

MOSSY COMMENTS - #4

During our recent foray to the Library at the Corning Museum we came across a mystery that you might be able to help us with. In Peterson's book on Glass Patterns and Patents he mentions the ROSE SPRIG sleigh shown at the right (Smith 325-3-3, Coddington 28-3-5). We trust Peterson's research a lot, so when he said that the sleigh was marked with "Pat. May 26, '86" at the base of the dashboard we expected to find this on our sleigh when we got home. We pulled it off the shelf and found no marks at all! We guessed it might be a repro or an early one made before the patent was issued, but went to our own book collection to see if we could clarify the situation.



The first try was Ruth Webb Lee's "Antique Fakes and Reproductions", but she had no listing for the pattern. We struck pay dirt, however, when we went to Jenks, Luna and Reilly's book, "Identifying Pattern Glass Reproductions". They say the sleigh was reproduced in the original colors of clear, amber, blue and canary yellow (vaseline?) in the early 1960's. They add "although they were produced from a new mold *and are unmarked (my italics)*, new salts are embossed with the same "1888" patent date" as the originals." I'm confused. The design was definitely patented in 1886, and Peterson says the originals had the 1886 date on them. And if the salts are unmarked, isn't the "1888" counted as a mark?

Jenks & Co. add that "the new items are heavier than originals, the glass is thicker, and the colors are harsher, the rose sprig design is not as finely stippled as the original and the rose is slightly larger." Having only one sleigh to look at, we could not tell anything about the comparative weight and rose size. Our blue sleigh weighs exactly 2 oz., and the rose on the side measures 15mm. across at its widest point, perpendicular to the stem. And we couldn't see a date on it anywhere.

We sent the first version of this column to Ed Bowman, and he looked at his amber sleigh. He sent us an e-mail telling about it, and mentioned that the date was in capital letters on the front outside, at the bottom of the dashboard. We had been looking at the inside very carefully, but now that we looked at the right place on the outside in bright sunlight we found the date was there after all! It was very faint - we couldn't decipher the year and could barely see the rest. So now we have to find one of the copies so we can document the difference.

If you are fortunate enough to have one of these sleighs, please look for the patent date on it. If you have one without the date, or with the 1888 date that Jenks and Luna mention, we would very much like to hear about it. If there are copies out there as claimed, we'd like to compare the old with the new so we can tell the difference in the future.

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April 1998