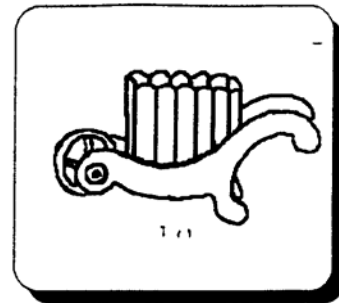




Salty Comments

No. 43

Facts and Opinion about Open Salt Collecting



When we looked for information about Gillinder Glass we were surprised to find that the Company is still in existence. It has not made any open salts for decades, we are sure, but it was active over 100 years ago when shakers were rare and impractical. Their early tableware lines often had salts that we still see in antique shops.

William T. Gillinder was a glass worker who came to the U.S. from England in 1854. Four years earlier he had published a book, "The Art of Glassmaking", so he obviously knew something about the trade. He worked first for the New England Glass Co. and later in Pittsburgh. In 1861 he moved to Philadelphia and started the Franklin Flint Glass Co., making lamp chimneys and window glass. In 1863, Edwin Bennett, a potter from Ohio, joined him and the firm changed its name to Gillinder and Bennett. About this time they started pressing glass, and probably added tableware to their line. Edwin stayed only 4 years, then moved to Baltimore to make pottery. The Gillinder sons took over his share, and the firm became Gillinder & Sons.

The first old catalogs we found dated in the 1870's. By this time the firm was evidently prosperous, because they erected a 60 ft. by 96 ft. glass factory at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. They operated 11 glass pots there, making novelty items for sale to visitors and probably some of their regular line for sale elsewhere. We believe they made the LIBERTY BELL pattern of tableware, and perhaps this was one of the Expo items. They also had a pattern set they called CENTENNIAL, but there is no record of exactly when it was manufactured. -147

In 1883, part of the business moved to Greensburg, PA to get a supply of natural gas. Only the cutting and glass blowing operations stayed in Philadelphia. The Greensburg plant became Factory G when the U.S. Glass combine was formed 8 years later, and the factory itself was dismantled in 1898. As part of the factory sale, Gillinder agreed not to make tableware for 20 years. Whether they lived up to this agreement is not stated.

In 1912, Gillinder added a Port Jervis, NY plant to the Philadelphia operation. This factory burned in 1919, but was rebuilt. In 1926 they started pressing glass there, and did a brisk business in electric meter covers among other things. There is no mention of any tableware being made. Although the Philadelphia plant closed in 1930, Port Jervis is still in business today making industrial pressed and blown glassware.

The records of Gillinder open salts all date back to the pattern glass era - 1865-1900. Some of their shapes can't be distinguished from similar ones by other companies - the common square ones and the ARGUS type individuals, the plain ovals and the SAWTOOTH pedestal salts are examples. Other shapes are clear enough in the catalogs so that we can be more certain of their distinguishing characteristics. Some we are sure that we have seen and passed up as "ordinary". Now we'll have to look closer, and try to find them for the collection.

We suspect that one of the Gillinder patterns - TRIANGLE - was continued by U.S. Glass into the 20th century. The salts we see in this pattern are made of better glass and come in some colors that were not common while Gillinder was making tableware.

Two of the salts attributed to Gillinder have been reproduced to our knowledge - the squirrel on a tree stump and the oval DAISY AND BUTTON tub, master size. The newer squirrel is very close to the original, but there is a very faint raised B at the bottom of the left side that identifies it. In addition, any colors except clear, amber, blue and possibly vaseline are almost certainly the later version. The oval repro tub has a round dot in the middle of the daisy on the handles. We don't know who made it, but we're pretty sure it dates in this century.



In addition to these repros, Francis Oksala sent us an article that describes some fake marks. Gillinder registered a mark shown at the right in 1883, stating it would be "etched on glass". This means it would be applied with an acid stamp, which is easy to duplicate. The article talked about two copies of the mark, both mis-spelled (probably intentionally). The first was "GILLENDER" and the other "GILLENDAR". It talks about the mark on the bottom of the squirrel salt, but mentions no other shapes. We've yet to see any mark, genuine or otherwise, but we're looking.

GILLINDER

One of their salts is shown in the early catalogs as "Footed O'Hara" and in the glass books as LOOP or O'HARA pattern. Maybe they bought the mold or copied the design from the O'Hara Glass Co. who was in business years before. We found 5 other glass companies listed as making this pattern, so we may never know how to tell the real Gillinder from the others.

Our faces are red on one pattern - the LIBERTY BELL. In Salty Comments No. 36 we said this salt was made by Adams. This was based on a listing in our most reliable source, the Welker book. Now we have found several other sources that attribute it to Gillinder. The final blow was to find that Ruth Webb Lee describes this pattern being made at the Gillinder factory on the Centennial Expo grounds. Since her book was written in 1931, when many people who attended the Expo were still alive, we are accepting her statements and crossing the salt off the Adams list.

We hope that you can find at least a few of the Gillinder salts in your collection. Some are the "ordinary" types, but this is what was used 100 years ago. The special ones are interesting, but will cost you a lot more than the "ordinaries".

