



Bird with Berry Individual Salt

The following article is the result of a collaborative effort of research, pictures and input from the following opensalt.us "Message Board" contributors: Judy Chisum, Joan Feasler, Linda Houser, Janelle Jefferson, Mary Kern, Jane Koble and Debi Raitz.



A Tail of Two Birdies

By Joan Feasler

From the time I first started collecting open salts these cute little "Bird with Berry" ("aka" Bird with Seed & Bird with Cherry) individual size open salts just seemed to "tickle my fancy". It may be because I love gardening and along with lots of flowers, plants and trees my husband and I always make sure to include multiple bird feeders, and a bird bath or two, for our fine feathered friends. We enjoy seeing the different species of birds that are attracted to our backyard and take up residence in the environment we've created.

As such, I started off my "Bird with Berry" collection with a pretty red and gold glass one, later to find the glass color was called "amberina", because it reminded me of a mother cardinal that had built a nest in one of our pine trees. We always have at least one pair of blue jays that visit each year, so two blue glass birds were soon to follow. Those pretty little gold finches needed to be represented, so a vaseline and an amber colored bird was a must (Figure 1). Before I knew it, my little bird collection had grown into a large "flock" that had now taken over a full shelf in one of my curio cabinets. While collecting them I noticed some slight differences in the amount of detail on the "tails of two birds" and set out to see if anyone else had researched these charming little creatures. I soon found that over the years Ed Berg had written "Salty Comments" about the "Bird with Seed" open salts. And Ed Bowman had researched and documented the "newer" versions. So, I was off to my computer to compile a list of the birds I had acquired thus far, take

pictures, make some research notes of my own and establish a "wish list" of the known versions I seemed to be missing. As the hunt for my missing birds continued so did my enthusiasm to keep detailed records of the subtle differences of each bird. I was now down to only two birds left on my "must have" wish list...or so I thought! And as things happen in life, my extensive "Bird with Berry" collection, that was once the center of my attention, now sat lonely waiting for someone to take interest in them once more.

And then one day it happened!! Mary posted a question on the message board that would finally cause my long-awaited Bird with Berry collection to become meaningful once again. "Does anyone have a

Degenhart book showing the production of the Bird with Berry? Oh...and the time to look something up for me? Thanks!" Could it be possible? Does someone else share my passion for these darling little bird salts? I was excited!

No one seemed to have the Degenhart book at the time, but Judy, Debi and I, sensing that Mary needed help identifying a Bird with Berry salt, reacted quickly. I referred her to the Berg and Bowman research sites, Debi posted pictures of two versions of the birds that she had in her collection (blue of course), and Judy supplied copious research notes on a variety of companies that made the bird. But to our surprise what came next was unexpected - to say the least!

Mary posted a picture of a small green bird (Figure 2) and stated: "He has the Degenhart mark...he has no protruding wings...saw the base was askew and I began to wonder if he was a mistake". Well, the word "mistake" didn't quite rise to the level of



Figure 1 Joan's first five "Bird with Berry" open salts



Figure 2 Mary's Degenhart "error/sample" bird.

what we were viewing. Needless to say, Mary's newly found salt was strictly "for the birds!" We would later find out that it was most likely an error of some serious mold underfill or a sample salt that had somehow "flown the coop".

But the door was now open, and I had no intention of letting it slam shut before I found out all I could about these adorable birds, along with how many ver-

