

MALING

COLLECTORS' SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Issue 10 March 2001

Clock tower restored



Those of you who have visited the pottery site on our collectors' days will recognise this landmark as the clock tower and works manager's office. You can just see the tiny window on the left of the picture from where the works manager was able to see the entrance gate and any late workers!

The clock and date plaque have recently been restored as part of an ongoing maintenance programme carried out by Hoult's Estates. The original mechanism still exists but, as it needs to be wound once a week, an electric system has been installed to drive the clock.

Museum to follow

A joint venture between Maling Collectors' Society patron, Fred Hoult and chairman Steven Moore will see a Maling museum established at the former pottery. Plans are still in their infancy but in the years to come it is hoped to establish a museum worthy of Maling's unique place in history.

At the moment there are no suitable unoccupied premises at the former pottery site, so a display might not be an option yet, but it will happen as soon as somewhere becomes free. Steven Moore said; "I think it is more important to start to acquire Maling to form a collection, than to display it for now. Once a site comes free the museum will have a great show to put on. It's possible that a 'virtual museum' might be opened on the Internet to allow anyone to see the entire collection anywhere in the world.

Steven has always felt that the Maling story deserved to be told to a wider audience and a Maling museum has been a long-term ambition. As a first step the collections of both Fred Hoult and Steven will be catalogued together as one core collection to be known as the "CT Maling & Sons Collection." A modest budget has been set up to help with acquisitions.

"Between us we have a good 'core' of a museum collection, but we need to fill in the gaps to form a representative collection of all areas of Maling production."



See page 7

COLLECTORS' DAY

The next collectors' day will be Saturday 28th April.
As usual, the venue will be the Laing Art Gallery in Newcastle.

This date fits in with Steven, Ruth and David's work commitments and avoids cup finals, bank holidays and major fairs - so we trust it's OK with you.

We hope to have Doug and Vi Spearman back casting pots on the former pottery site, and possibly a Maling mould maker to tell us how the moulds were made in the first place. To cover the costs of room hire, coach, catering, etc, admission is £15 a head for members and their guests. Please send cheques made payable to the society to the PO Box (address on back page).



What remains of Maling's pattern archive has been recovered from the former factory site in Newcastle. The original archive was housed in two buildings at the top of the yard but was set on fire by vandals not long after the pottery closed. What survived was put up in an attic and forgotten until recently, when it was removed and placed in secure storage.

This has given Steven the opportunity to begin to go through everything and start the long task of cleaning and cataloguing.

Don't get too excited! What was once thousands of moulds, samples and glazed white ware of everything the pottery ever produced has been reduced to just a few hundred survivors. However, the odd thing is proving interesting. Beginning with this issue we intend to begin a new feature which will look at anything of interest as it emerges.

1 Get a grip

If someone were to tell you that this little Maling jug was not meant to have a handle you might not believe them, yet here is proof that Maling did make a jug without a handle. But why?

This is an unglazed "biscuit" shape sample, one of those rescued from the attic of the former factory site early last year. When I discovered it I thought it was strange that it had no handle, but after cleaning it and finding the date all became clear.

The date reads "8/1/40" so this was a wartime product. Removing the handle would save both clay and production costs - vital in wartime. Probably made for use by a British restaurant, the name is too rubbed to read. It looks like the "TANKARD" shape, but without the lip (possibly another money saver.)

This jug will almost certainly have only been made in white ware, so let us know if you have one glazed!



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2 Gypsy or Angus Wilson?

This is the familiar "GYPSY" bowl that some of you will no doubt have an example of, or will have seen in the 1926 catalogue, but here is the original shape sample which bears the inscription "16/1/26 Grape Fruit holder Angus Wilson Also called Gypsy bowl"

So here Maling poses us a dilemma, when is it an "Angus Wilson Grape Fruit" and when a "Gypsy bowl"?

3 Pocket, vase or bowl?

This is the flower block (or frog) for the "MECCA" or "CAIRO" wall bowl, clearly inscribed "No 2 Flower Block to fit Mecca or Cairo wall bowl 26/3/37". So now we know that what we were calling wall pockets, Maling called "wall bowls."

