

# WHITE IRONSTONE NOTES

VOL. 10 No. 4



SPRING 2004



## MUGS AND EGG CUPS

To acknowledge and greet the Spring we have chosen one of its symbols, the egg, and the white ironstone china made especially for serving. Above is a set of six double egg cups with decorated Easter eggs. The cups are not marked, but probably are American. The easily found cups could hold a single egg or, inverted, could hold one or two eggs in the larger end. When we were too young to eat boiled eggs from the shell, our grandmothers and mothers would scoop out the egg, putting it in the larger end. We did the same for our children --sometimes adding small pieces of bread stirred in with a bit of salt. Even after

developing the skill to peel the top off a boiled egg, it is still a favorite way to eat one. There was something about an object with a choice of two ends that pleased our child mind. We much preferred them to the single egg cup (see pg 5) which was only for eating out of the shell. There is also a Boston egg cup (see pg 6), wide open and on a short stable raised foot from which some served similar fare. But we used ours for ice cream and pudding. Some egg cups were designed to be carried to the table in a stand. Early egg cup stands were the center section of a breakfast set which sometimes had (continued on page 4)

## EGG SERVERS

(continued from page 1) matching toast racks. We have never seen a white ironstone breakfast set but a few beautiful rare examples of stands have been found (see below). Egg cup stands have a pedestal which supports a tray usually with holes for six cups. They also have a post with a ring handle. The one at the top of this page also has two little holes for spoons. Some stands were called egg holders and probably

didn't have cups. Egg coddlers or poachers were made of ironstone cups with screw tops. The one shown (See Pg. 7) has a wire holder that allows it to be immersed in boiling water as well as carried to the table. Many of these egg related ironstone pieces are rare. Only a few egg cups with shape names have been found with a pattern. We believe since they are so rare that they were special order pieces.



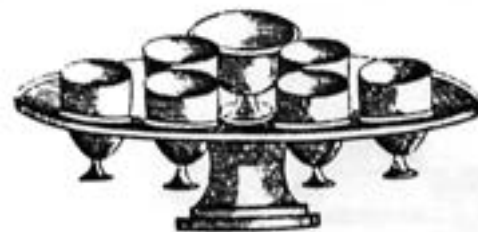
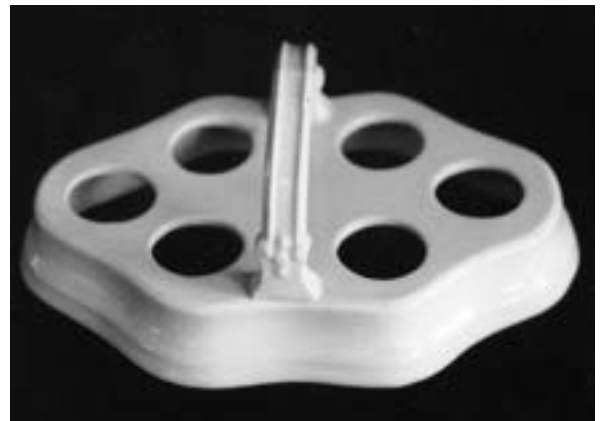
Above: This egg stand holds six eggs and also has two smaller holes for spoons. There were possibly six individual cups that fit in each hole, 5-1/2" by 9-3/4" diameter. (Nielsen photo & coll.)



Above right: Another 6-egg holder that probably did not have cups because there is no evidence of rim wear. (Scrimjeour coll, John Ladd photo)

Below: A three-egg server with its original cups. (Allers coll.)

Right: A six-egg server that probably didn't have individual cups because of its shallow profile.



*Egg Stand 6 Cups.*

Illustration of an egg carrier or stand found in "The Wedgwood 1880 Illustrated Catalogue of Shapes." It has six cups and a larger one in the center. We wonder what that was for?

# EGG SERVERS



**Ceres Shape** by Elsmore & Forster.



**Wheat** by unknown potter.



**Prairie Shape**, Livesley Powell & Co. (Hitt coll.)



We believe this is **St. Louis Shape**. (Stockglausner coll.)



**Full Ribbed** by Pankhurst. (Moreland coll.)



**Reeded shape**.



**Fluted shape**.



**Fluted egg cup**. (Gosselin/Vasseur photo & coll.)



**Divided Gothic**. (Dieringer coll.)



**Early Gothic**. (Overmeyer coll.)



**10-Sided Gothic**.



**12-Sided Gothic** with Pysanka decorated egg. (Moreland coll.)



**Balanced Vine** by Clementson Bros. (Moreland coll.)



**Berlin Swirl** egg cup. Shorter version of the syllabub cup. (Hitt photo & coll.)



This small egg cup is somewhat like an urn.



Alternate Panel & Rib shape.



Large plain egg cup, 3" high by 3-1/2" wide, unmarked. (Internet)



Egg cup 3" high by 3 1/4" wide. (Internet)



Pair of high pedestaled egg cups, 2 1/2" high. (Gosselin/Vasseur photo & coll.)



Double ended egg cups with decorated Easter eggs. You could turn the cups over and scoop out a soft boiled egg to season. (Dieringer coll.)  
*These common, versatile cups can be found in most antique malls and shops.*



**Cameo** egg cup with an example of the cameo face from a companion sugar bowl. Age unknown. (Internet)



Boston egg cup 3 1/2" diameter. Usually seen with lustre decoration, this is an 1880s item. (Annablis photo & coll.)



**Wheat** double egg cup. Mark at the bottom of the small end is Made in England, probably by Adams. (Internet)



**Beaded Swirl.** (Internet)



**4-Rib Band** 3 3/4" high, probably c. 1930s. Probably Hall China.



Three items with hen and chick themes.

Left: Hen on nest clearly showing the eggs on which she's sitting. Many of us liked to put our decorated eggs in this chicken base.

Below: Hen-shaped egg cup, 2 1/2" high. (Allers coll.)

Right: Hen-shaped egg cup found on the Internet. Probably 20th Century.



Vase-shaped egg cup, 2 1/2" high. (Gosselin/Vasseur photo & coll.)



Elegant egg cup. (Nielsen photo & coll.)



We included this ironstone Rabbit food mold to represent the other of spring icon.



Egg coddler with screw-on lids. The metal holder allowed four eggs to be immersed in boiling water, and then be easily carried for serving from the opened cup.