

SALTY COMMENTS #23
(Facts and Opinion on Open Salt Collecting)

Part of the fun of open salt collecting is identifying the dishes we find. It is specially exciting when we get a salt with a mark, because we can go to the books and look it up. We don't find the mark every time, but when we do it tells us who made the dish and sometimes leads us to the approximate date. We find marks on silver and silver plate, ceramics which we are frequently able to decipher. When we get a glass mark, we find there are fewer reference books, and that some of the marks are too recent to be listed in the books that have been published. Our visits to Ohio glass companies have helped us keep up with some of the unpublished information. In this issue we will try to summarize what we have been able to find about marks on glass open salts.

Many glass companies have used trade marks, but not all of them made open salts. The earliest marks we know were during the lacy period (1825-1850). Sandwich put their name on the LAFAYET boat (Smith 396-5-2, H&J 456). The Providence Glass Co. in Rhode Island marked "Providence" on a lacy salt (Smith 396-1-1), and the Stourbridge Flint Glass Co. marked "Pittsburgh" on a boat salt (Smith 396-5-1). The New England Glass Co. and the Jersey Glass Co. both made a rectangular salt marked with their name. The Jersey dish is not in the books, but it looks like the New England one (Smith 329-4-1, H&J 3480). Each of these old dishes seems to be the only marked salt that the company made, according to the books we have read. The names are embossed on the glass, meaning the raised letters we see were cut into the mold that was used.

The use of marks on glass seems to have started about 1842 in England, when a system for registering a design was established to protect manufacturers from imitators. A complex mark was adopted and sometimes embossed on each piece to inform others that they could not copy it. Deciphering this registry mark is straightforward, but requires a table of codes which can be found in most reference books on porcelain or glass marks. We are not sure when the use of maker's trade marks began on English glass, but it was after the registry mark was adopted.

In the U.S., registry of trade marks started about 1860. Once a mark is registered, it can be protected indefinitely by renewing the application every 20 years. Relatively few glass companies chose to mark each piece, which is unfortunate for collectors today. The pieces that are marked, however, are more valuable because the mark establishes the identity.

The four ways that marks are put on a piece of glass permanently are:

1. Embossing - Raised lettering or a raised design is produced by cutting it into the mold.
2. Impressing - The reverse of embossing. Raised letters in the mold produced sunken letters in the finished piece.
3. Inscribing - A sharp diamond or carbide point is used to scratch the desired mark on the glass. Sometimes a copper wheel is used instead of a sharp point. Used on freehand glass, not on hand pressed or machine manufactured.
4. Acid etch - A rubber stamp is wet with hydrofluoric acid to mark the glass in the same way an inked stamp is used on paper. This is the way most cut glass is marked.

On the following pages we will show some of the glass company marks we have found on salts. We have not included country marks (Japan, Czechoslovakia, Taiwan), or marks that we have seen on labels only. We hope that the list will help you identify the maker and perhaps the age of some of your dishes.

MARKS ON PRESSED GLASS SALTS

The following marks are embossed on the glass unless stated otherwise. In some cases salts have been made both marked and unmarked. The absence of a mark does not always mean that the dish is old, or that there are two different makers.

AVON

Avon Co. - The mark is found on the underneath corner of a lacy salt of their own design (Smith 85-5-2, H&J 3506). It imitates the old dish that the Henry Ford Museum copied, but the bowl is round instead of oval. We know of no old dish with the round bowl, but we have seen a dealer who labelled this as old lacy ware.



Guernsey Glass Co., Cambridge, Ohio (1967 -) The B is the initial of the owner (Harold Bennett). Originally made glass, then had others make it using Guernsey molds. No recent production. Their inventory of salts is nearly depleted, and they seem to be going out of business.



Boyd

Boyd's Crystal Art Glass Co. All of their glass is marked. They used the first mark when they bought the Degenhart business in 1978, added the line under the diamond in 1983, and the line above it in 1988. The scratched signature is on a few scarce pieces that were made when they tested some old molds they had purchased.



Cambridge Glass Co. Some, but not all, of their salts are marked. When Imperial bought their molds after 1958, they also bought the rights to use the mark. The MOUNT VERNON pattern salt was subsequently made without removing the mark from the mold. We have one of these with the Cambridge mark and an Imperial Glass sticker.