An illustration of the "CAIRO" wall bowl appears in the Pottery Gazette early in 1940 where it is described as a "wall vase". It is a tapered "vase" with four graduated disks either side. Although I don't yet know, I would think that

"MECCA" is a round version with the same disks, but four at the top and four at the bottom on the opposite side. If you have a suspected "CAIRO" or "MECCA" wall bowl, bring it to the next collectors' day and we can see if the flower block fits!

4 Wicka's world.

Norman Carling's name is well known as one of Maling's most innovative designers, whose work is much admired by collectors. His ranges such as "FLIGHT", "BAMBOLA" and "BLOSSOM TIME" are familiar, but has anyone seen an example of "WICKA"?

This cover has recently been rediscovered in the factory archive and, as far as I am aware, is the only example. Obviously it's part of a whole range of shapes, but where in the world are all the examples of "WICKA"? The only surviving list of Maling moulds does mention a "Wicker (sic) vase", but I can find no reference to it anywhere else. It is not mentioned in the Pottery Gazette as Carling's other designs are. So if any members have pieces of Maling pottery that look like woven basket work, let us know.

Oddities & Rarities

In this series of articles, we'll try to bring you information about pieces which you may not have come across before.

It just takes three little words to transform this "DAISY" plaque from the ordinary to the extraordinary. Made in 1938, probably for the refurbished London Showrooms, it is of a type previously unrecorded.

All potteries produced advertising pieces for retailers and their own showrooms, but Maling ones are so rare that they almost don't exist.

Examining a photograph of the boardroom at the Ford Pottery, standard plaques with the words "Maling Art Ware" replacing the centre of the design can be seen, but I have never seen one 'in the flesh.'

This plaque was probably produced for a special display of Lustre ware connected to an advertising campaign promoting Maling lustre pieces. The freehand wording would be painted by Lucien Boullemier, whilst the main "DAISY" design by Annie Fenton, the chief painter at the time. Her mark is on the back.

We know that Norman Carling produced a free-standing plaque, based on a swagged curtain bearing the words "Maling Lustre Ware" and the castle trademark, but again none of these have come to light.

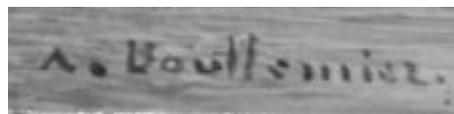
The discovery of this plaque brings a little more Maling history to life, especially as it is something that Maling used themselves to promote our favourite pottery. - *Steven*



This is, as you might say, a "tall tale" with Maling connections. From an unknown e-mailer in Canada we received this image of a tile with a request for information.

Obviously, it depicts Gulliver captured by the Lilliputians in "Gulliver's Travels". The interesting thing is the signature which, as you can see from the photo is "A Boullemier".

It has to be a work by Antonin Boullemier, father of LEB. But when, where or why it was made, we don't know.



Society matters

1 Renewals

Membership continues to run at around the 200 mark. When your subscription is due for renewal, you'll receive a note with your newsletter. We'd appreciate prompt renewals. Under UK data protection laws, we must remove your details from the computer within a "reasonable time" if we don't hear from you. That may mean that we have to inconvenience late payers by asking for their details again.

2 Still solvent

The accounts for year 2 have been audited and passed by the Inland Revenue. The bottom line is that we're still solvent and will be carrying on in year 3. You are of course welcome (and entitled) to see a summary of the accounts, if you wish.

3 Website & newsletters

For those of you with Internet access (about 40 per cent of members) we are posting highlights of past newsletters on the site. You need a password, so please e-mail if you don't know what it is. Sorry to non 'Net users, but we haven't got back copies of newsletters available. As always, we appreciate your articles, comments or snippets of news to help make up the 5,000 words we aim for in each newsletter.

maling commemoratives

2 Edward VII

First a clarification of a point in my previous article on Queen Victoria. If you didn't spot the significance of the "Osborne" border, I should have pointed out that Osborne House was the Queen's favoured retreat on the Isle of Wight, following the death of Prince Albert.

