

SALTY COMMENTS #25
(Facts and Opinion on Open Salt Collecting)

Researching open salts by Westmoreland has been the most frustrating task we have tried to date. The Company operated mostly in the 20th century, so a number of their catalogs and advertisements have survived. Their salts included many of the "standard" shapes which other companies also produced. Since many of the Westmoreland molds survived, we have been able to compare the repros with similar salts, and thus see the tiny differences that distinguish the Westmoreland ones. Where the molds are not being used today, however, all we can do is look at a catalog picture and wonder which of 3 or 4 similar dishes we have is the "real Westmoreland". In a couple of instances we can't even tell from the old catalogs whether the dish is round or oval. Our heads are spinning, but we have done the best we can.

The story of Westmoreland begins with the East Liverpool Specialty Glass Co. in Ohio. This firm started operations in January 1893. In March, their secretary-treasurer resigned, and his replacement absconded to Bermuda with the Company funds. Operations stopped in April, and the Company went into bankruptcy. Five years later, in March 1888, a group bought the plant and started the Novelty Glass Works to make electrical, mechanical and scientific glassware. Two weeks later they changed their name to the Specialty Glass Works, and their product line to jelly glasses, goblets and tableware. In June of the next year, the President announced that they were moving to a new factory in Jeannette, PA, and that house lots would be sold adjacent to the factory, with natural gas supplied free. The new factory went ahead as scheduled, but the old one continued operations for 9 more years, until a flood and fire wiped them out.

The new factory, called the Westmoreland Specialty Co., started operations in 1890. Their primary product was glass, but they sold it as containers filled with mustard, vinegar, lemon flavoring and other condiments. Like the "tumbler" jelly glasses of the 1930's, many of the containers were meant to be useful after the original contents were gone. The sugar bowl and cream pitcher with the open salt top are examples (see H&J 477, Smith 363-4-3 for pictures of a top). We met a mustard jar collector several years ago who had one of these jars with the original Westmoreland sticker, and traces of mustard still left inside the container. In October of 1901, the Crockery and Glass Journal reported that Westmoreland was the only glass firm still in the mustard business who made the jars, ground the mustard, packed it, and shipped it, all from the same plant. Besides the condiment jars, they made toy candy containers for others to fill. Their tableware lines included some pattern glass, but not the number of different patterns that the 19th century glass manufacturers made. Their most successful products were in milk glass; these were about 90% of their output during their last 30 years. They ceased operations in 1984, and their molds and inventory were sold.

Westmoreland made more than 30 designs of open salts, but only 8 of them are designs unique to the Company. The rest were copies from or were copied by other glass companies. We can only identify the genuine Westmoreland dishes because the molds have survived, and the reproductions made with the molds give us something to go on. Six of their salts we know only as pictures in catalogs or advertisements. These are all common shapes, and we cannot tell the Westmoreland versions from the competition. In the notes which accompany the attached pictures, we tell you as best we can how to identify the real thing.

The WG trademark can be found embossed on many open salts. Ironically, most of these were not made by Westmoreland, since the molds were not run after the mark was applied. We have never seen a genuine Westmoreland salt which has the WG except the hen on a nest. This particular mold was sold to the Rosso's of Port Vue, PA, and now has their mark. On all other salts, the WG mark identifies production by Summit Art Glass of Ravenna, OH.

We hope the information which follows will help you find some Westmoreland salts in your collection, and will help you avoid paying "old" prices for current production. This will be even more important in the coming years as Westmoreland collector organizations develop, and as antique dealers become more aware of Westmoreland glass. And we wish you luck in finding a salt with a pepper shaker on top - if you find two, we need one for our collection.

