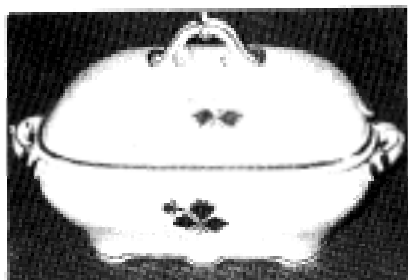


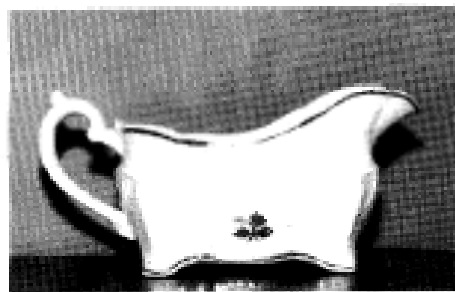
In 1879, Arthur J. Wilkinson began his Tea Leaf potting business in Burslem. Of the several body styles he molded and decorated, one has a beautiful botanical embossment. Annise Heavilin referred to specific pieces as ornate, fancy and “a real beauty,” but the body style remained unnamed.



Above left: Maidenhair Fern from *The World Book of House Plants* by Elvin McDonald; right: sketch of embossing on Gayley Hautzenroeder soup tureen lid; below LtoR: A. J. Wilkinson’s “Maidenhair Fern” soup tureen from collection of Gayley Hautzenroeder. (This tureen belonged to Gayley’s Grandmother.); “Maidenhair Fern” collection of Tom Chadwick which includes covered vegetables-rectangular and square, gravy, sugar bowl, and very likely, the service tray for Gayley’s soup tureen; Jane W. Bleck’s “Maidenhair Fern” teapot with cleanest embossment at base of spout.

A recent, temporary name of “Scrolled Acanthus” was suggested, but at the Great Lakes Regional hosted by Lou and Dwayne Burhans in May 1992, Gayley Hautzenroeder brought the most beautifully embossed soup tureen for “show and tell.” As soon as I saw it and the lovely expanse of embossment on the lid, I could positively identify the botanical plant as being a Maidenhair fern or *Adiantum tenerum wrightii*. What a thrill!! I’ve seen and even owned some of these Wilkinson pieces but did not examine the embossment closely enough to recognize that delicate, lacy fern.

What an attest to what we still must learn through study and observation....So may I make a proposal that Arthur J. Wilkinson’s botanically embossed body style be properly named Maidenhair Fern? The Maidenhair fern that I refer to is a tender house plant and is available in the larger greenhouses or from good catalog sources.



Left: Campanula, Bellflower from *White Flower Farm*; center: W.&E. Corn Bellflower (*Campanula*)^{gravy} Tom Chadwick collection; right: close up sketch of “Bellflower (*Campanula*) embossment,” Chadwick^{gravy}

And yet another lovely botanically. embossed body style has surfaced recently from the Campanula family, the BELLFLOWER. The potter is W.&B. Corn. The bellflowers, in the botanical field, include an important group of garden plants, over two dozen of its 300 known species being in common cultivation for their beautiful bell-shaped flowers.

Just which one modeled for W.&E. Corn is difficult to determine since their number is so great and many are named for their color and growth patterns. It is said that no garden plants offer such a variety of blue color as the bellflowers, though there are white varieties just like the ones in the Corn embossment.