For the coronation of Edward VII in 1902, Maling seem to have reverted to single colour transfers for their commemorative mugs. The one on the left is most commonly found. Interestingly, this straight-sided mug was produced for the city of Edinburgh and, in addition to a CTM triangle mark, bears the words "John Ford & Co, the King's manufacturers" on the base.

John Ford was, of course, the name of CT Maling's father in law - a prominent Edinburgh glass manufacturer - and the two Ford potteries were named after his daughter, and CTM's wife, Mary.

Although that particular John Ford was long-dead by this time, was there still a branch of the Ford family in business in Edinburgh, and still some sort of connection between them and the Malings? (It's not unknown for retailers to claim to be the "manufacturer" of items which clearly weren't made by them. It happens quite a lot with furniture, for example.)

Alternatively, as I don't usually expect the Scottish people to get too excited about a coronation in London, were Maling drawing attention to their Edinburgh connection in order to make these souvenirs more acceptable to the citizens? Once again, we just don't know!

By now, you should be familiar with the barrel shaped mug, and you'll find the "standard" transfer on this shape as well. However, the transfer shown on this example is considerably rarer, and depicts the King and Queen on the front, and the Prince and Princesses of Wales on the back, with the inscription "Marlborough House". These particular mugs were made for Harrods in London and, as such, are a tribute to the quality of Maling's output. (Of course, the link between Maling and Harrods was to be further strengthened by the introduction of Cetem Ware a few years later.)

The transfer on this particular example is in orange, though I have been told that other colours exist.

Something to look out for, if you are collecting Maling (and other) commemorative wares, is the date on Edward VII coronation pieces. Some say that the coronation was held in June, 1902,

while others say it was August of that year! What's going on?

Well, the King wasn't crowned twice. However, he went down with appendicitis shortly before the proposed coronation, so the date was shifted back by a couple of months to allow him time to recover.

Because most potteries were producing their coronation souvenirs well in advance of the event, it's estimated that around 90 per cent of all Edward VII pieces have the "wrong" date. Expect to find "right" dated pieces going for a higher price than "wrong" ones.

This can be seen most clearly on the plates which Maling produced for the city of Leeds. We know, from the inscription, that 80,000 of these were presented to the children of the city by the Lord Mayor. Most have the "wrong" date on the front. Some have the "wrong" date and a hastily-applied transfer on the back which explains: "Coronation postponed owing to the sudden illness of His Majesty". And, finally, you'll find some which have an amended transfer which has the "right" date of the coronation on the front.

I've not yet come across a "right" dated Maling mug for Edward VII, but I dare say one of you may be able to help me out!





Unlike the mugs, the Leeds plates have a colour transfer. They also have an aerographed (i.e. spray painted) coloured border. I know of examples in blue, green, purple and pink but, again, other colours may exist somewhere out there.

The significance of aerography is that it was this technique which allowed the production of the famous "black ground" Cetem wares a few years later. A biscuit fired piece was decorated, and the decoration then overpainted with a masking fluid which was either water soluble or volatile (so that it would burn off when the piece received its second firing).

Then the piece was sprayed all over in black (or another colour). After the second firing, the piece either emerged from the kiln with the masking fluid burnt off, or else it was scrubbed vigorously to reveal the decoration underneath. As former paintress Florrie Moore (then in her 90s) recollected: "I never realised that we made so much black ware. When we were finished with the ware it was white, but it then went 'downstairs' to the stencillers, and they added the coloured grounds."

Next you'll see something very similar to the Leeds plate, but with all reference to the city of Leeds removed. Maling surely wouldn't have "pinched" someone else's transfer an adapted it for their own purposes... or would they? We'll look into that rather sensitive matter next time! -

David

Footnote. I guess this belongs on the "Put Pen To Paper" page, but it will do as well here. Some of you may be wondering why, when there is so much wonderful decorative Maling ware, should I keep inflicting my commemorative stories on you? Well, you can blame Edward VII.

