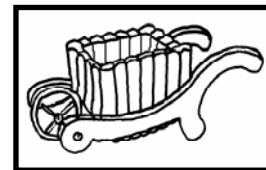


Salty Comments



Facts and Opinion about Open Salt Collecting

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“Let’s put together a flower garden of salts”, I suggested. “We have lots of them – some with painted flowers, some shaped like them, some with flowers as part of the glass pattern”.

“We should be able to get quite a few”, the resident garden club member responded.

“Just 2 rules before we start”, I said. “Only flowers that can be identified as a specific kind, and no roses”.

“That’s a dirty trick, but we can try”, was the reaction.

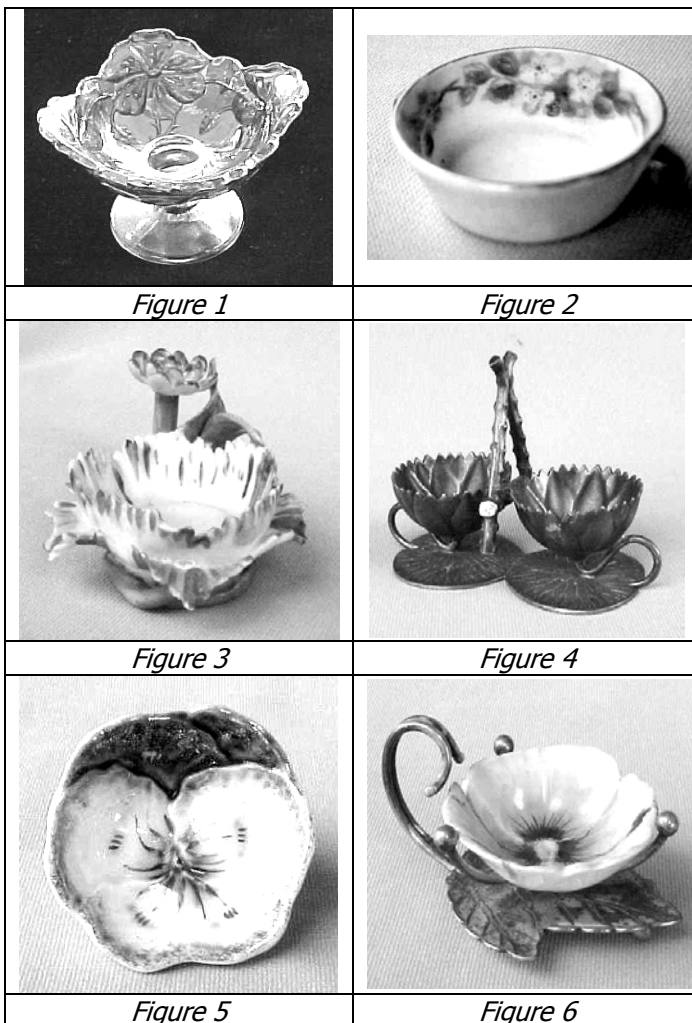
It turned out to be more difficult than it sounded. There are lots of blossoms on painted salts, but so many are just 4 or 5 petals with some leaves, not faithful at all to any that Mother Nature created (as far as we know). And when the artist wanted to paint a specific flower, 9 times out of ten it was a rose. We wound up with 16 different flowers, and 31 salts, and we had to use artistic license in some cases. The group had a wide variety of shapes and materials, which made it quite interesting as an open salt collection. Here’s what we found:

There were 4 types of flower salts in the collection – those shaped like a specific flower, those with flowers applied to the dish, those with flowers painted on, and glass ones which incorporated a flower in the pattern.

We found lots of “generic” flowers, like those shown at the right. Figure 1 is the “Azalea” or “Big Pansy” salt by Imperial. The blossom doesn’t look like either of these names, and we can’t put another name to it with our limited botanical background. Figure 2 shows another “generic” flower painted on china. Maybe it matches one in your garden – it doesn’t in ours. We wound up with a garden, but it was much smaller than we expected.

In the first group of salts, those shaped like flowers, there were 6 varieties represented. We found china and metal water lilies, shown in Figures 3 and 4. The first of these is unmarked china and very delicate, so much so that we’re surprised it has survived. It has purple trim and sits on a green “leaf” base. The second is a silver plated double, marked Rogers and Smith, New Haven. We also have a matching individual one, and have seen a matching pepper shaker.

There are 2 salts in the pansy category. The first (Figure 5) is blue and white china with a little gold trim, and is unmarked. The second (Figure 6) is a yellow porcelain pansy in a plated frame, with a leaf on the bottom. The frame is marked “N&W” and a number, but we haven’t been able to identify the specific manufacturer. The china has a different (unidentified) maker’s mark and an English registry number issued in 1889.



