

Vincent Butter Mold

This is a photo of a butter mold we had in our home where I grew up from the time I was near 2 years old. The home was located on Hardy Road in Hueytown, Alabama.



My Aunt Evelyn (daddy's sister) and Uncle John lived next door. Both our families owned a milk cow. We had ample milk until I was 10 years old when we got rid of the cows. Mother would churn butter, drain it overnight and press it into this mold for us to eat. We also had plenty to give away. My brother Rick often gave some to his teacher, Mrs. Flynn. By the time I had her for my sixth-grade teacher, the cows were gone. I had to tell her there would be no more butter from the Vincent family.



Milk would have to be clabbered before you could churn it. Mother would pour fresh milk into the churn, cover it with a cloth, and leave it overnight to clabber. This separated the "curds and whey" (solids and liquids). The yellow butter would float to the top. I remember the mold would make this flower design in the top of every little round cake of butter. The mold is designed with the top more narrow than the bottom so the butter will slide out easily. Before mother could use the spatula to press the butter into the mold she would have to press, blot, or squeeze out the last bits of whey from the butter left from the churning process.

One day the wooden handle broke. Daddy took the mold to U.S. Steel where he worked in maintenance as a millwright. He fashioned a near duplicate of the wooden handle out of a piece of brass. The only difference was the wooden handle was a bit fatter at the base where it threaded into the mold. Dad ground off the wooden threads and inserted a threaded brass nut into the mold to hold the handle. Over the years, the mold has split but it once was solid.



This butter mold reminds me of the years when I was a child how I enjoyed all the fresh milk and butter I ever wanted. After we got rid of the milk cows it was an adjustment sometimes having to wait until my parents bought milk. I loved milk and was impatient. For this reason I made up my mind that when my own children were growing up I would never let them experience a time when they "ran out of milk."

-- Ronald E. Vincent (1947-)