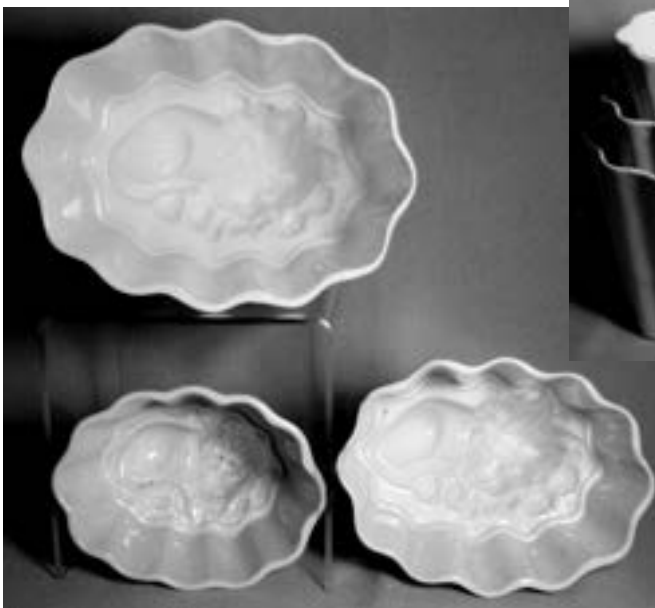
Above and right: Lion and outside of mold with stand to keep mold level. 7" L, 5" W, and 3 1/2" H. (Denton coll.)

CHOCOLATE MOULD

Ingredients: 4 oz. chocolate, 1 oz. of castor sugar, 1 oz gelatine, 1 pint of milk, vanilla.

Method: Soak gelatine in 1 or 2 table-spoonfuls of milk and boil the remainder with the chocolate. When perfectly smooth, stir in the sugar and gelatine, add vanilla to taste, let mixture cool, then pour into one large or several small moulds.

This recipe and several that follow are from a c. 1900 edition of Mrs. Beeton's Book of Household Management.



Three recumbent lion mold set. Inset picture shows molds stacked and the right photo shows the bases of the molds. The sizes are:

5"	L.	3 1/2"	W.	3 1/2"	H.
5 3/4"	L.	4 1/2"	W.	4"	H.
6 5/8"	L.	5"	W.	5"	H.

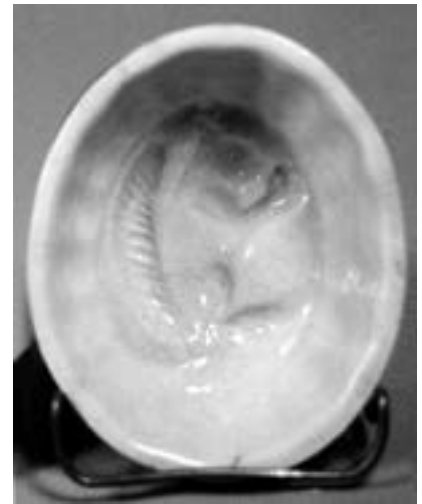
(Denton coll.)

ANIMALS

To see a positive image of a mold, rotate the page one quarter turn or 90 degrees.



*Squirrel mold with morning glory border.
(Meneghini coll.)*



*Squirrel, 4 5/8" high by 3 1/2" wide.
(Gould coll.)*



*A covey of Doves, 6 1/8" long by 4 1/2" wide
by 3" high. (Gould Coll.)*

CHICKEN MOULD
 Ingredients: 1 lb of cooked chicken, 4 oz. of ham or lean bacon, 2 oz. of butter, 1/4 pint of cream, 3 eggs, nutmeg, cayenne, salt, 3/4 pint of Bechamel, oyster or other suitable sauce.
 Method: Melt butter, beat eggs until light, and mix the two together. Chop chicken and ham finely, pound them well, adding a little of the mixed egg and butter to moisten. When smooth add the cream (stiffly whipped), the remainder of the egg mixture and season to taste. Turn into a well buttered mould and steam gently from 30 to 35 minutes. Unmould and serve with a sauce in a sauce boat.



*Rooster, 6 1/2" long by 5 1/8" wide by
4" high. (Gould coll.)*



Star shape.



Round Ribs.

FRUIT



Fruit and Flower basket marked Davenport with anchor. 5 1/2" long by 4 1/2" wide by 2 3/8" high. (Gould coll.)



Right: Two sizes of one shape of fruit molds which have different backs. (Denton coll.)