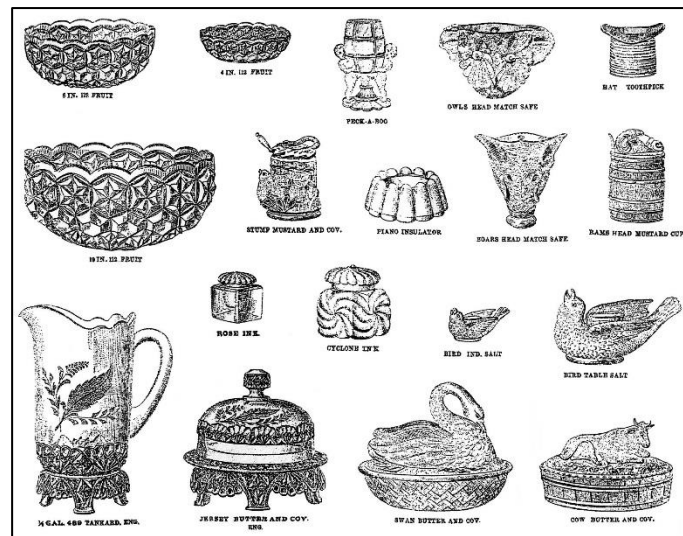


Figure 3 McKee Glass Company 1890 catalog page shows individual & table "Bird without Berry" salts.



Figure 4 Joan's McKee individual & table "Bird with Berry" salts in Vaseline.

sions my fellow salt collectors had in their collections.

And so, just like "Birds of a Feather Flock Together" the information sharing began, and we were well on our way to identifying some of the unique features of each of the birds and the companies that made them.

Companies That Made the "individual" Bird and Berry Salts

We know of four American companies that made at least one version of the "individual" size Bird with Berry open salt. They are McKee, Degenhart, Kanawha and Boyd. We also know of at least two overseas import companies that made "copies" of the Bird with Berry salt and we will address them last in the article.

Note: Both McKee and L.G. Wright also made larger 4" table/master sized Bird with Berry open salts

that are not covered in detail in this article. McKee's Table and individual bird "without" berry salts were shown in their 1890 catalog (Figures 3 & 4). An easy way to tell the difference between the McKee table salt,



Figure 5 Judy's amethyst L.G. Wright master salt & amber McKee table salt. Birds are comparable in size except for the L.G. Wright bird having a slightly larger base.

and the L.G. Wright version that they called a master, is to compare the size of their base. The L.G. Wright base is slightly larger measuring 2-1/2" in length, whereas the McKee base measures 2-1/16" in length (Figure 5).

One other Bird with Berry item to mention, before we move on to the individual bird salts, is the Bird with Berry Caster Set (Figure 6). This rare and charming piece, also known as a Breakfast Set, is attributed to Aetna Glass Company, Bellaire, Ohio, circa 1887. The bird open salt is perched on a napkin ring that is supported by a round base with a pepper shaker extending from the side. Known colors are



Figure 6 Joan's amber "Bird with Berry Caster Set" attributed to Aetna Glass Company, Bellaire, Ohio - circa 1887.

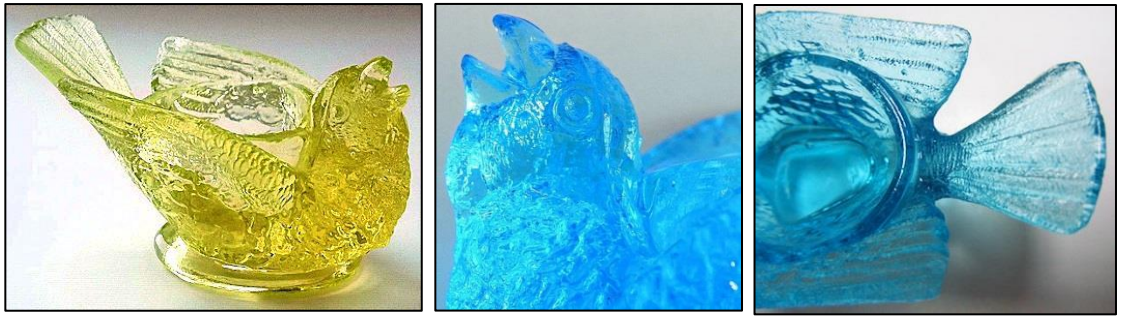
amber, blue, canary & clear. Was the cute little bird on the Aetna caster set McKee's inspiration for their bird with berry open salts or was it the other way around??