I've collected Maling for a long time - and not just commem! Some years ago I was at a rather "thin" fair and was about to walk out of the door empty-handed, when I spotted an Edward VII coronation mug. I knew nothing about commemoratives - whether Maling or not - but it was less than £20 (ah, those were the days!) and I reckoned I could pass this piece on at a small profit to help pay for my petrol and admission fee.

When I got the mug home, I had a staggeringly stupid idea. There had only been six monarchs in the last hundred years, from Victoria to our present Queen. One down, and five to go. Then I'd have a small collection which would sit on a single shelf and be an interesting talking point.

Of course, as you'll have realised from the last article, it's never that simple. Different transfers, colours, body shapes, etc. Like a child who's been given the key to a sweet shop, I found I couldn't resist having "just one more".

I've picked up the vast majority of the pieces very cheaply, and I have to admit that many of them wouldn't thrill the average collector. However, there are also several "jewels in the crown" and this series of articles does, I hope, provide a few points of interest for other Maling lovers.

News of the 'Net

Buy maiden aunts now... there's a world shortage! That, at least, is my deduction from the past few months' e-mail.

Not a week goes by without me receiving a message from a non-member. They have invariably "just inherited a wonderful piece of Maling from a dear aunt.". They go on to ask about identification of this beloved piece and casually end by asking what it may be worth.

I may be a cynic, but my experience is that 99 per cent of these people are cheapskates who are after a free valuation before they float their "beloved" piece on eBay for top dollar. Rest assured, our valuation service is for members only and these people receive a non-committal and only vaguely informative answer.

And what about this helpful query posted on the message board of the website?



'I have a footed bowl approx 8 ins diameter. The only way I can describe it is, it is very heavy, oriental in pattern with a pagoda and flowers, inside and outside of bowl, handpainted with a deep cobalt/pinkish/light blue/green/orange-brownish colouring, rusty colour around rim of bowl - the footed part is also patterned. The blue tends to give a similar look to flow blue. It has a red 3524 painted on base, and an M in blue. Could this bowl be Maling?'

Helpful, or what? Are you sure there's no semi-turquoise with a hint of reddish-grey in there as well? Taking pity on this poor unfortunate, I eventually elicited a photograph. Conclusion? Not Maling - possibly Masons.

Next, my thanks to the Italian gentleman who offered to sell the society his collection of rare African stamps. Does anyone know the Italian for: "Sorry, signor, but we're interested in items related to Maling, not mailing"?

And finally the best bit of 'Net nonsense for quite a while. Did anyone spot the piece of "Venetian Scenes" on eBay and described as "showing a view of Newcastle? - David

MORE FREE OFFERS!

DMG Antiques Fairs have kindly agreed to extend their 2-for-1 admission offer throughout 2001. This applies to Ardingly, Detling, Shepton Mallet and Newark (where you could save yourself your annual membership fee of £20 by taking up the offer on a Monday).

If you still have a December newsletter, photocopy the form on page 8, fill in the fairs and dates you are interested in, and send the form to DMG. Otherwise, write to Mike Turner at DMG Antiques Fairs, PO Box 100, Newark, Notts NG24 1DJ. (Remember, this offer is for two people attending for the price of one. It doesn't allow half price entry for one person.)

Bowman Fairs are repeating their 2-for-1 offer for Stafford in June and August. UK members will receive a ticket with this newsletter.

More pattern perplexity

Another note about pattern names and the occasional difficulty in attributing them. Some names might have been given as “nicknames” by the workers within the factory and may never have been made public.