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WESTMORELAND SALTS

<u>Picture No.</u>	<u>Their No.</u>	<u>PATTERN or Description</u>	<u>Catalog Years</u>	<u>Smith No.*</u>	<u>H&J No.*</u>	<u>Currently Made by</u>
1		Duck, bowl in back	1939 1952		1019	Summit
2		Chick salt (hen on nest)	1944 thru 1983	44-2-4	949	Rosso
3		BAG WARE copy, rectangular, X-patterned bottom			449	Pairpoint
4-9	200	Set of 6 euchre celery dips (3,4,5-lobe, hexagon, star heart)	1912 1924	Plate 7	Page 151	Summit (no 3- lobe)
10	201	Square, waffle bottom	1924	8-1-3	2762	Summit
11	202	Two rows of baby thumbprints	1924	37-4-3	2553	Summit
12	203	Zippers and notched prisms (cut and not cut)	1912 1924	475-3-2	2558	Summit
13	204	Seven curving sides	1912 1924	476-5-1	2867	
14	205	Pedestal, scalloped rim, zippered edges	1912 1924		2962	
15	209	Square, crosshatched diamond in each side Variant - no cross-hatching	1924 not shown	78-1-3	3224	Summit
16	210	Feather & star, sawtooth rim	1912 1924	11-3-3	2646	Summit
17	211	Six concave curving sides	1912 1924	8-1-1		
18	212)				
19	213)Round (oval?), star bottom	1924			
20	214)				
21	218	Oval, plain bottom	1924			
22	215	Eight curving sides	1924	444-3-2		Summit
23	216	8-sided tub, tab handles 16 ray bottom	1924		2848	Summit (V-notch handles)
24	217	8-sided pedestal	1924	80-5-2	2957	Summit
25	300	ENGLISH HOBNAIL (non-pedestal) (as part of condiment set)	1924-52 1912-40	36-3-3	2681	Summit

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26	460	Combination open salt & pepper	1924			Pairpoint (Salt only)
27	555	ENGLISH HOBNAIL pedestal (with tabs, nut & card holder)	1930's 1952 1955	40-6-3	329	Summit
28	909	LACY DAISY (listed as a salt) (listed as toy berry set)	1952 1924	37-3-1	351	Summit
29	1078	Two buzz stars (cut)	1924		3127	Summit
30	1079	Hexagonal, stars in panels (catalog says cut)	1924		3306	Summit (pressed)
31	1880	Footed salt (DEWDROP & STAR?)	1952	362-4-2	925	Boyd?
32	1921	LOTUS	1952	19-4-3	580	Summit
33		Mustard jar cover, for re-use as salt?		363-4-3	477	

* Our book references are often guesses, since several companies made most shapes.

NOTES ON THE ABOVE LIST

1. Copy of a duck made in Vallerysthal (France). The Westmoreland one has a level rim and different feather details; the French one has several bumps along the rim, just in front of the tail. On some of these, the head is turned varying amounts. This is done by hand after the glass is taken from the mold, so variations in the turning are no help in identification. Summit Art Glass is making them now, with the WG mark on the bottom.

2. Hen on nest. This was made for at least 40 years, in a variety of colors, some frosted and some painted. The hen has its head turned, and the nest is a basket weave with oval loops along the top edge. Those made in recent years have the WG mark on the inside bottom of the nest. We have a similar hen with head turned which is from a different mold - maker unknown. A third one, also from a different mold and with turned head, was bought with a "Made in Poland" sticker on it. The Vallerysthal hen is similar, but has their name embossed on the bottom inside. If you want to be certain of the genuine Westmoreland, get one with the WG mark. The mold for this salt was sold to Phil and Helen Rosso of Port Vue, PA, who had it run by Viking. A few unmarked hens were made in black, and then the Rosso mark (R in a keystone) was put on the inside bottom. All production now bears this mark.

3. BAG WARE type. We saw a salt in the Westmoreland museum that was an exact copy of the Duncan & Miller BAG WARE one. There are minute differences in the bottom pattern, but none you can define in words. Pairpoint has the mold currently, and is making salts in modern colors with no distinguishing marks.

4 - 9. Euchre celery dips. These were made as early as 1912, and also appear in a 1924 catalog. They were sold in boxed sets of 6 (85 cents per dozen boxes initially). One book mentions that Westmoreland made some in marigold carnival color, but we have never seen any. Thanks to Kathryn Barnes, an Ohio collector, we learned that Dalzell, Gilmore & Leighton of Findlay, OH also made the 3-, 4-, and 5-lobed dishes, as well as the heart, a diamond and a maltese cross in the 1890's. Westmoreland dishes have rounded ribs on their sides; the older ones have ribs with a sharp edge, like tiny prisms. Summit is making all but the 3-lobed version in color. There are no marks to distinguish the new production from the old, but Summit has not made the Westmoreland colors so far.

