

**SALTY COMMENTS #22**  
(Facts and Opinion on Open Salt Collecting)

In Salty Comments #20 we talked about open salts made by George Duncan & Sons Co. in the factory at Pittsburgh, PA. We left our story in 1892, after the business had become Factory D in the United States Glass Co. and had subsequently burned. By this time, George had died and his sons were running the operation.

When U.S. Glass decided not to rebuild, the Duncans went into business for themselves. They bought land in Washington, PA, known in the area today as "Little Washington" to avoid confusion with our nation's capital. A new factory was completed in 1893, and George Duncan's Sons & Co. went into business. In 1900 they incorporated, and changed their name to Duncan and Miller Glass Co. The Miller in their name was John Ernest Miller, who was originally a mold shop superintendent in the old George Duncan & Sons business. He became a part of management in recognition of his abilities (or because he invested of money in the business - take your choice. These were the days of Horatio Alger, and the first of the two sounds much more exciting.)

The company survived until 1955, owned and run by a succession of heirs of the original founders. At that time the competition from automated factories was too great, and they shut down. Molds and equipment were sold to U.S. Glass, who published a catalog of their "D & M Division" in the late 1950's. The molds were run at the Glassport, PA plant, although the main offices were in Tiffin, Ohio. The Washington, PA factory building was sold to a tire recapping firm, but burned before operations were started.

The Duncan (Washington) operation made a number of open salts which we know of. Most of these date back to the early 1900's - later patterns seem to have featured only salt shakers. We have listed 30 different shapes and sizes. Most are easy to identify, but a few patterns were copied by other glass companies or have recently been reproduced. We will try to identify these for you, moving down the attached list in order. Those we do not comment on are straightforward - the open salt looks like the sketch, and we know of no other salts close to the original.

Duncan #24 - QUARTERED BLOCK (WITH DIAMONDS) (mis-identified in H&J as TEUTONIC) has been copied by Guernsey Glass Co. of Cambridge, Ohio. in crystal and a multitude of colors. Their mold has a faint "B" on the lower edge of the side, which you can find if you are lucky and persistent and have the right light. The original Duncan is 1-1/6 inch higher and better glass. You can safely assume that all the colored ones are Guernsey, but you need an original Duncan for comparison on the clear salts. Guernsey is considered a reproduction, but it is really a collectible in the early stages. The dishes were made a quite a few years ago, and it looks like no more will be produced. Harold Bennett has only a small number left in a very few colors. If you want a challenge, see how many colors you can find, but watch out for people who try to sell the dish as "old".

Duncan #30 - SCALLOPED SIX POINT is shown as an individual and as a larger size with scalloped rim in H&J (#2661). The catalog reprints we have seen show no salts like this, but there are nappies with the same configuration. We have a dish in the #42 pattern with the identical shape and size. For the time being we are calling it a nappy.

Duncan #42 - EMPIRE (now known as MARDI GRAS) is close to the SERRATED RIB AND FINECUT design, but the latter has 2 rows of zippers between panels. The latter dish is shown in H&J 2535, Smith 470-6-1.

Duncan #54 - COLONIAL was made by a number of companies, both the tub and the simple hexagonal shape. We don't know how to tell for sure which is the Duncan. We bought one from a Duncan collector who told us it was genuine, but we have seen so many pictures like it in other old catalogs that we still need to do more research. The table (master) salt size may be unique - we have seen its picture only in the Duncan catalog but never an actual dish.

Duncan #61,#65 - The individual size pedestal salt is very close to ones made by other companies. We're not sure how to identify which of several dishes is Duncan. The two larger sizes may be easier to tell - so far we know of no other company who made the bigger versions. The celery dip is unique and not in the books, probably because it looks like a condiment dish. The old catalog shows it clearly as a celery dip, however.

Duncan #63 - The books call this #62, but catalog reprints show otherwise.