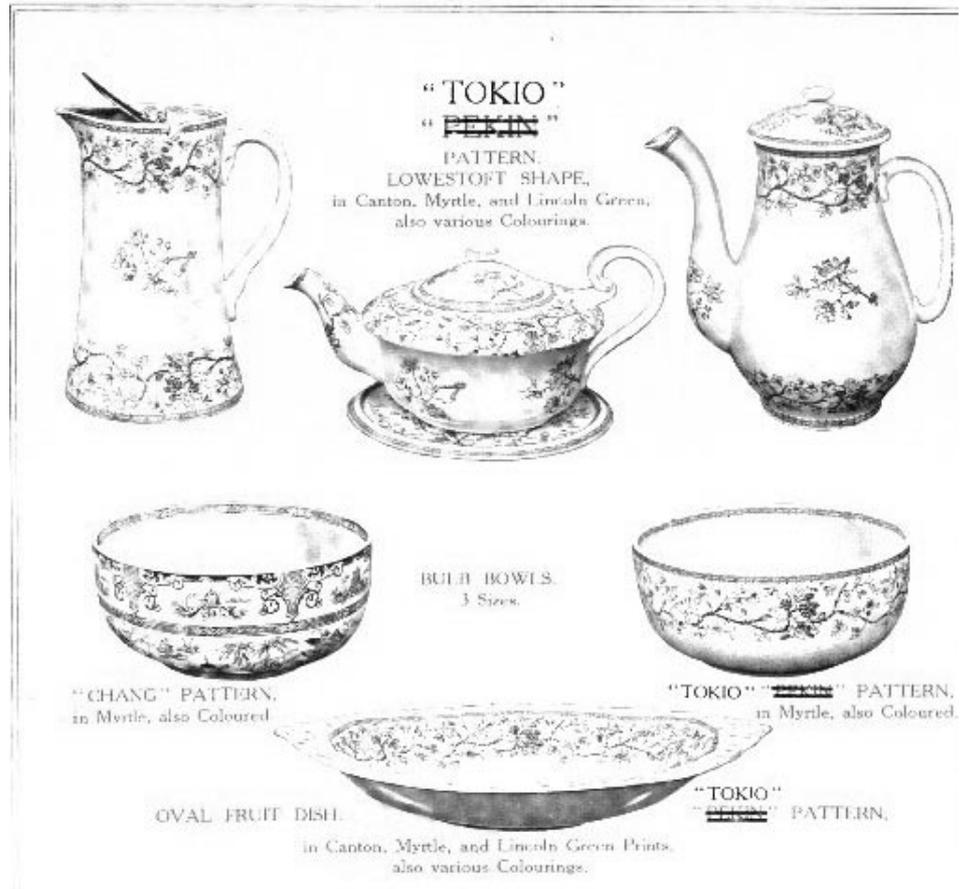
Sometimes these nicknames became established within the factory before a pattern had been officially named. This wasn't exclusive to Maling. When the “lost” moulds were rescued from Weatherbys, Chris Weatherby said that exactly the same thing happened there.

As an example, the pattern which was officially known as “Ming & Chang” was known within the Maling factory as Pitman's Derby (a somewhat derogatory term, suggesting a cheap and cheerful imitation of “posh” china which the local mineworkers couldn't afford to buy!)

Even when a pattern had an “official” name, there could be problems! Here is the advert for the “Pekin/Tokio” pattern. Steven recalls Les Dixon telling him that they named it Pekin first, but then found out a competitor had named a similar design the same, so it was renamed Tokio.

Add to this the problem of pieces having the wrong pattern number painted on them, or that you sometimes get a name or a number, but rarely both, and you can see why it isn't always easy to make a certain attribution.

C. T. MALING & SONS, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.



The other picture shows a trefoil serving dish in the Tokio pattern. It has an impressed CETEM mark and a date of 3.09 (for March 1909). It's numbered 8291, but there's no name on it, so without the pattern card we just wouldn't know what it was called.



Put Pen to Paper

Dave Neville writes:

Last March I wrote about my mild obsession with Petunia pattern, and that I was one piece short of a full set (yes- you can take that whichever way you want). Well at Donington in September I achieved my ambition at a good price thanks to a dealer from Scotland new to me.

That meant that my recurring nightmare didn't come true. You see all the dealers I knew were on the lookout for the elusive vase and I had this scary vision that they'd be at the same auction bidding against each other because they all had a customer - me! So that's the collection complete - I think.

There remains the nagging doubt that there could still be unknown pieces. And my example of the rare Swan jug has a crack, so I'm still keeping my eyes open for one without damage.