~ McKee Glass Company, Jeannette, Pennsylvania, Circa 1853 – 1961

McKee is thought to have made three different versions of the "individual" sized bird salt...one of which does not have the much loved berry in its mouth. Was the Berry an afterthought? Or was the berry added to strengthen the beak? Like the old saying goes: "Which came first the chicken or the egg?" we may never know if the Bird "with" the Berry or the Bird "without" the

Berry came first. But for our purposes we will cover the Bird “without” Berry first as it seems to be the most detailed of the three McKee versions and the hardest to find. Note: There is a Chinese import version that is very close to the McKee birds and will be covered in more detail later in the article.

McKee Birds Version 1, Bird without Berry



Left: Figure 7 Judy’s McKee Ver. 1 - Bird without Berry in vaseline.

Center: Figure 8 Debi’s Ver. 1 bird in blue. Note the thickness of the bird’s neck.

Right: Figure 9 Version 1’s tail is covered with feather from base to tip. Note also the irregular shape of bowl that tapers toward back.

McKee “Birds”

Version 1: Bird “Without” Berry (Rare) (Figure 7)

- Open mouth “without” berry.
- Head is the most rounded of all the known birds.
- Bird has “protruding” eyeballs with sharp points on the end.
- Neck is the thickest of all known birds (Figure 8).
- Face & feathers have the most detail of all the known birds.
- Tail has feathers that extend from the base to the tip (Figure 9).
- Inside bottom of bowl is uneven, not circular & tapers toward back ending with a tiny elevated “lip”.
- Measurements: 2-15/16” beak-to-tail, 1-13/16” wide, 1-5/8” high at tail
- Known colors: Vaseline, Blue, Amber & Clear

Version 2: Bird “With” Berry - Protruding Eyes (Figure 10)

- Open mouth “with” berry.
- Head is more rounded than most birds, but less than version 1.
- Bird has “protruding” eyeballs with sharp points on the end.
- Neck is thicker than most known birds.
- Face & feathers are more detailed than most birds, but less than version 1.
- Two tail designs have been found on this bird. The first is like the Version 1 bird with feathers from base to tip. The other is with half circles near the base (Figure 11).
- Inside bottom of bowl is uneven, not circular and tapers toward back ending with a tiny elevated “lip”.

McKee Birds Version 2, Protruding Eyes

Right: Figure 10 Judy’s McKee Ver. 2 - Protruding Eyes - Bird with Berry in amber.



Above: Figure 11 Jane’s Ver. 2 bird in amber. Note the protruding eyes with sharp points and the half circles at the base of the tail.



• Measurements: 2-15/16” beak-to-tail, 1-13/16” wide, 1-5/8” high at tail.

• Known colors: Vaseline, Blue, Amber, Clear & Aqua (Rare) (Figure 12).

Version 3: Bird “With” Berry, “Flat” Non-Protruding Eyes (Figure 13)

- Open mouth “with” berry.
- Head is more rounded than most birds, but less than version 1.
- Bird has “flat” non-protruding eyeballs with no points.
- Bird’s beak has more clearly defined nostrils (nares) indentations than other birds (Figure 14).

Right: (Figure 12) Joan’s Ver. 2 bird in “rare” aqua color



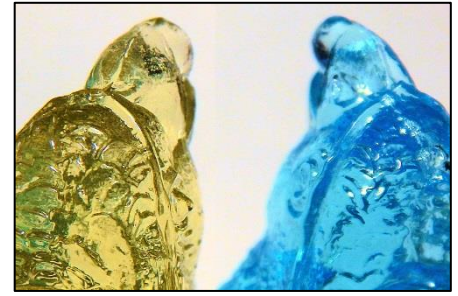
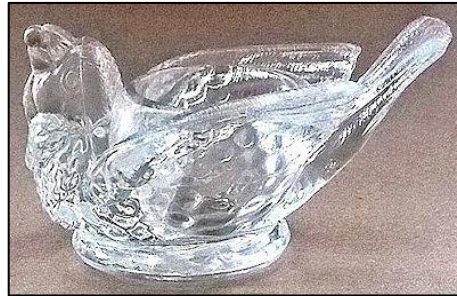
- Neck is thicker than most known birds.
- Face & feathers are more detailed than most birds, but less than version 1 & 2 (Figure 15).
- Tail has rows of tiny dots near base (Figure 16).
- Inside bottom of bowl is uneven, not circular and tapers toward back ending with a tiny elevated “lip”.
- Measurements: 2-15/16” beak-to-tail, 1-13/16” wide, 1-5/8” high at tail.
- Known colors: Vaseline, Blue, Amber & Clear