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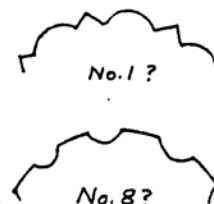
November 1993

References:

- "Pressed Glass in America", by John and Elizabeth Welker
- "Nineteenth Century Glass", by Albert Christian Revi
- "Early American Pressed Glass", by Ruth Webb Lee
- "Early American Pattern Glass 1850-1910", by Bill Jenks and Jerry Luna
- "Fake & Forged Trade Marks on Old & New Glass", by J.R. Cronin
- "5000 Open Salts" by William Heacock and Patricia Johnson
- Ten books, "Open Salts Illustrated", by Alan B. and Helen B. Smith

NOTES ON SPECIFIC GILLINDER SALTS

1. Gillinder's No. 1 Pillar and No. 8 Pillar (Figs. 1 & 6) are hard to distinguish from one another. Close examination of the old catalog leads us to believe the No. 1 has alternating rounded and pointed ribs, as shown to the right. The No. 8 appears to have a single type of rib with a flat face. We have a salt like the first of these; we don't remember ever seeing any one like the No. 8.



2. Their No. 5 Round Individual (ARGUS pattern) (Fig. 4) was made by many glass companies, and the catalog picture doesn't help tell the Gillinder version from any of the others.

3. Their No. 7 Mitre salt (Fig. 5) is different from similar heavy-rim salts made by other companies. The ribs on the lower sides are alternating rounded and pointed, which shows up clearly in the catalog picture. We think that Gillinder was the only one to use this variation.



4. The old catalog price lists have Diamond and Covered Diamond salts (SAWTOOTH pattern, Figs. 9 & 10), but the illustrations show only a toy set. Perhaps the same dish was sold both ways. The figures are from the toy set illustration, but they look like salts to us.

5. The LIBERTY BELL pattern (Fig. 13) was not called CENTENNIAL by Gillinder according to the old catalogs, though some books say differently. The old records show their set of CENTENNIAL tableware (Fig. 12) as a completely different design.

6. The FROSTED LION glassware (Fig. 14) is much sought after by collectors. The salt has a reclining lion embossed in the frosted section, which barely shows in the picture. We have seen it for sale only once, years ago, and passed it up because the price was \$150. Now the price guides list it at \$250, and we still don't see any for sale.

7. Gillinder made their DAISY AND BUTTON pattern soon after the 1876 Centennial Expo when cut glass was such a hit. They called their line "Imitation Rich Cut Ware", since it copied the "Russian" cutting which attracted so much attention. They used it on their oval tub salts, on their TRIANGLE pattern tableware, and on their Cradle (Figs. 15, 16 & 17). We have been unable to find out if Gillinder was the first one to use this design - they certainly were one of the earliest. We also don't know when the DAISY AND BUTTON name was coined.

8. The Cradle (Fig. 17) and the Basket (TREE OF LIFE pattern, Fig. 18) weren't listed as salts in the old catalog. They come under the category of "Dishes that are the right size, and are too cute to pass up, no matter what the original makers called them". We keep telling ourselves that someone must have bought them for serving salt during the era when they were made.

9. The BUCKLE pattern (Figs. 19, 20, & 21) was not in the old catalogs, but is universally attributed to Gillinder. Jenks and Luna list salts with both a plain rim and a scalloped rim, as well as the low oval version. We don't know the source of their designation - it might be that one was made as a salt and the other for some other use. We hope to find an old catalog showing the entire set some day.

SALTS BY GILLINDER

Fig. No.	Approx. Date	Gillinder Name (Common Name)	H&J No.	Smith No.
1	1870-76	No. 1 Pillar		479-4-3
2	1870-76	No. 2 Concave		410-5-3 ?
3	1870-76	No. 3 Square Pillar		
4	1870-76	No. 5 Round Individual (ARGUS pattern)		
5	1870-76	No. 7 Mitre		
6	1870-76	No. 8 Pillar, Round		473-3-1
7	1870-76	NO. 9 Footed O'Hara (LOOP pattern)	3607	53-2-2
8	1870-76	No. 11 Square Individual		
9	1870-76	No. 12 Diamond (SAWTOOTH pattern)	3526	275-4-3
10	1870-76	No. 12 Diamond, Covered (SAWTOOTH pattern)	3526	
11	1870-76	No. 14 Oval Individual No. 15 Oval Table		
12	1876	No. 16 Oval Centennial (CENTENNIAL pattern)	3510	
13	1877	(LIBERTY BELL pattern) NO	2689	4-3-3
14	1877-90	(LION or FROSTED LION pattern)		346-5-3
15	1877-90	No. 408 Imitation Rich Cut Ware both individual and table sizes (DAISY & BUTTON oval tub)	850	13-3-2
16	1877-90	No. 3 Imitation Rich Cut Ware, Triangle (TRIANGLE pattern)	547	444-1-2
17	1877-90	Imitation Rich Cut Ware Cradle (DAISY & BUTTON pattern)		
18	1877-90	Sundries Section, Basket (TREE OF LIFE pattern)		
19	?	(BUCKLE pattern, oval master)	3512	335-5-2
20	?	(BUCKLE pattern, pedestal, plain rim)		467-5-1
21	?	(BUCKLE pattern, pedestal, scalloped rim)	3608	345-2-1
22	?	(Squirrel on Tree Trunk)	4671	

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SALTS BY GILLINDER



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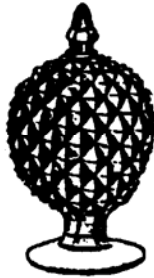
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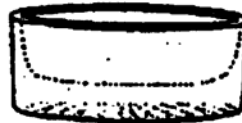
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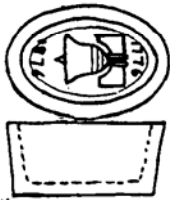
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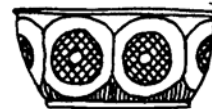
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