(2)

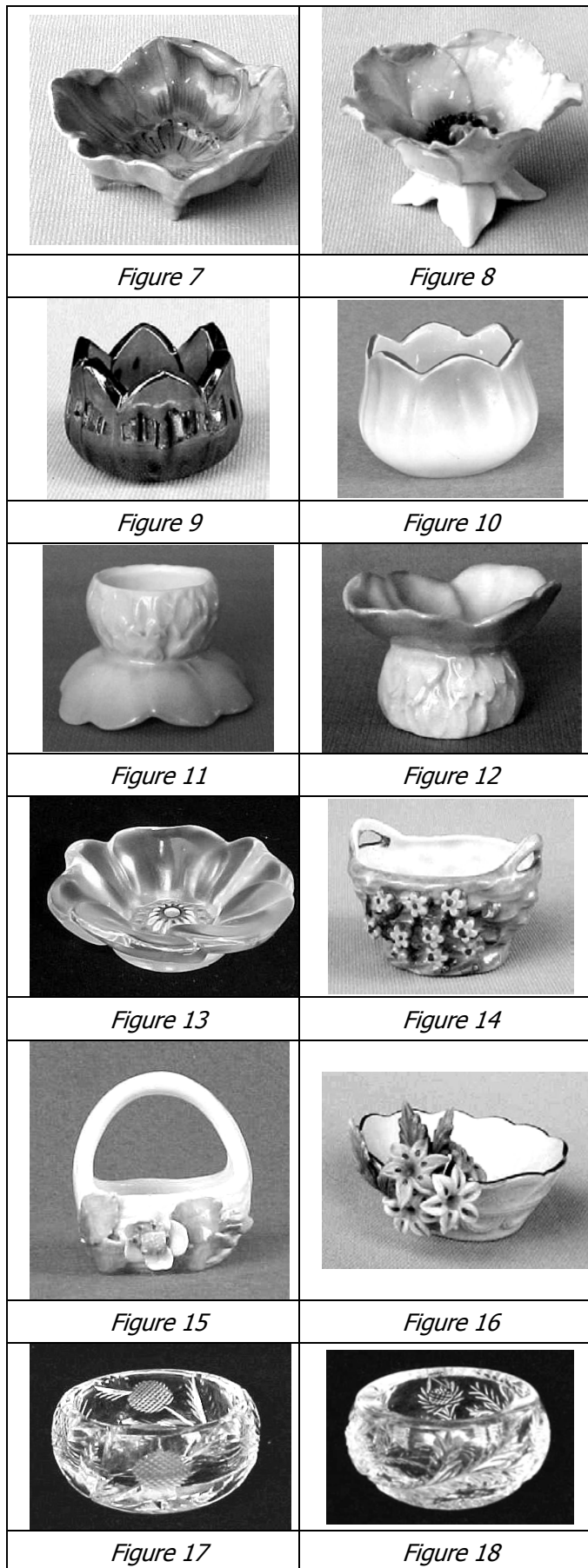
Poppies are represented by two china salts shown in Figures 7 and 8. The first is bright orange with a green center, and 4 short legs underneath. It is unmarked, but we have seen one like it stamped “Made in Germany”. The second is very delicate china, and sits on a base of four white leaves which form feet. It has a dark green center and is sort of a pink-peach color. This is not the color of the poppies in our garden, so it must be a hybrid. It has a mark which is illegible.

The fourth shape is the tulip, which is a popular motif in open salts. The two with this shape are the glass LOTUS pattern (Figure 9), first made by Westmoreland and now being turned out in a wide range of colors by Summit Art Glass. The same size and shape was made of china (Figure 10). This one is white and purple outside with an orange luster interior and a black rim, marked “Made in Japan”.

We have two other flower shapes in our “garden”. The first is the Royal Bayreuth Clover Blossom” salt in Figure 11. The flower is pink as it should be, and the base is green. If you turn it over, however, (Figure 12) it still looks like a salt and would be better suited for dipping celery and other vegetables. Maybe that’s what the maker intended – use it either way according to your current menu. The other shape is the frosted glass Peach Blossom (Figure 13), from the Imperial Glass Cathay Crystal line made during the late 1940’s. We have seen this salt being sold as Lalique, with a correspondingly high price, because it resembles the more expensive French glass.










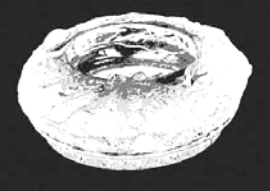
In the area of applied flowers, we have many salts with applied roses but fewer with identifiable species. The flowers on Figure 14, are Forget-Me-Not’s which are often used in German Elfinware salts like this one. The white flower on the basket in Figure 15, looks like an apple blossom, flanked by 2 green leaves. The third one in this category is a cream-colored basket-weave oval dish with white and yellow lilies and green leaves on the edge (Figure 16). The leaves don’t look like those on our lilies, but the salt is too elegant not to be in this special group. It is unmarked, but looks like something Dresden would make.