Duncan #66 - Westmoreland made a dish almost exactly like this one. Their mold is still in use at Summit Art Glass Co. Comparing the Summit salts with others like it, we can find only one difference that can be described. If we run our thumb over the center of the underside, we feel a much deeper depression on the Westmoreland & Summit salts than on the ones we think are Duncan. Evidently the bottom plate of the Westmoreland mold is different.

You can probably assume that any colored salts are Westmoreland or Summit. To identify the clear ones, we suggest that you have a Summit dish (or better an authenticated Duncan one) for comparison.

Duncan #72 - FLAWLESS - The old catalog shows only 2 sizes, but we have 3. We have found no record of other companies making this shape, so we are assuming all 3 are Duncan. The lengths of the bottoms on the 3 are 1-11/16", 2-1/16" and 2-1/2". We have the smallest size in both clear and green with all faces polished.

Some of the dishes were decorated after they were made, often in ruby stain or gold by the Oriental Glass Co. of Pittsburgh. The salts we know about are:

#10 - (no name) engraved

#30 - SCALLOPED SIX POINT - shown in ruby stain on the cover of H&J. A number of other patterns had larger dishes with ruby stain, so there may be other stained salts as well. Keep your eyes open - they are scarce if they exist.

#54 - COLONIAL - we have seen the tub shape engraved, and also with silver deposit (H&J 3866)

#65 - (no name) - we have the celery dip with gold on the upper rim and also with silver deposit decoration

#66 - (no name) - can be found with silver deposit decoration

#72 - FLAWLESS - found with silver deposit decoration (H&J 3870, Smith 386-5-2)

We have covered what we know of the open salts made by Duncan in Washington, PA. There may be more that we have not included - certainly the factory made a number of other patterns of tableware. If you know of any that we have left off the list, we would appreciate hearing of it so we can pass the information along. In the meantime, you might like to see how many of those on the list are already in your collection. You might also enjoy trying to find a complete set - even without getting into different colors it will be a challenge. We'll be looking too - we don't have copies of BLOCK BAND or the master size of COLONIAL in the simple hexagonal shape. We think both are scarce.

Happy Hunting.

Ed Berg  
401 Nottingham Rd., Newark, DE 19711

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#### Acknowledgements:

We would like to thank George Schamel, who started us on the hunt for Duncan salts with his talk at an OSCAR meeting, and who put together a list of Duncan (Washington) salts for us to work from. We are especially indebted to Irene Bobrowicz of Lorain, Ohio who not only edited our list of Duncan salts but gave us references where we could find the actual salts shown on old catalog pages. She is the most informed person we know on this subject, and we are grateful for the considerable effort she put in to share her knowledge with us.

DUNCAN (WASHINGTON, PA) SALTS

<u>Duncan No.</u>	<u>Smith No.</u>	<u>H&amp;J No.</u>	<u>Year Made</u> (approx)	<u>Pattern Name</u>
10		3315	1930's	No name. Book shows a 2-1/2" ash tray like this, with grooves for holding a cigarette.
20	29-1-2		1895	GRATED DIAMOND & SUNBURST
24	23-4-1	2541 3688(master)	1894	QUARTERED BLOCK (WITH DIAMONDS), ( <u>not</u> TEUTONIC). Two sizes. Individual size reproduced by Guernsey (H&J #401, 579, 883, 912-14).
27			1895	BLOCK BAND, Brown #673 (p.93, row 2, #1) may be it
28	31-3-2	2539	1897	TEPEE
30	31-4-2	2540	1896	SCALLOPED SIX POINT
39	11-3-2	3388	1897	BUTTON ARCHES
40	31-3-1	3386	1898	Named BASSETTOWN by Duncan Glass Society, no original name. Larger pieces have been made with ruby stain.
42	30-1-3 30-4-2	2534 2698	1894	Originally EMPIRE, now called MARDI GRAS, comes as round and oval individuals. Rare in color (blue, amber, pale green).
44	108-5-1	2658	1900	BUTTON PANEL ( <u>not</u> BUTTON PANEL WITH BARS)
48	22-4-2	2699	1901	DIAMOND RIDGE
51	29-3-2	2659	1902	TWO PLY SWIRL
52	84-3-3	2655	1900	Originally CROWN, now called LADDER WITH DIAMOND
54		2848 2875	1902	COLONIAL, as a simple hexagonal shape (both individual and master), and as a tub. We have seen the hexagonal individual in clear, pink and green.
58	291-2-1	2657	1904	CLOVER
61	297-5-2	2961	1905	8-sided pedestal, scalloped rim, individual size only.
63	80-1-3	3406	1900	HOMESTEAD
65	297-5-2	2961	1905	Individual size same as #61. Also 2 larger sizes in the same pedestal shape, plus an open bowl celery dip.
66	80-5-2	2957	1906	8-panelled pedestal, smooth rim. Westmoreland made one that matches almost exactly.
72	481-3-3	2887	1905	FLAWLESS pattern, in 3 sizes - bottom lengths 1-11/16", 2-1/16" and 2-1/2". Catalog shows 2 sizes, an individual and a celery dip. We have the smallest in crystal and green, all faces polished.
80	29-2-3		1913	THISTLE, recently called SUNFLOWER PATCH

