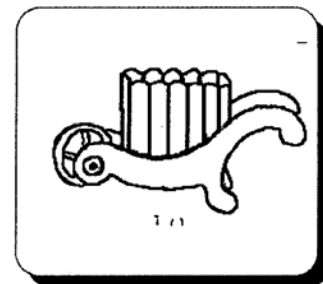




Salty Comments

No. 41

Facts and Opinion about Open Salt Collecting



In 1845, the firm we call Hobbs, Brockunier was started. Its initial name was Barnes, Hobbs Co., reflecting the names of the principal partners. The name changed to Hobbs, Barnes and back again before 1863, when a new partnership changed the company to Hobbs, Brockunier. It stayed this way for 25 years, then reorganized as the Hobbs Glass Co. in 1888. Three years later they became Factory H of the U. S. Glass combine. It was dismantled in 1893 because of labor problems.

During their heyday Hobbs was relatively large, employing 650 people and shipping over a carload of glass per day. Their biggest contribution to the industry was the work of William Leighton, who developed a formula for making acceptable pressed products from soda-lime glass. The elimination of the lead and potash cut costs by 30%, so use of the new formula spread to the entire industry within 10 years. The other thing Hobbs pioneered was the production of colored glass items, which they started many years before other large factories. Their catalogs reflect this - their set in the DAISY & BUTTON pattern which include their Yacht Salt (we call it a boat) was advertised in Crystal, Old Gold (amber), Sapphire (blue), Mint Green and Canary (vaseline). We don't have any information about which other patterns were made in color.

Hobbs made a number of common open salts (round, square, etc.) which we cannot separate from similar ones made by many others. We have been able to identify 13 shapes which are probably only theirs, however. These are listed on page 2. Comments on them:

The #115 and #332 Ware sets had legs on all the pieces, including the salt. These are the kind of things that break off in the dishpan. We have never seen either of these salts in the books or in any collection. They must be scarce - keep your eyes open for them.

The turtle shape was patented by Hobbs in 1875, and made in several sizes including the salt. This shape also has projecting parts, and it is quite common to see a tail or a leg chipped or missing.

The pattern we call VIKING was issued by them in 1876 and originally named CENTENNIAL. We don't know how a Viking's head is connected with the 100th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Maybe they were saluting Lief Erikson.

Their Yacht Salt needs further clarification. It is part of a tableware set in the DAISY AND BUTTON pattern. We have two boats like this with different pattern sizes, one with full daisies and 6 buttons on each side and one with a coarser design. This latter boat has only 5 buttons and half-daisies on the sides, which matches the picture in the old catalog. Look closely at yours to find out which it is. We feel certain the coarser pattern is Hobbs, but we don't know who made the other version.

The salt we have in their #102 pattern, which the books call SUNBURST AND BAR, has an unconventional shape. The pattern was patented in 1886, and there is no question but that the design matches the patent. Most salts of the 1880's are round bowls on a pedestal, however. The low, rectangular shape went out of style 15-20 years earlier. Our salt like the one in H&J doesn't look like it belongs even if the pattern does match. We saw the patent, but didn't find any old catalog pages, so we can't be sure what is going on. Maybe Hobbs copied the markings from the salt, which was made earlier. We're puzzled.

The faceted oval salts we have that match the catalog pictures all have polished faces. Although the catalog shows only two sizes (Large and Medium), we have inferred that the smaller version exists because the one in our collection matches the others perfectly. This might also have been made by other companies, but we haven't seen the oval version in any other catalogs yet.

The Hobbs #205 salt is also a common shape - 6-sided with a round bowl - but it is hollow underneath. This also is something which we haven't seen in any other catalog, so we're guessing it's original Hobbs.

(2)

SALTS BY HOBBS, BELLAIRE, DALZELL

Fig. No..	Catalog Year	Factory and (Current) Name	Smith No.	H&J No.
Hobbs Brockunier & Co.				
1	1870	BLACKBERRY pattern master size	-	3557
2	1875-88	#115 Ware Table Salt	-	-
3	1875-88	# 332 Ware Table Salt	-	-
4	1875	Turtle Shape Small Salt Cellar	54-4-3	3758
5	1876	CENTENNIAL (VIKING) pattern	108-5-3	3636
6	1880's	Yacht Salt (DAISY AND BUTTON Boat)	-	2043
7	1880's	DIAMOND & SUNBURST (EDGERTON) pattern	477-6-3	3378
8	1886	#102 Pattern (SUNBURST & BAR, MALTESE)	340-5-1	3649
9	1888-91	#44 Large Oval Salt (Diamond Faceted)	464-3-3	3211
10	1888-91	#44 Medium Oval Salt (Diamond Faceted)	483-2-2	2705
11		#44 Small Oval Salt (Diamond Faceted)	-	-
12	1888-91	#205 Salt	53-3-1	2866
13	1888-91	#210 Salt (Maltese cross shape)	3-2-1	3029
Bellaire Goblet Co.				
14	1888-91	Turtle Salt	120-5-2	993
15	1888-91	CURRIER & IVES pattern	-	3579
Dalzell, Gilmore and Leighton Co.				
16	1888-1901	3-lobed Euchre Salt	7-3-2	3018
17		4-lobed Euchre Salt	7-2-3	3020
18	1888-1901	5-lobed Euchre Salt	7-3-3	3021
19	1888-1901	Maltese Cross Euchre Salt	7-1-2	3017
20		Diamond Shape Euchre Salt	7--2-1	-
21	1890	IVANHOE pattern, Table Size	-	-
22	1890	IVANHOE pattern, Individual Size	23-2-3	-
23		DEEP FILE pattern	-	2638