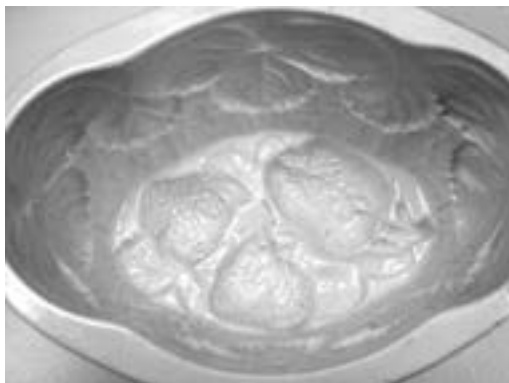


Large fruit cluster mold, 8" long by 6 1/8" wide and 3 3/4" deep. (Gould coll.)

BLANCMANGE
 Ingredients: 4 heaping tblsp of arrowroot, sugar to taste, 1 1/2 pints of milk, lemon rind, vanilla or other flavouring.
 Method: Mix the arrowroot smoothly in a little milk, bring the remainder to boiling-point, put in flavouring ingredients and infuse for 20 minutes. Strain the milk over the blended arrowroot and stir, replace in the stew pan, sweeten to taste, and boil gently for a few minutes. Rinse a mould with cold water, pour in the mixture, and put aside to set. Serve with stewed fruit, jam or cold custard sauce. Serves 4 or 5 persons.



Melon and Fruit border, 4 3/4" long by 3 3/4" wide by 2" high. (Gould coll.)



Strawberry mold, detail and outside.



Holly Berry? (Gould photo & coll.)

GRAPES



*Grapes and leaves.
(Denton coll.)*



*Grape clusters in three-
footed mold, 9 1/4" L. by
7 1/4" W. by 4 1/4" H.
(Gould coll.)*



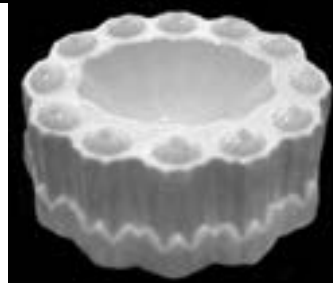
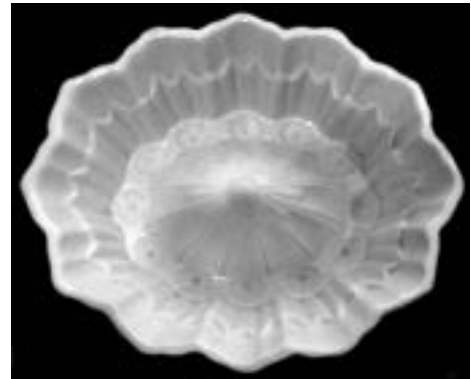
*Grape cluster and Gothic ribs,
8 1/2" L. by 7 1/4" W. by 4" H.
(Gould coll.)*



*Grapes with ribbon border, 5 1/4" L.
by 4 1/4" W. by 2" H.
(Gould coll.)*



*Grape cluster mold, 4" long.
Right: Grape cluster mark.
(Moreland coll.)*



Fancy Gothic shape, probably Shelley.



*Pudding mold with atin clamp-on
lid, and its interior.*



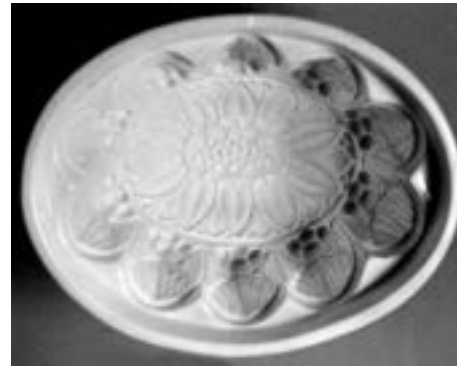
*Two identical bundt molds.
(Gould photo & coll.)*

ODDS AND ENDS

To see a positive image of a mold, rotate the page one quarter turn or 90 degrees.



Left: Prince of Wales (three feathers) mold, 8" x 7" oval, 6 1/2" high. (Denton coll.)



Sunflower center mold marked Brownfield & Son, 7 1/2 L. by 6" W. and 5 1/8" H. (Gould coll.)



Six leaves and flower, 6" L. by 5" W. by 4 1/2" H. (Gould coll.)