Crystal Art Glass Co. Their early glass was unmarked, but Elizabeth Degenhart started using the embossed D in a heart in 1972. They also impressed this mark into the hot glass on some of their items from 1967-1972. We have one salt marked in this latter fashion.

E.E.

E&E Collectables, Plainfield, IN (1986-) Bought the Wetzel molds and inventory in 1986. Have sold off most of the Wetzel salts, but have a few designs left. Their glass is made by others using the molds they own. All their items are plainly marked E&E.



Hazel Atlas Glass Co. This is frequently attributed to Anchor Hocking, whose mark is really an anchor on an H. Hazel Atlas has made relatively little tableware, but made lots of small jelly glasses in the days when you preserved fruit at home.

HFM

Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, MI - The mark is found on a lacy salt reproduction made for them by Fostoria (H&J 924, shape of Smith 327-4-2).



A.H. Heisey Co., Newark, OH (1893-1958) - There is an imitation of this mark on a few pieces of glass imported 10-20 years ago, but no salts were involved that we know of.

KRYSTOL

Used successively by the Ohio Flint Glass Works (1906-8), Jefferson Glass (1908-18) and Central Glass Works (1919-). Found in a few salts; we don't know which of the 3 companies made them.

MMA

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City - The mark is found on a lacy salt reproduction made for them by Imperial (H&J 895, shape of Smith 324-4-2).



Mosser Glass Co., Cambridge, OH (1971-) Their marks have changed over the years, from the M to the M in a circle to the present M in an outline of Ohio. All their salts are made both marked and unmarked. Since they use old Cambridge molds as well as their own originals, this makes some Cambridge salts difficult or impossible to identify. It also leads some people to identify the unmarked ones as "old", even when the mold is original with Mosser.



Northwood Glass Co., Martins Ferry, OH (1880's to 1923) The mark was used starting about 1910.



Pairpoint Glass Works, Sagamore, MA - The only salt we have seen with this mark was the LAFAYET boat type made for sale at the Sandwich Museum.



The Fostoria LUCERE open salt is now being made with this embossed on the bottom. We understand it is the Pioneer Glass Co. mark, but we have yet to get any first-hand information about them.

PORTIEUX

Our book lists 2 glass companies in Portieux, France. We are not sure which of them made the marked salts which we have.



Wholesale Glass Dealers (Phil and Helen Rosso), Port Vue, PA. They have their glass pressed by others using molds they own. The mark was originally registered by E.F. Rump & Sons in 1892, but the claim to it was evidently allowed to expire.



L.E. Smith Glass Co., Mt. Pleasant, PA We have seen a newly made ENGLISH HOBNAIL pedestal salt with their mark. We know of no old salts with this.

Joe St Clair

St. Clair Glass Works, Elwood, Indiana. Started in 1938. Joe St. Clair, the most recent owner, died in 1987 and we believe the business has closed. His marked glass has become more valuable since then.



Summit Art Glass. The V is the initial of the owner (Russell Vogelsong). They used the mark on their LION salt before they started making their own glass in 1984. The mark is now used on some of the salts they make with old molds from other glass companies.

**VAL ST LAMBERT
BELGIQUE**

Crystalleries du Val-Saint-Lambert in Liege, Belgium. We have one open salt they made. We think it is recent, but have no information on their operations other than that they started in 1825.

VALLERYSTHAL

Vallerysthal Glass Works, Vallerysthal, France - established 1836 and still in operation.

R Wetzel RW
1976

R. Wetzel Glass Co., Zanesville, Ohio (1977-) They sold their inventory, molds and glass pressing equipment in 1986. A few salts are still offered for sale, but most of their limited production has disappeared and is quite collectible.



Westmoreland Glass Co., Grapeville PA 1889-1985 - The company put this mark on their molds a few years before they went out of business. The only salt they made with this mark, as far as we can determine, is the hen on a nest. Other salts with this mark are currently production by Summit Art Glass, who uses the old molds without removing the WG.