SALTS BY HOBBS, BELLEAIR, DALZELL



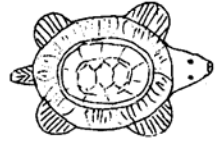
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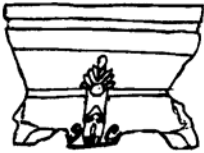
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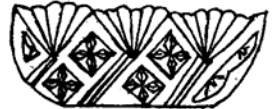
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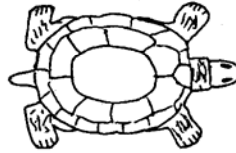
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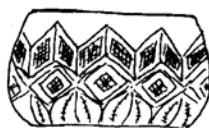
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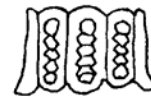
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Although they gave the name MALTESE CROSS to their #102 pattern, Hobbs also made a salt in the shape of a Maltese cross. This was shown as a novelty item not associated with any set of dinnerware. It is heavy, so a number have survived, but it has vulnerable corners so most of the ones we see are chipped on several edges. If you find a mint one, get it because it may be a long time before you see another.

The Turtle salt made by Hobbs led us to another firm who made a turtle - the Belleair Goblet Co. They started operations in Belleair, Ohio in 1876, and were the third largest goblet factory in the US. They made 7500 dozen per week - over 4,000,000 pieces of glass per year - which they sold all over the world. Goblets were really popular in those days! In 1888 they succumbed to the offer of a free factory site and free gas and moved their entire plant to Findlay, Ohio. Although their primary business was stemware, they made a few novelty items and a few tableware patterns. In 1891, they joined U.S. Glass. By December 1892 the dream of free gas evaporated. The "unlimited gas supply" was dwindling, and the Findlay Gas Trustees had to choose between heating voters homes and supplying industry. Gas to factories was rationed, so the plant closed.

The Belleair turtle is scarcer than the one from Hobbs. If you compare the two shapes in the illustrations you can see the differences. We have one in amber, and they also come in blue and crystal. They lose legs or tails easily, of course, like the one pictured in H&J. The only Belleair tableware design with an open salt seems to be the CURRIER & IVES pattern. This we have seen only in pictures, and H&J advises that it is scarce. It is an oval master size, and one that we will be looking for now that we know its origin.

The Findlay Ohio Glass book led us to a third company - Dalzell, Gilmore and Leighton. They also started elsewhere, in Wellsburg, West Virginia, and moved to the free land and free gas about the same time as Belleair. When the gas crunch came in December 1892, they were prepared and changed to oil. They went back to gas when warm weather permitted, and stayed in operation until 1901. By that time they were part of the National Glass combine. When the factory closed, their equipment was divided among other National factories, including the new one in Cambridge, Ohio.

Although Dalzell made numerous lines of pattern glass tableware, all but two of the ones we found had shakers and no open salts. These two are IVANHOE and DEEP FILE. We have the first in both Table and Individual size, and the second in the smaller size only. We haven't found any pictures of the tableware lines, but the books are unanimous in attributing these two designs to Dalzell.

Besides the pattern salts, they also made a set of euchre salts, probably before Westmoreland. The old catalog shows their 3-lobed, 5-lobed and Maltese cross shapes. We also have a 4-lobed and a diamond shape which we believe are part of the same set. The way we tell is by the design on the sides. The Dalzell salts have prism sides leading up to a beveled rim. The Westmoreland versions have rounded ribs which go all the way up to the flat rim. The two sketches on the right illustrate the difference. You might want to examine your euchres to see which you have. The lobed ones from Findlay are less common, but command a higher price only if you are buying in the Findlay area. The diamond and cross shapes are scarce, and much more in demand. The other euchre shape - the butterfly - doesn't match either the Westmoreland or Dalzell designs on its sides. Someday we may find where it came from.

We hope that you have a lot of these salts in your collection already. If you don't, we hope our descriptions will help you find those that are missing. In our own case, we're now going to be looking for CURRIER & IVES and the Hobbs #115 and #332 - the ones with the legs. If you are lucky enough to find two of any of these, we'd like to buy one for our collection.



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July 1993

References:

- James Measell and Don E. Smith - "Findlay Glass"
- Albert Christian Revi - "American Pressed Glass and Figure Bottles"
- John and Elizabeth Welker - "Pressed Glass in America"
- William Heacock and Patricia Johnson - "5000 Open Salts"
- Alan B. and Helen B. Smith - a series of 10 books, "Open Salts Illustrated"