~ **DEGENHART CRYSTAL ART GLASS – CAMBRIDGE, OHIO – CIRCA 1947-1978** ~

Degenhart introduced their Bird with Berry salt in 1958. No marks were used on the Degenhart birds from 1958

to 1971. In 1972 they added a “D” in a heart to the inside bottom of the bowl. They used this mark until 1978 when they sold their business with their molds to Boyd. The same mold was used for both the Degenhart and Boyd “Bird with Berry” salts, with no known design changes. As such, the following makes comparisons to the McKee and Kanawha birds only, as the Boyd bird is identical to the Degenhart except for the maker’s marks. Note: Recently, Asian import “copies” of the Degenhart birds, that include their trademark, have been found selling on the U.S. market. More on how to identify these “copies” later in the article.

McKee Birds Version 3 With Berry, “Flat” Non-Protruding Eyes



Left: Figure 13 Judy’s McKee Ver. 3 in clear.

Right: Figure 14 Debi’s McKee Ver. 2 in Vaseline (left) with “protruding” eyes and her Ver. 3 in blue (right) with “flat” non-protruding eyes & clearly defined “nares” on sides of the beak.



Left: Figure 15 McKee Ver. 3 bird in blue

Right: Figure 16 Ver. 3 birds have rows of tiny dots at the base of the tail (see above). While Ver. 1 tails have feathers from base to tip and Ver. 2 birds have been found with all feather tails, as well as, those with half circles at the base of the tail.

Degenhart – “Bird with Berry” (Figure 17)

- Open mouth “with” berry.
- Head is a little flatter than McKee’s version 3, but not as flat as Kanawha.
- Bird has “flat” non-protruding eyeballs.
- Top portion of beak is smaller with the berry more pronounced than the McKee & Kanawha birds.
- Neck is thinner than McKee birds. About the same as Kanawha.



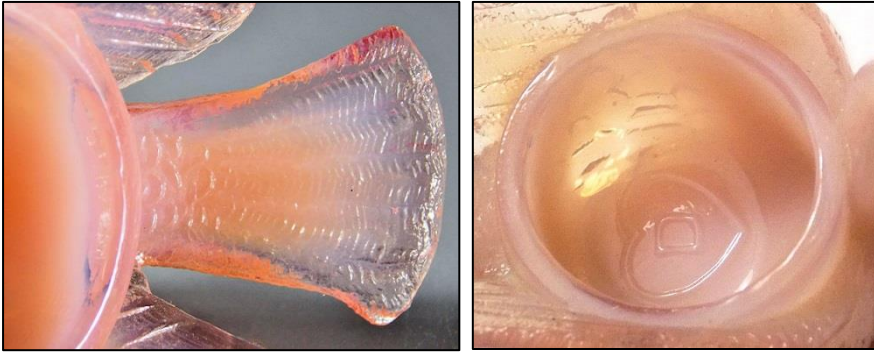
Figure 17 Judy’s “marked” post 1972 version of the Degenhart Bird with Berry in “Crown Tuscan” pink.



Figure 18 Linda’s “unmarked” pre 1972 version of the Degenhart bird in a light blue.

- Face & feathers have less detail than McKee birds. Details are about the same as Kanawha (Figure 18).

- Slight bump found on left side edge of tail and tiny half circles at the base. Kanawha does not have the bump but does have the half circles. (Figure 19).



Degenhart's Collector's Guide, published in 1982, referenced that Kanawha was also currently producing a "Bird with Berry" salt that was very similar in design to that of the Degenhart version.