10. Square, waffle bottom. We know this only from a catalog picture - there are so many like it that we can't tell them apart. We are fairly certain that Pairpoint has the mold, and we have one of their dishes shaped like the catalog picture. It has no waffling on the bottom - evidently they are using a new bottom plate. No marks on either the original Westmoreland or the Pairpoint version.

11. Baby thumbprints. Also shown in the Paden City Glass Co. catalog, (Heacock & Johnson p. 294). We do not know the difference between the Westmoreland and Paden City versions. Summit is making salts with this mold, but theirs have a very faint WG mark in the center of the bottom. The old dishes have a sharp asterisk design in the center underneath - if this design is messed up, it is a Summit dish.

12. Zippers & notched prisms. An imitation of a common cut glass pattern. It is listed in both the 1912 and 1924 Westmoreland catalogs, and is called "cut" in the latter. We believe the "cut" salts were pressed, then worked on a cutting wheel briefly to touch up the design. This is an inexpensive way to compete with genuine cut glass, where a glass blank with a flat surface is used as a starting point. The dish has 16 ribs around the outside, and a fancy 24-rayed star on the bottom, with varying length rays. Summit is making the dish in color, with no marks to distinguish their production. They do not make any of the "cut" version.

13. Seven curving sides. If we interpret the catalog picture correctly, this is exclusively Westmoreland. We had to look twice to realize there were seven sides instead of six, but we have one that looks just like this. It is just over 1-1/4" high, and has 35 rays on the bottom. It appears in both the 1912 and 1924 catalogs.

14. Zippered pedestal. The same shape as Duncan & Miller #65 individual salt, but a little shorter and with zippers on the vertical edges. Westmoreland is the only one we have found with zippers, although several other firms made dishes the shape of this one.

15. Square with crosshatched diamond. Probably an original Westmoreland design, appearing in their 1924 catalog. There is also an earlier variation where the crosshatching is missing. The dish is now being made in color by Summit, with no markings to distinguish the new from the old.

16. Feather & star, sawtooth rim. A duplicate of one shown in the 1920 Paden City Glass Co. catalog. We have no way of telling what is really the Westmoreland version. Summit is making this in a variety of colors, with no markings.

17. Six concave curving sides. This is original with Westmoreland, appearing in their 1912 and 1924 catalogs. If the mold has survived, we do not know about it.

18 - 21. Plain sides round & oval. These are shown in the 1924 catalog. The shapes are so common that we can't tell whether we have any or not. The molds evidently have not survived - at least we have not heard of it. If you have any that look like the pictures, you can call them Westmoreland and nobody can refute you.

22. Eight curving sides. A duplicate of Duncan & Miller #54 COLONIAL and Paden City #401. We don't know how to distinguish one from the other. Summit has the Westmoreland mold, and is making this dish in color.

23. 8-sided tub. Cambridge had a similar tab-handled tub, now being made by Boyd's Crystal Art Glass Co. The Westmoreland tub has 16 rays on the bottom - the Cambridge only 8. Summit is making the Westmoreland version with v-notched tab handles in a variety of colors, no marks.

24. 8-sided pedestal. This matches Duncan & Miller #66 except for the thickness of the walls of the bowl. If our deductions are correct, the D&M version has a bowl which is 1-1/8" inside diameter, and the Westmoreland one is 1-3/16". This sounds like a trifling difference, but it is clear when you compare the two. Summit is using the Westmoreland mold currently, with no distinguishing mark. Someone is selling the Summit cobalt dish with a Heisey sticker on it - we saw one priced at \$65.00. Watch out - Heisey never made a dish in this shape!