The third part of our garden show involves glass salts with flowers on them. Here the most abundant shape is the thistle – sort of like our real-life garden. We have a cut glass salt with thistles on the sides (Figure 17), which is similar to the pressed Duncan #80 pattern that has thistles and leaves impressed into the glass (Figure 18).



(3)

Among the goblet-like glass master salts there is the THISTLE pattern (Figure 19), made by Bryce about 1872 that also shows both flowers and leaves. Finally there is the paneled thistle pattern originated by Higbee and shown in Figure 20. This comes both with and without the Higbee "Bee" which has the letters "HIG" in the wings and body. This was adapted by L.G. Wright into a larger version which is 2-1/4" across, larger than the 1-3/4" for the Higbee original (Figure 21). Wright also put a bee in the bottom of his salt, but did not put any letters in it. Beyond the thistle, we have two glass salts with a tulip motif. These are the TULIP WITH SAWTOOTH master (Figure 22) and the tulip-like pattern child's dish in Figure 23. The master is the version with a flat rim, made to accept a cover which was lost before we obtained it. Someday we may find a stray cover to fit if we are very lucky. The child's dish is one we have yet to identify in any of the old catalogs we have studied. There are a number of flowers used in pattern glass salts, especially the goblet type masters. The LILY OF THE VALLEY pattern by Richards and Hartley shown in Figure 24 is typical. The maker called it May Flower, but we're sure the plant is Coral Bells, in spite of the name given by the Pattern Glass pundits. A similar one is the BLEEDING HEART pattern by King, shown in Figure 25. There is no question about the identity of the blossom in this case. The Stevens & Williams English art glass salt in Figure 26 has pink glass apple blossoms on a custard glass background, formed by acid cut-back of layered glass. It is trimmed with gold, and the silver rim has a Birmingham 1885 mark on it. One of our intaglios has an identifiable flower – a spray of poppies. These are painted, and show in Figure 27. Finally in the "molded in" category there is the Sandwich MORNING GLORY salt (Figure 28). We stared at this salt for some time before convincing ourselves that we could actually see a flower in the design. Morning Glory leaves, yes, but the flower is jumbled up in the middle of them.

	
<i>Figure 19</i>	<i>Figure 20</i>
	
<i>Figure 21</i>	<i>Figure 22</i>
	
<i>Figure 23</i>	<i>Figure 24</i>
	
<i>Figure 25</i>	<i>Figure 26</i>
	
<i>Figure 27</i>	<i>Figure 28</i>

(4)

Moving on to the painted designs, the most common identifiable ones are violets and pansies. Some of these are on glass salts, like the green one with violets shown in Figure 29. We have no idea as to its source. Violets also can be found on a number of china shapes, like the footed one shown in Figure 30. We're sure we have seen a number of other shapes with this flower. One or more of you have probably collected them, and could write an essay on violets alone. Our friend the thistle shows up again on the English dish in Figure 31. This one is has the Goss mark, the same company that made so much of the heraldic china souvenir ware that can be used as salts. Some of the home decorated salts have identifiable flowers on them, though we're sure the makers would say they are more identifiable that we think. The salt in Figure 32 is one of these. We've called the flower a daisy, and we hope the artist (M. Paddock) would agree with us. The bottom of this salt has her name, and a CFM/GDM France mark. Finally we have the Mt. Washington salts decorated by the Smith brothers. Two of these are shown in Figures 33 and 34 with pansies and fuchsia blossoms respectively. The latter flower is one we've never seen on any other shape of salt, either glass or china. Although we said "No roses" at the start, we can't resist putting in two examples of this most popular flower. Applied ones like those in Figure 35 are not uncommon, but salts with painted ones like Figure 36 could more than fill the space we have used in this newsletter. If you want to get only salts with painted roses, you would need a very large cabinet but would have a beautiful open salt collection.

So now we've put together a garden of salts. It's nice because it doesn't have to be watered or weeded regularly, like a real one. The flowers are used to decorate our tables, piano, windowsills, and any other horizontal surface, especially when the salt shelves get too full, and they won't fade like their real-life counterparts. The variety is limited – we'd like to have poinsettias for the Christmas season but haven't got a salt like that yet. Our identification of flowers has sometimes involved "artistic license", so please feel free to disagree with the names we have chosen. We hope you can find more varieties in your collection, and that they are even more attractive than ours are.

Ed Berg
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P.S. After writing this, we found a U.S. Glass catalog that called the dish in Figure 1, "Wild Rose Wreath Footed Almond". Looking at it again, maybe it does depict wild roses, which adds another one to our rose garden of salts.