Kanawha – "Bird with Berry" (Figure 21)

- Open mouth "with" berry.
- Head is the "flattest" of all the known birds and is slightly concaved.
- Bird has "flat" non-protruding eyes that are located "very close" to the back of the head.
- Top portion of beak is larger and ex-

Left: Figure 19 Both the Degenhart (above) and the Boyd tails have a slight bump on the upper left side (bottom in picture) and half circles at the base. Kanawha's tail does not have the bump but does have the half circles.
Right: Figure 20 Degenhart mark in bottom of bowl.

- Inside bottom of bowl is even and circular.
- No marks were used from 1958-1971. A "D" in a heart on the inside bottom of the bowl was used from 1972 to 1978 (Figure 20).
- Measurements: 3" beak-to-tail, 1-7/8 wide, 1-5/8" high at tail.
- Known colors: "Degenhart Glass & Paperweight Guide" by Gene Florence Degenhart states that colors were not recorded until 1965 and in some instances these records are incomplete or missing". There are 100 listed colors for the Bird with Berry salt in the Degenhart book. You can also view this list on OpenSalts.US under References > Ed Bowman > Degenhart Open Salts > Bird Salt Color List.

~ KANAWHA GLASS COMPANY – DUNBAR, WV – CIRCA 1955-1987 ~

Although we do not know the exact timeframes Kanawha made their version of the Bird with Berry salt,

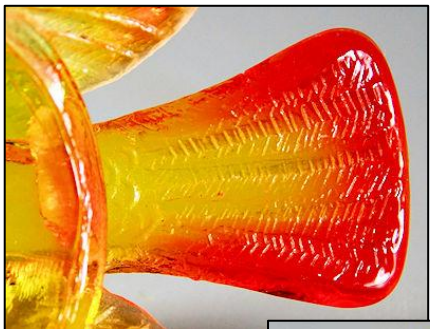


Figure 23 Kanawha birds do not have the tail bump found on the Degenhart & Boyd versions, but does have the same half circles at the base of the tail.



Figure 24 Amberina Bird with Berry with Kanawha paper label.

tends slightly over the berry unlike those of the McKee, Degenhart & Boyd versions.

- The berry is slightly smaller than the McKee, Degenhart & Boyd versions.
- Neck has more detail than Degenhart and Boyd versions.
- Face & feathers are about the same as Degenhart & Boyd versions.
- Breast is more "rippled" in design than Degenhart & Boyd versions (Figure 22).
- Tail does not have the bump that is found on the Degenhart & Boyd versions, but does have the half circles at the base (Figure 23).
- Inside bottom of bowl is even and circular.
- No maker's marks were used on this bird. Some have been found with an original black and gold paper label with "Kanawha, Hand Crafted Glassware, Dunbar, W. VA." (Figure 24).

Figure 21 Judy's Kanawha amberina Bird with Berry salt. The Kanawha bird has the flattest head of all known birds and its eyes are set close to the back of the head.



Figure 22 Kanawha Lime Green Bird. The Kanawha bird's beak extends slightly over the berry and its breast has more of a "rippled" design, unlike the flatter breast of the Degenhart & Boyd birds.



Figure 25 Joan's Boyd "Tomato Crème" bird. It was the first Bird with Berry produced by Boyd on 10-26-78. It has the "First Five Year" marker's mark on the base of the salt.



Figure 26 Janelle's pretty "Lemon Splash" bird. It is Boyd's #67 bird color, made on 10-9-00 and has the "Fifth Five Year" mark on the base. This little guy proved to be a strong and determined flyer as he ended up on the other side of the world in Australia.

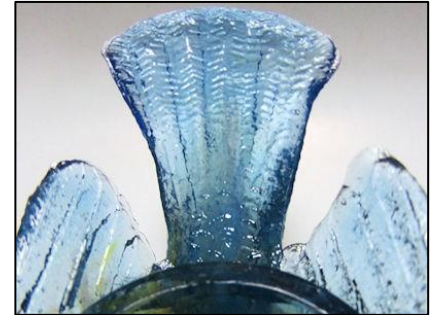


Figure 27 Both the Boyd (above) and the Degenhart tails have a bump on the upper left side (right side in picture) and half circles at the base. Kanawha's tail does not have the bump but does have the half circles.