L.G. Wright Co. This mark has been used occasionally, but most of their glass is sold with only a label. The only salt we know of with this mark is their copy of the THREE FACE pattern.



A raised dot, embossed in the center of the bottom. Used by Summit Art Glass to identify reproductions they make using old Cambridge molds.



English Registry mark. Tables in most reference books will let you identify the year, month and day of registry and the bundle in the British Patent Office where the papers are filed.



Sowerby Glass Co., England (1855-). The design is a peacock's head - we thought it was a sea lion the first time we saw it.



John B. Higbee Glass Co., Bridgeville PA (1907-1919) - The mark has been imitated but not copied exactly on a salt by L.G. Wright



L.G. Wright Co., New Martinsville, WV - This mark was used on their PANELLED THISTLE salt, which is a larger version of the old Higbee dish.

MARKS ON CUT, ENGRAVED AND CAMEO GLASS

All of these are acid etch unless stated otherwise. Most cut glass salts are not signed. Those that have the marks are much in demand and bring a substantially higher price.



Baccarat, Muerthe, France (1860-) - We have seen new lead crystal salts with this mark in a high-class jewelry store. They are beautiful but expensive.



Daum et Cie., Nancy, France (1875-) The word "France" was added to the signature in 1920. The mark is painted or etched on the bottom on the salts we have seen.



H.C. Fry Glass Co., Rochester, PA (1901-1934)



Thomas G. Hawkes & Co., Corning, NY (1895-1962)



J. Hoare & Co., Corning, NY (1853-1920) The mark was registered in 1895. Salts bearing it are after this date.



W.H. Libbey & Son, Toledo, OH - The first mark was used 1896-1906; the second was 1906-1913.



H.P. Sinclair & Co., Corning, NY (1904-1928)



Probably Waterford Crystal Ltd., Waterford, Ireland (1951-) We can find only one reference to this mark, and it implies that the older Waterford salts were unmarked.

Wedgwood Wedgwood, Galway, Ireland - This mark appears on a new dish our son brought back from his trip to Europe several years ago.



Maple City Glass Co. (1898) Our source says the Company was taken over by T.B. Clark Co. soon after it started.

MARKS ON FREEHAND GLASS SALTS

Freehand salts are made by glass artisans without the benefit of a mold. There are a number of shops doing this today, but few make open salts. All these marks are scratched on the glass unless stated otherwise. Cameo glass may be freehand or pressed, but is worked by hand to get the cameo effect.

Crider
1988

Terry Crider, an independent glass artist working in Wapakoneta, Ohio. He has made a number of open salts, including the one for the first National Open Salt Convention.

Pepi

Pepi Herrman, Laconia, NH - Pepi learned his art in Europe and has set up business in New Hampshire. We know of only one shape of salt that he has made.



Steuben

Steuben Glass Works, Corning, NY (Now part of Corning Glass Works) - The older dishes have the acid etch fleur-de-lys mark, or an acid etch signature on them. Present day ones have a scratched signature on their bottom.

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Orefors, Glasbruck, Sweden (1913-)

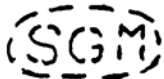
Quezal

Quezal Art Glass & Decorating Co., New York City (1901-1925). Our Quezal salt is marked with an engraving wheel.

L.C.T.

Tiffany Glass Co. (later Tiffany Studios), New York City (1892-1928). Some salts have a scratched mark; others have the signature made by an engraving wheel.

L.C.T. Family



Sandwich Glass Museum, Sandwich, MA The museum shop sells small freehand dishes bearing this mark in acid etch. They are called miniature bowls, but have a shape similar to salts made earlier by Steuben.

Vitrix
1987

Vitrix Co., Corning, NY - They made a limited number of one design of open salt in 1987 on special order. Although they do extensive freehand work, we know of no other open salts they have made.

We hope that you have some of the above marks in your collection, and that the list will tell you something that you did not know before.

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References: Ten books "Open Salts Illustrated" by Helen and Alan Smith
"5000 Open Salts" by William Heacock and Patricia Johnson
"400 Trademarks on Glass" by Arthur G. Peterson
"Glass Signatures, Trademarks and Trade Names" by Anne Geffken Pullen
"Know Your Antiques" by Ralph and Terry Kovel