ANOTHER DUNCAN ITEM IN THE BOOKS

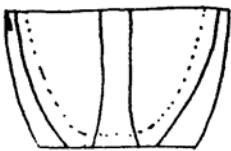
<u>Their No.</u>	<u>Smith No.</u>	<u>H&amp;J No.</u>	<u>Year Made</u>	<u>Pattern Name</u>
41	478-6-3	2687	1925	EARLY AMERICAN SANDWICH pattern, a salted almond dish

References:

- Ten books, "Open Salts Illustrated" by Helen and Alan Smith  
 "5000 Open Salts" by William Heacock and Patricia Johnson  
 "Salt Dishes" by Clark W. Brown  
 "The Encyclopedia of Duncan Glass" by Gail Krause  
 "The Years of Duncan" by Gail Krause  
 "The Book of Duncan Glass" by Frances Bones  
 "Encyclopedia of Victorian Colored Pattern Glass" by William Heacock  
 Book 5 - "U.S. Glass from A to Z" (co-authored with Fred Bickenheuser)  
 Book 6 - "Oil Cruets from A to Z"  
 Book 7 - "Ruby Stained Glass from A to Z"  
 "Pressed Glass in America" by John & Elizabeth Welker  
 "The Encyclopedia of Pattern Glass" by Mollie McCain

DUNCAN (WASHINGTON) SALTS

(By Duncan Pattern Number)



10



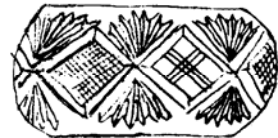
GRATED DIAMOND &amp; SUNBURST

20



QUARTERED BLOCK (WITH DIAMONDS)

24



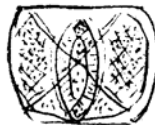
BLOCK BAND

27



TEPEE

28



SCALLOPED SIX POINT

30



BUTTON ARCHES

39



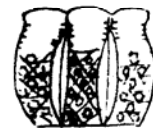
BASSETTOWN

40



Originally EMPIRE, now called MARDI GRAS

42



BUTTON PANEL

44

DUNCAN (WASHINGTON) SALTS  
(By Duncan Pattern Number)



DIAMOND RIDGE

48



TWO PLY SWIRL

51



Originally CROWN  
now called LADDER WITH DIAMOND

52



COLONIAL

54



CLOVER

58

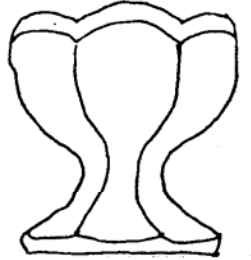
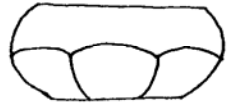


61



HOMESTEAD

63



65

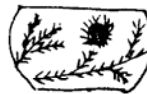
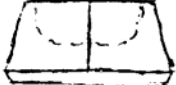


66



FLAWLESS

72



THISTLE  
recently called  
SUNFLOWER PATCH

80



EARLY AMERICAN SANDWICH

41