Last trip to Donington I bought my cheapest ever Maling piece. There wasn't a great deal on sale - even Blossom Time was in short supply - but in a box of “junk” under a table was a filthy pink Voluta jardiniere. The box was marked “Each Item £1.” OK, the base had been slightly repaired, but with a bit of cleaning and careful removal of excess Evostik the piece was transformed. And on display with its “bad side” against the back of the cabinet, it's the best £1 investment I've made in a long while.

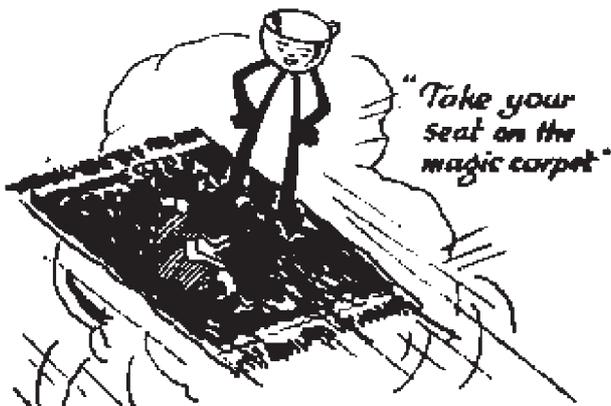
Craig Weeks writes:

Several years ago my son and I were diving in a lake in a very rural part of the state of Maine (USA) and my son found a Keiller Marmalade jar in the mud on the bottom of the lake. The lake was the site of some rustic vacation homes belonging to a group of Scottish origin Presbyterian ministers in the early part of the century. As you say, Maling's products found their way all over the world.

Continued on page 7

“My adventures with the Genii of the Tea-cup”

“**C**OME and have a Cup of Tea!!!”
Quite an ordinary remark but made by an extraordinary person... a quaint little man with a teacup for a head.
“Where did you come from?” I asked feeling a wee bit nervous.
“That’s a long story,” replied the Genii of the Teacup. “I have had so many lurid experiences, and been in so many hot corners during my evolution from the raw materials.”
“But,” he added, “should you like to know how I was made? - it’s a very interesting story.”
“Oh! I should love to,” I said. “Come along then,” said he, “but let me introduce myself. I am a Tyneside Cup and bear the magic words - ‘Made by Maling’ - which stand for Pottery Perfection since 1762.”



“Give me your hand and close your eyes while I summon my magic carpet - then off we’ll go to the Pottery - you must have heard of Maling’s - it is one of England’s largest Potteries.”
“Come - take your seat on the Magic Carpet - don’t be afraid of falling off.”

Made by Maling - stands for

“**SEE,**” said the Genii, as we rushed through space, “we are just over Grey’s monument - there in the distance is the Cathedral - and there is the new Tyne Bridge - we have not far to go now. Steady! We are just settling, don’t get too excited - ah, here we are!” “What a huge block of buildings,” I observed. “Rather, but don’t be nervous, I know my way about,” he assured me. “Do you see those large heaps of stones and clay - not very pretty, are they? But wait!”

“These large heaps are what might be called My beginnings. This one is Ball Clay from Devon - that one is China Clay from Cornwall, this is Cornish Stone and that Flints.”

“These raw materials,” he continued, “are all treated separately, the Flints being calcined in this huge Lime Kiln into which they go just as you see them. When they come out they are chalk white and very brittle. Then they are put in pans and ground to a fine powder, just like flour, ready for use.” “All the clays and flints are then mixed up in a special way by men and machines into a slop state called ‘Slip’, which is passed through several very fine Lawns to free it from all impurities.”



pottery perfection since 1762

Put Pen to Paper

Continued from page 8
Marcel Goulding writes:

I was very interested to read about paintress Margaret Dixon trying to find some of her work. I have two items painted by her. One of them is a Harlequin Vase (impressed vase shape number 144). People always comment on it as it is quite stunning to look at. The paintwork is fabulous and the item has aged exceptionally well.

Elizabeth Morton writes:

My first piece of Maling was bought way back in 1971 from an Oxfam Shop in Dumfries. Why did I buy it? I was just married and looking for bits and pieces to decorate my new home. The article I bought was in the window with a heap of second hand clothes and books. I thought: “what a pretty plate”. It was the large, pink “Springtime” plate (6525), priced at 75p and in superb condition! My mother had a small, pink Springtime dish which she immediately gave me to match up, and I have been collecting ever since! Now I have 100 pieces in my collection.