- Measurements: 2-7/8" beak-to-tail, 1-7/8 wide, 1-5/8" high at tail.
- Known colors: Amber, Amberina, Amethyst, Blue & Green (Possibly others).

~ **BOYD'S CRYSTAL ART GLASS – CAMBRIDGE, OHIO – CIRCA 1978-2014** ~

Boyd Crystal Art Glass began making glass on October 10, 1978, after purchasing the Degenhart Crystal Art Glass business along with all their molds. They remained in business for 36 years. Their first production of the Bird with Berry salt was on October 26, 1978 in their "Tomato Crème" glass color and has their "First Five Years" trademark of a "B" in a diamond (Figure 15). The Boyd bird is identical to the Degenhart version, as they reused their mold with no known design changes. As such, the following comparisons are only with McKee and Kanawha birds and not with Degenhart's. But the Boyd birds are the easiest of all the known birds to identify, as they were always marked from the first date of production to the last known version that was produced with their "Seventh Five Years" mark in 2008. As of this date, no known overseas import copies of the "Boyd marked" birds are being made.

Boyd – "Bird with Berry" (Figure 25)

- Open mouth "with" berry.
- Head is a little flatter than McKee's version 3,

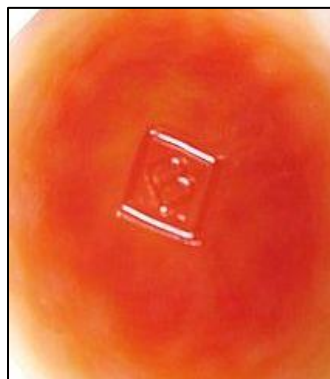


Figure 28 Boyd "First Five Year" Maker's Mark on their first production of their "Bird with Berry" Open Salt.

- but not as flat as Kanawha.
- Bird has "flat" non-protruding eyeballs.
- Top portion of beak is smaller with the berry more pronounced than the McKee & Kanawha birds.
- Neck is thinner than McKee birds. About the same as Kanawha.
- Face & feathers have less detail than McKee birds. Details are the about the same the Kanawha bird (Figure 26).
- Slight bump found on left side edge of tail and half circles at the base. Kanawha does not have the bump but does have the half circles. (Figure 27).
- Inside bottom of bowl is even and circular.
- All Boyd birds are marked with their trademark "B" in a diamond and lines defining the "five year" period they were made. (Figure 28 & 29)

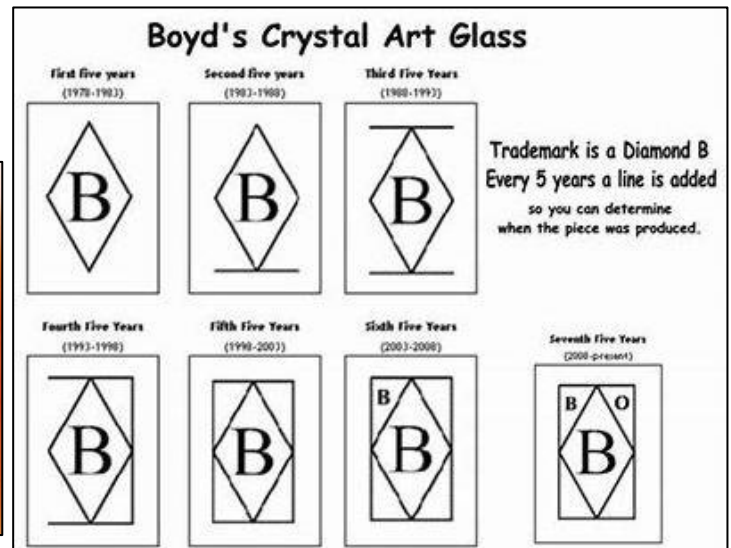


Figure 29 Boyd Crystal Art Glass signature "B" in a Diamond trademarks. Every five years a line was added, culminating with a "B" and then an "O" being added to the top corners for the last ten years they were in business.