25. Round ENGLISH HOBNAIL. Shown in catalogs as part of a individual condiment set (on a tray with pepper shaker and cruet) in 1912 and 1940, and as an individual open salt in 1924 and 1952. This design was made by a number of companies. We have 4 different versions in the collection, and there may be more. The Westmoreland one is 15/16" high, has 14 rays on the bottom, and fans in the diamonds on the rim. The only one close to this is the Cambridge version, now being made by Mosser. If you use a stamp pad and make an impression with the bottom, the Cambridge/Mosser circle will be just over 1" diameter while the Westmoreland will be just under 1". A mighty small difference - it shows how well the various companies copied each other's designs. Summit is now running the Westmoreland mold, and there are no identifying marks on their production.

26. Salt/pepper combination. The most intriguing salt of all was pointed out to us by Virginia Wright, Associate Librarian at Corning. This is an 8-sided dish with a ledge inside the rim. The Westmoreland catalog shows it with a pepper shaker that fits on top. We have the salt, but did not know what the ledge was for. Now we are looking for a shaker to fit it, which is a real needle-in-a-haystack hunt. The mold for the open salt portion is now at Pairpoint, who is making it in several colors, unmarked.

27. Pedestal ENGLISH HOBNAIL. This shape may have been original with Westmoreland, although a similar dish was made by L.E. Smith during the past few years. There are two versions - with and without stars in the top row of diamonds. The Smith dish has no stars; the Westmoreland catalogs show the stars. Our present guess is that Westmoreland had two molds, and sold one to Smith before they closed. Someday we will find out the whole story.

Westmoreland advertised this dish two ways - as a salt and as a nut with place card holder. To make the place card version, they put a different cap ring on the mold to make 3 tabs on one side of the rim. The first listing we found for either version was in the 1930's. It has been made in a variety of colors since then, including painted and frosted versions. The mold shows signs of use - the width of the stem varies from 19 up to 24 mm. We think this is the result of wear and mold reworking, since the latest dishes have the widest stem. Summit is now making the salt in a variety of colors, all marked WG under the foot. Unmarked ones are original Westmoreland; marked ones are all Summit.

28. LACY DAISY. The 1924 catalog shows this as part of a toy berry set. The 1952 catalog shows one of these as a salt. We prefer to think of them all as open salts - surely someone used them this way. Two different molds were involved - the earlier dishes have the design coming into the center on the bottom, while the later ones have a small circle of clear glass there. The mold is now being run at Summit in a variety of colors. Their dishes have a faint WG in the center of the bottom, where the circle of clear glass used to be.

29. Two buzz stars. The Westmoreland catalog shows this as cut, although the mold produces the complete pattern without need for additional cutting. The dish looks like it was touched up on a cutting wheel after it was made. We have a similar dish by some other company that lacks the hobstar in the middle of the buzz star. Summit has the mold, and is making the dish in several colors, uncut.

30. Hexagonal, stars in panels. Similar to salts made by others, but Westmoreland's version has the rays of the stars going out to the corners of each side panel. All other versions have stars with equal length rays. Summit has the mold and is making these in several colors, unmarked.

31. Footed salt. Shown in the 1952 catalog, the picture looks just like the DEWDROP AND STAR salt that Degenhart introduced the same year. We have yet to see a genuine Westmoreland dish, so we are not sure what is going on. Perhaps they sold the mold to Degenhart, since there is no other catalog listing of a dish like this. If so, this would solve the mystery of where the Degenhart mold came from - a question the Degenhart museum has been unable to answer.

32. LOTUS. A design original with Westmoreland. It has been made in a variety of colors, and Summit is making even more. We have seen 20 different ones, if you count those that are frosted or painted. For the first year or two the Summit salts had no distinguishing mark. Now the dishes are embossed with V in a circle on the inside bottom.

33. Mustard jar cover. Two jars were made, intended for re-use as a sugar bowl and a pitcher. The tops could also be used as table salts, but we have never seen this in writing.

References and abbreviations:

- Ten books "Open Salts Illustrated" by Helen and Alan Smith
- "5000 Open Salts" by William Heacock and Patricia Johnson
- Summit - Summit Art Glass Co., Ravenna, OH
- Pairpoint - Pairpoint Glass Co., Sagamore, MA
- Boyd - Boyd's Crystal Art Glass Co., Cambridge, OH

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