We have already had “Life of a pottery girl!” written by Marion Robinson - former Maling paintress and star of our collectors’ days. Now we bring you a ‘new’ Maling serial. This time written by none other than Fred Maling in 1929. When interviewed in 1998, Derek Maling, FT’s son, told me that his father had written this booklet to be given out at the pottery’s stand at the North East Coast Exhibition. More in the next newsletter. - Steven



Q Can you please give me some information on two pieces? The first one is a boot. It has a copper lustre body with yellow inside and an impressed number 7 on the heel and is approx 6in. The next one, I think, is a moon flask. It has no marks on it but the feet are the same as the one in Steven's book and I can not find the pattern. It is blue and white with willow pattern in the circles and has blossoms on one side and a bird and an insect on the other.

A In the Maling mould list the boot is described as "OLD BOOT OR SHOE". It is a Norman Carling model of the late 30's, but this example is a sample from circa 1960. The flask looks right, and the pattern is "WILLOW" of circa 1900.



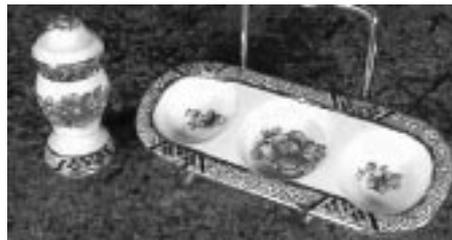
Q Via e-mail from the Caribbean: Recently at a friend's house I noticed a piece of porcelain on a display stand. It was the base of a bowl which had the mark 'MALING WARE 1944' with 'GR' which we assumed to be the mark of King George VI. It was found on a beach known for broken glass and pottery from shipwrecks. Although it could not be of any value, any ideas on its origin?

A During the war, a lot of Maling's output was white wares for the armed forces - canteens, hospitals, etc. It's quite conceivable that this came off a sunken British warship or, if there are no records of one being sunk in the

area, the less dramatic guess is that the bowl just got broken and was thrown overboard as rubbish.



Q I really don't have a clue what this is. It's sort of a part cruet and part egg-cup, I think. I've tried sitting eggs in the side bits, but they don't co-operate. The pepper shaker won't fit in the outside bits, and by the look of things nothing ever has. Could it be a 'loose salt, and pepper cruet'?



A Good guess! The two indentations left and right are, indeed, open salts and the other bit is, as you say, a pepper shaker.

Q I am currently living in Tonga. I have been collecting Maling for a number of years and on a recent trip to New Zealand, I bought a Bowl approx 230mm across in Blue Thumbprint with a border of Grapes. The marks on the bottom read: "Meaders Ltd, Boscombe" 5917 and it looks like a V as the painter's mark. I'm sure it's Maling because I have a small bowl with the exact pattern and it has a Maling mark on the bottom circa 1932. Can you please tell me anything about this strange mark.?

A Sounds like a retailer's mark. If we have any members living near Boscombe, perhaps you could research this store for us?



Win a piece of Maling

At the next collectors' day we'll be raffling a piece of Maling. We won't tell you what it is, but we guarantee that it's marked and in good condition.

Tickets will be £1 each and members who attend the collectors' day will have the chance to buy "on the spot". If you can't attend, but would like to take part, just send payment of £1 per ticket to the usual address (see below).

As our overseas members don't have much chance of attending the collectors' days, we thought we'd give them a head start. Every overseas member gets one free entry to the raffle. Whoever wins, we'll pay the postage as part of the prize.

The prize this time is of fairly modest value, but around 70 years old. We'll up the stakes next time if more people are interested.



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www.maling-pottery.org.uk

Chairman: Steven Moore
Secretary: David Holmes
Patrons: Roger Allan,
Tony Boullemier, Fred Hoult,
Caroline Kirkhope,
Dr John Maling

Membership:
£20 p.a. (UK),
£25 p.a. (overseas)