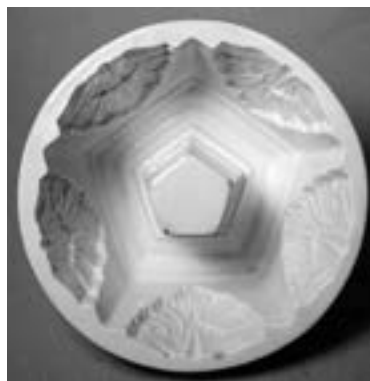
(Denton coll.)



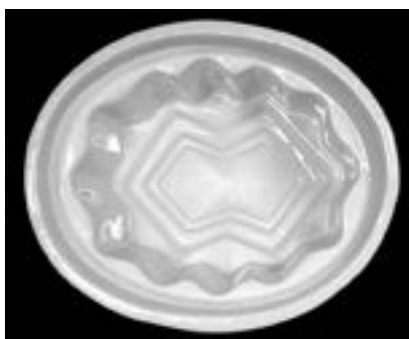
Flower in large ribbed base, 7 1/2" L. by 6 1/2" W. by 3 3/4" H. (Gould coll.)



Celtic motif.



Pentagon mold 6 1/2" diameter and 4" high and the outside. (Gould coll.)



Left: Bow Tie
Right: Star
(Both Gould photos & coll.)



VEGETABLES

To see a positive image of a mold, rotate the page one quarter turn or 90 degrees.



Pea Pods with Flowerwvs, 7 1/2" long by 6 1/2" wide by 3 3/4" deep. (Gould coll.)

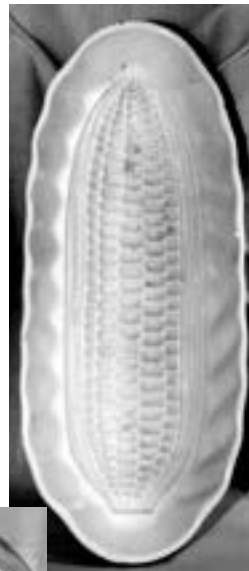


Asparagus mold marked No. 41 over 7. (Gould and Denton coll.)

Below: Asparagus mold from the same maker as the corn cob lower right. (Denton coll.)



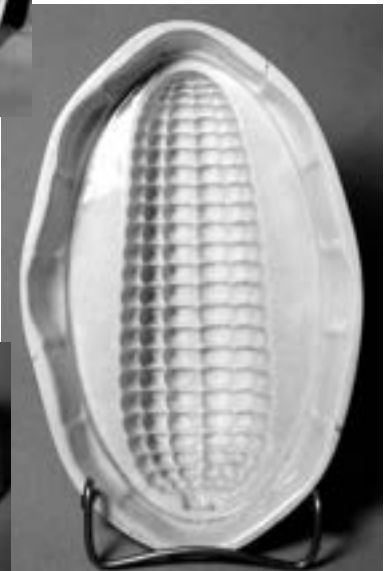
Sheaf of Wheat, its outside and mark.



Sheaf of Wheat, 6 3/4" long by 5" wide by 4 1/4" deep. (Gould coll.)



Corn cob mold from the same maker as the Turtle mold on page 8. G.M.T. & Bro., Germany, 3814/2 (Denton coll.)



Corn cob mold, 8 1/2" long by 6 1/8" wide by 2 3/4" deep. (Gould and Denton coll.)

SEAFOOD



Clam Shell, 7 1/2" long by 5 3/8" wide. Marked WAGGS, Stoke on Trent, England. Grim Wades, c. 1930. (Gould coll.)



Left: Conch Shells, smaller one is impressed FELANI. (Denton coll.)



A fish in a basket, a fish and a dolphin. (Denton coll.)



Scallop Shells, the one on the right is marked Minton. (Denton coll.)



This 3" ironstone butter mold was published in Vol. 3, No. 2. We thought it was a good opportunity to revive it. (Gosselin/Vasseur)

This piece of information from Mrs. Beeton's *Book of Household Management*, c. 1900, is relevant to the butter mold at left:

Round ceramic butter moulds or wooden stamps are much used and are made in a variety of patterns. Before the butter is pressed in the moulds, they should be scalded and afterwards well soaked in cold water. The butter at once takes the impress of the mould, and therefore may be turned out immediately on to the butter dish. In hot weather a little ice should be place under the butter dish. (Covered) Dishes with a double bottom (liner) are constructed for this.

We had often wondered why there were liners in the butter dishes, we now know thanks to Mrs. Beeton.



Four Crawfish and shells, 7" wide by 6" long by 4 3/8" deep. Registry No. 430208, Shelly. (Gould coll.)