- Measurements: 3" beak-to-tail, 1-7/8 wide, 1-5/8" high at tail.
- Known colors: Boyd made the Bird with Berry in 82 beautiful colors from 10-10-1978 through 10-23-2008. You can view Boyd's Bird with Berry color list on Opensalts.US under References > Ed Bowman > Boyd Open Salts > Bird Salt Color List.

~ CHINESE IMPORT – UNMARKED – CIRCA EARLY 1980'S ~

These Chinese import Bird with Berry salts started to appear in the late 1980's. We believe that the company that made them most likely copied McKee's Version 2 bird. The birds are very nice reproductions, and other than being lucky enough to find one with the "Made in China" label, there are some subtle design changes in the eyes, beak & berry that you should look for to distinguish them from an original McKee.



Figure 30 Joan's Chinese Import Bird with Berry salts in known colors of cobalt blue, green & pink.



Figure 31 Cobalt blue Chinese Import (left) & Aqua McKee Ver. 2 (right). Note the Chinese import has a broader more rounded beak, a larger berry and the eye placement is lower and closer to back of head.



Figure 32 Cobalt blue import bird with "Made in China" paper label.

- Face & feathers have good detail close to McKee version 2.
- Inside bottom of bowl is even and flat, tapers to the back similar to McKee's, but does not have the elevated "lip".
- No maker's mark is on the bird. Some have been found with "Made in China" paper labels (Figure 32).
- Measurements: 3" berry to tail, 1-11/16" wide, 1-1/2" high at tail
- Known colors: Cobalt Blue, Green & Pink (Possibly others)

~ TAIWAN IMPORT – "COPY" OF MARKED DEGENHART – CIRCA LATE 1980'S ~

- Very little is known about these Taiwan imports that are "copies" of the Degenhart Bird with Berry salts, complete with their signature "D" inside a

China Imports – "Bird with Berry" (Figure 30)

- Open mouth "with" berry.
- Head is nicely rounded similar to McKee's version 2.
- Bird has "protruding" eyeballs but the sharp points, like those on the McKee version 1 & 2 birds, have been fire polished smooth. Also, the eye placement is lower and slightly closer to the back of the head than the McKee versions.
- Top portion of beak is broader and more rounded than the smaller pointy McKee version beaks (Figure 31).
- The berry is slightly larger than the McKee berry.
- Neck is slightly thinner than McKee's version 2.

heart trademark. Although we believe these Taiwan imports have been around for a while, recently they seem to be coming out of hiding and appearing more and more on the U.S. market. None of the copies that we have found have any added marker's marks on the birds, but some have been found with a "Made in Taiwan" gold and black paper label. There are however, some notable differences that you should look for in order to distinguish this copy from an original Degenhart version. As such, the following information compares the "copies" to the "original" Degenhart version only and does not compare them to any other company's bird.

Figure 33
Joan's Tur-
quoise Blue
Slag "Taiwan
Copy" of the
Degenhart
Bird with
Berry salt.



Figure 34 Back of
head on original De-
genhart (left) is
rounded without
indentation. Taiwan
copy's head (right) is
pointed and shows
indentation at 10
o'clock mark.

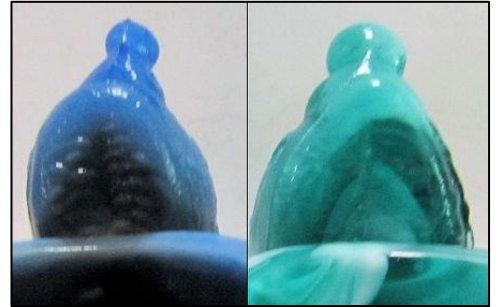


Figure 35 Orig-
inal Degenhart
on left, Taiwan
copy on right.
Note original
has smaller
berry and a
more defined
beak and eye.



