

View from the Salt Box - #44

We made a find at the Jones Museum of Glass and Ceramics near Portland, ME this summer (It's a very worthwhile place to visit if you are in the area). For a long time we have wondered about the basket double salt (Figure 1) shown in an old Co-Operative Flint Glass catalog, (H&J page 18). We have seen a number of them around, and have found that Imperial made them in milk glass as shaker holders, apparently using the old mold (Figure 2). In the Museum gift shop they had one on sale which we are pretty sure is old (Figures 3 & 4). Evidently Co-Op Flint sold the dish both ways - with and without shakers. In the set we found, the shakers were obviously blown into a mold with lung power, a technique common at the end of the 19th century.. These shakers fit into the basket only one way. If you take either of them out and turn it 90 degrees, it won't go back into the hole. Imperial's shakers don't have this problem. So we now have an old and a new to compare for yet another salt. We also have the knowledge that the maker sold the basket two ways - as a double salt and as a shaker holder. From this we leap to the conclusion that almost any shaker holder could also be sold as a double, which may be stretching things a bit.

There is another basket double around which has a smooth handle instead of a rope handle (Figure 5). We have no idea who made this one, but the workmanship on our copy is definitely inferior. It was taken out of the mold too soon, and the center divider has sagged, giving a lump at its bottom and pulling in the sides slightly. The rope-handle basket is being reproduced in cobalt by Summit Art Glass using the Imperial mold, and our copy has the same center sagging.

Another glass shaker holder which might have been sold both ways is the one shown in Figure 6. We have the shaker set without the tops, but have more often seen just the double salt. We wish we could find an old catalog reference to see how the maker listed it. We've also seen the holder with 3 compartments, probably designed to hold a mustard jar as well as the two shakers.

Sometimes open salts are designed to hold a shaker for the pepper, like the Imperial CAPE COD set in Figure 7. They are shaker holders too, but there is no doubt as to their legitimacy in an open salt collection.

Some porcelain shaker holders we have seen just won't do for open salts. They lack the center divider, which says to us that they would be impractical for holding salt and pepper. Yes, they could just hold salt alone, perhaps with a spoon on each side, but they also are much better suited for holding shakers.

Finally we have the Whatzit shown in Figure 8. This is fine porcelain with a KPM mark which has a divider down the center. You can pour or sprinkle from either side without losing any of the contents from the opposite one. We could use it for salt and pepper quite nicely, but did the KPM factory think of that? If any of you have an idea of something else it was intended for, we'd like to hear.

We hope you have a few doubles which were made to do double duty, as salts and as shaker holders. We'll be on the lookout for them in the future - there must be more of them out there.



Fig. 1 - Basket Double



Figure 2 - Imperial Set



Figure 3

Figure 4



Figure 5 - Repr



Figure 6 - Salt & Shakers



Figure 7 - CAPE COD



Figure 8 - Whatzit?