Figure 36 Original Degen-
hart on left, Taiwan copy
on right. Note that the
copy's wings are thicker
and more rounded, the tail
is wider and its edge bump
is less obvious. Also, the
half circles at the base of
the tail are missing on the
Taiwan copy.

~ Taiwan "Copy" of "Marked" Degenhart – "Bird with Berry" (Figure 33) ~

- Open mouth "with" berry.
- Back of head is flatter, wider and the top is more pointed with an indentation on the left (10 o'clock mark). Some heads were also left with rough mold points that were not fire polished smooth (Figure 34).
- Eyes are flat like original but have less dimension.
- Bottom of beak is larger and broader than original. Top of beak lacks definition, almost deformed, and merges together with the berry.
- The berry is larger than the original (Figure 35).
- Neck is slightly thinner. Not as detailed as the original.
- Feather details are about the same as those of the original.
- Wing tips are thicker and more rounded than the thinner pointed original Degenhart version.
- Tail bump found on left side edge is smaller and less obvious than the original.
- Base of tail near bowl does not have the half circles like the original (Figure 36).
- Some of the inside bottoms of the bowls are even and flat like the originals, with the copied Degen-

hart maker's mark of a "D in a heart". Others bowls are uneven with excess glass "overflow" causing the "D in heart" mark to bulge and to be elevated and closer to the rim. Some birds are also found with "Made in Taiwan" labels (Figure 37).

- Measurements: 3" beak to tail, 1-3/4" wide, 1-1/2" high at tail
- Known colors: Amberina, Amber Carnival, Amethyst, Apple Green, Azure Blue, Black/Ebony, Black Carnival, Black Slag, Clear, Cobalt Blue, Cobalt Blue Carnival, Jadeite, Jadeite Slag, Medium Blue, Orange, Orange Slag, Periwinkle, Pink Carnival, Pink Slag & Turquoise Slag (Possibly many others)



Figure 37 Turquoise Blue Slag import bird with "Made in Taiwan" paper label.

So, there you have it! And should you be enticed to "feather your nest" with a "flock" of your own, you now have "a bird's eye view" of some detailed information to help get you started (Figure 38). If you have a question about a particular bird (or are just looking for some great - not to mention fun - open salt information sharing) please feel "free as a bird" to stop

by the opensalts.us "Message Board" as we would love to "tweet" with you! And I promise I will not subject you to any more of my "bird" idioms, similes or metaphors!!



Figure 38 Linda has a nice variety in her small “flock”, including a L. G. Wright master size “Mommy” bird (in bird bath) who is keeping an eye on her “brood” of smaller Degenhart and Boyd birds.

In closing, I would like to personally express my sincere thanks to a very special group of open salt collectors (and friends), mentioned in the beginning of this article, that took the time to share their personal knowledge, research material, comments and pictures

(even if they were of a “misfit” bird) thus making this article possible. Now when I look at my “Bird with Berry” collection I will no longer just think of the birds in my garden, but I will also think of each of you, and how you have made them much more meaningful to me!

Bibliography

- 5,000 Open Salt, A Collector’s Guide by William Heacock & Patricia Johnson
 - All About Glass Vol. VI No. 3, West Virginia Museum of American Glass, Ltd.
 - Ed Bowman Research, Boyd Crystal Art Glass, Degenhart Crystal Art Glass & L. G. Wright Glass Company
 - Degenhart Glass and Paperweights, A Collector’s Guide to Colors and Values by Gene Florence
 - Degenhart Glass Company Newsletter “Heartbeat” Vol. 2, No. 8, December 1982
 - L. G. Wright Glass, West Virginia Museum of American Glass, Ltd., A Schiffer Book for Collectors
 - Salty Comments by Ed & Kay Berg, Bird with Seed #’s 17, 19, 31, 57 & 64
 - The Open Salt Compendium by Sandra Jzyk & Nina Robertson
-

